



Sri Sri Ma. Anandamayee

VOLUME VI

Gurupriya Devi



Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi

VOLUME VI
(December 1937 to May 1938)

GURUPRIYA ANANDA GIRI
(Sri Gurupriya Devi)

Translated by Tara Kini



SHREE SHREE ANANDAMAYEE CHARITABLE SOCIETY
CALCUTTA
1997

All rights reserved

Published by

Shree Shree Anandamayee Charitable Society
57/1, Ballygunge Circular Road,
Calcutta-700 019

First Edition
1996

Price : Rs.



Printed at

The Eureka Printing Works (P) Ltd.,
76, Bepin Behari Ganguly Street,
Calcutta-700 012

Translator's Note

By Ma's grace, yet another volume of Didi's invaluable record of Ma's day to day life has been translated into English.

I would like to apologize for an error that seems to have arisen in my calculation of the dates according to the Julian calendar from the dates given by Didi according to the Bengali calendar. I realized the discrepancy when the date of Bholanath's *samadhi* appeared as May 6th, 1938 (23 Vaishakh, 1345 Bengali Era). To arrive at this date I consulted Sri Amulya Datta Gupta's book, 'In Association With Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi', and found that the starting date of this volume of Didi's diary (Volume 6) should be December 9th, 1937 (23 Agrahayana, 1344 Bengali Era). This leads to a necessary correction in Volume 5 of the English translation of Didi's diary which should start from June 13th 1937 rather than June 16th 1937. Bhajji's *samadhi* date should be August 18th, 1937 rather than August 21st 1937, and Volume 5 should end on Wednesday, 8th December 1937.

However, in 'Ma Anandamayi Lila — Memoirs of Sri Hari Ram Joshi', the date of Bholanath's *samadhi* is given as May 7th, 1938 and Bhajji's *samadhi* date as August 17th, 1937. These discrepancies seem to have arisen because of the ambiguities involved in translating dates from the one or more Hindu calendars to the Julian calendar.

I would like to pay homage to the memory of Sri G.N.Roy Misra, who is no longer in our midst, and who was a source of constant encouragement to me in translating Didi's diary. I would also like to offer my tribute to the late Sri Lalit Mohan, who was ever engrossed in thoughts of Ma and who first introduced me to Ma in 1972.

Without my husband's encouragement and his regular typing of the manuscript this service could never have been accomplished. My grateful thanks are also offered to the Publication Division of Shree Shree Anandamayee Charitable Society for allowing me to render this service at the feet of Ma.

Jai Ma.

U. Tara Kini

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Page No.</i>
Chapter 1	
Ma in Tarapeeth	1
Dadamoṣhai gives up his body	15
Ma's indisposition in Haridwar	25
Chapter 2	
Ma in Dr. Pant's Sevashram	45
Chapter 3	
Ma's words on different spiritual topics	88
<i>Purna Kumbha</i> in Haridwar	104
Chapter 4	
Departure for Dehradun	126
Bholanath's illness	133
Bholanath gives up his body	160

Chapter One

MA IN TARAPEETH

December 9, Thursday, 1937

In the company of Sri Sri Ma, we reached Rampurhat around three p.m. It was past dusk when we travelled by bullock cart and reached the temple of Tara Mata, the Goddess of burning *ghats*. We were not going to stay here very long. Bholanath had to perform some task here and we had come to this place for that purpose. Earlier when he had performed *sadhana* in this place, he had attained a very beautiful state and therefore he was particularly attached to it. Bholanath decided to occupy the verandah of the temple of Tara Mata where he usually settles down and Ma's bedding was spread in the hut that had been erected during our sacred thread ceremony.

Food was cooked in the home of Sri Jatindranath Panda and at eleven p.m. Ma was offered *bhoga*. Many ladies from the homes of *pandas* arrived for Ma's darshan.

A Bhairavi Ma had arrived; we heard that she did not like the fact that the people here were so devoted to Ma. She had never seen Ma, yet she spoke ill of Ma. Yet, hearing about this Ma said, "Come Khukuni, let us go and see Bhairavi Ma." Bholanath stalled the visit and asked Ma to go the next day.

Later, Bhairavi Ma herself came to visit the temple. Ma went near her and stood beside her smilingly. Bhairavi Ma tugged at Ma's *dhoti* and made Ma sit next to her. Ma adopted the attitude of a daughter and began conversing thus. In a little while Bhairavi Ma got up and left. Ma followed her saying, "The daughter is trailing her mother, but the mother just does not look behind." Bhairavi Ma replied, "I wanted to become the Mother of the world but Anandamayi has not allowed that to happen. Therefore I can no longer try to be like a mother. Yet,

if a daughter calls me, I am willing to be like a mother." Saying so much she departed with her companions. God alone knows what her speech implied.

Bhairavi Ma was well built and clad in red with a trident in one hand. She lived in Magra with her husband, daughter and others; she sometimes went to Sri Rampur. She was to leave tomorrow. When she met Ma in the temple she declared, "I can sing very well." Immediately Ma responded, "Then do sing a song for me, Ma."

December 10, Friday

Ma lay on her bedding till late in the morning. Last night I slept in the Nat-Mandir near the door of Ma's room. Ruma Devi and Akhandananda slept in the Siddhashram. On the way here last night Ma conversed with me and said, "I cannot describe the various conditions that this body has experienced. At times as I sat my eye balls turned upwards till all those who saw me felt afraid. The face looked beautiful but very strange. A feeling seemed to arise within dictating that the hands should turn this way, the elbows that way and the head in some other direction. It could be asked why such a state occurred. People who witnessed the tortuous condition of the limbs were frightened. Do you know the reason for all this ? You people speak of six *chakras* (wheels) but I say that there are many knots within the entire body. With these *kriyas* the knots in each region become untied one by one. You people say, '*Trataka* (a yogic *kriya*) is performed with the eyes, but I say that the whole body can be involved in the *trataka kriya*. It can be clearly felt that each knot in the head, hand, the foot, the bone, the flesh, the fingers, is being untied. With every twist and turn of the limbs the breathing changes accordingly. That is indeed a wonderful state. Everything occurs spontaneously—*hathayoga*, *rajayoga* as you all call them have all occurred within this body. By touching one a level is attained. As long as you remain within

the *kriya*, so long will the levels and steps remain available."

"Do you know what the next state is ? It is like travelling in what you people call a lift. While moving upward you watch the second and third floor go past and you stay quietly for no *kriya* occurs within you. Up and down are all alike to you at that moment. You go wherever you need to spontaneously. There is no further necessity to make an effort, or you may say that in that state there is no rise or fall. Then many kinds of *bija mantras* also emanate from within."

I said, "Alright Ma, could we find a description of these conditions that occurred within you, in spiritual texts?" Ma replied, "Look, you must note one thing. You will surely find whatever is written in the *shastras*; if you don't find it in one text you shall find it in another. You will find it somewhere or the other. I have already asked you:— how much can be written in the *shastras*? Just as much as is written in a railway time-table that gives the names of certain places. If you were to walk from one place to another you would see sights that were not and could not be described in books on travel — similarly it is possible to experience many conditions other than those explicitly described in the *shastras*. However, whatever is mentioned in the *shastras* is bound to be encountered. Again the reference to all matters is present in the *shastras*. How will you understand all this until the lotus in the heart blooms? If what happens appears to be opposite to what has been mentioned in the scriptures then you must understand that the *kriya* is not occurring properly; something must have gone wrong somewhere. The fault could also be located in what has been described in the *shastras* as being against the *shastras*. Therefore all that is described in the *shastras* will be found amongst the experiences of different individuals".

I asked, "Tell me Ma, is the *bija mantra* greater than the Name?" Ma replied, "See, you cannot really say which is greater. Surely it has been said that you should keep repeating

the Name so that your *samskaras* are wiped out and the *bija* will then arrive of its own accord. But just as it is impossible to say whether the seed came first or the tree, so is it in this case. Therefore one cannot be adjudged to be greater than the other. Just as the existence of the tree lies within the seed, the seed is full of the potential tree and the tree arises out of the seed. Then again the tree gives fruit and hundreds of seeds. Thus it is said that the Name and the One who bears the Name are One and the Same."

In the course of conversation Ma spoke about the nature of the *kriyas* that occurred within the body. "I could see that the *kriyas* commenced, occurring one after the other, and then I could hear the utterance, 'Now I shall leave' and the *kriyas* would cease. It seemed as if the *kriyas* were personified and had declared, 'We shall leave' before ceasing to function. Then the body would be engaged in domestic chores, because such *kriyas* had then stopped. Such was the nature of the beautiful enlightenment."

Ma then described the brilliance that emanated from within her body, "What fun it was! One day as I was walking in Shahbagh I suddenly sat down at a spot and picked up a piece of coal that was lying beside me. I did not know why I picked it up — it just so happened. Then I started drawing certain lines with the piece of coal on the ground. There are six *chakras* in the body but they are spaced quite far apart; I began measuring their spacing with my fingers and drawing them — the number of petals or spokes of each lotus or wheel, their colouring, all was revealed from within. I sketched them all from the *muladhara* (the wheel at the base of the spine) to the *sahasrara* (the wheel at the top of the head). Now having heard the names of these *chakras* from you all I call them accordingly, but at that time I knew nothing. I drew them, then got up and told Bholanath, 'Cover this with a wooden plank.' Later when Jyotish and Niranjan arrived Bholanath showed it

to them."

Ma continued, "The heart is the seat of all experiences, happy and sad. It is, in fact the *asana* (seat) of God Himself. If the person to whom the *asana* belongs is not seated there then permanent peace is not obtained. If any other entity is made to sit there it only leads to restlessness, for the other one is unable to preserve the sanctity of the pure *asana*. That leads to coming and going. Therefore it is specially beneficial to us to try and seat the One to whom the *asana* rightfully belongs. He is always seated on that *asana* and the aim of our *sadhana* is to try for His manifestation. When that happens our *samaskaras* bound by name and form are removed and having reached the *chakra* situated between the eyebrows, the bright form with so many colours, blooms."

Ma laughed and then said, "Do you know what I saw? It was like a system of irrigation — when you pour water in one place it flows to a lower channel and then perhaps it flows to a large reservoir and fills it, all by itself. Just as the river flows only towards the ocean — so is also the rule that the *kundalini shakti* goes only upward from the *muladhara*. From one place to the second, then to the third and so on, in order, till it reaches the *sahasrara*."

I said, "Sometimes it has been observed that an individual experiences all kinds of wonderful states with no outward evidence of any spiritual practices, as if he were just a child." Ma explained, "See, it happened only because of a blow having been dealt. Sometimes it has so happened that many doors within have been thrown open because of fear or because of being hit by someone else. At that moment he may be able to explain many unearthly matters. At times such a condition may remain permanent and at other times it may only be temporary. If it is preserved in the right fashion the person may be able to succeed remarkably well in many fields. Whatever else has to happen or whatever is necessary then occurs of its own accord

as per the flow of *karmas*."

Then the topic of the language was mentioned and Ma remarked, "See, it is not necessary to remember every letter and word to learn a language. Whichever people I am amidst, their thoughts catch my attention and spontaneously their language emerges for me. I do not have to learn it word by word, nor do I have to remember it. Do you know what I observed? Sometimes my handwriting was very clear and well formed, and at times it was very indistinct. Once Bholanath wanted me to write my name for some reason and surprisingly, though I had written letters and notes earlier, I was unable to sign that day, even after spoiling many sheets of paper in the attempt. Therefore Bholanath could not obtain my signature and his purpose remained unaccomplished — such was my state."

"Do you know what it is like? At so many instances invocations and *mantras* have been uttered so distinctly, yet sometimes when you people plead with me nothing is uttered. Yet you could say — the tattered primary reader part one had been studied, but how could that knowledge give any idea of Sanskrit words? Then where did invocations and *mantras* emanate from? Similarly, beautifully formed, clear handwriting also emerged spontaneously at times."

Narrating about the time she spent in Karnali, Ma said, "After you went away, I began living alone in a room. One day I observed that this body was feeling strange. Suddenly I had the *kheyal* that Bodo Ma (Bhramar Ghosh) had asked about Krishna Leela and she had not been given an answer. She had been told, 'Whatever occurs to me later, I will let you know.' Now when this *kheyal* occurred I told Bholanath, 'Look, write down whatever I say and send it to Bodo Ma.' At that time the rate of breathing also changed. Baba (Swamiji) and Bholanath probably thought that the mention of Krishna was bringing on that *bhava* in me. But that was not the cause. The *bhava* had

begun earlier and then with the thought of Bodo Ma I began speaking the way I did. You all may say that speaking of Krishna later was the cause, but all this does not occur in me because of any such arrangement. Whenever the inspiration emerges, everything occurs spontaneously."

"I lay thus for some time. Baba and Bholanath stayed on for awhile and then went to their respective rooms, as I continued to lie there. A variety of *kriyas* were performed by this body. The room was dark and Ruma Devi lay in one corner of the room. These *kriyas* started of their own accord. It sometimes happens that when any other person enters the room these *kriyas* cease."

I asked, "Why does that happen Ma ? Earlier a particular kind of *kriya* occurred within you — now why is the *kriya* of a different kind ?" Jyotish Dada had once questioned Ma similarly. After a long gap, when Ma went into trance during *kirtan*, he had asked her, "People say that certain *kriyas* occurred in the earlier part of your life, then there occurred so much change in your condition. Why then did these *kriyas* occur again ?" In reply to that Ma had said, "You people can ask such things, but do you know what happens within a *sadhaka*? Each condition is replaced by yet another, new one and regular progress ensues. But in the case of this body it is totally different and therefore everything appears to be upside down and the flow is haphazard. May be, in your view, some *kriya* associated with an exalted state is manifested in this body and later, perhaps, a more ordinary *kriya* is observed. In this body there is nothing like high and low. Whatever be the need of you people at a particular time, this body responds accordingly."

Now in answer to my query Ma made a similar statement. On being asked about the radiance in her body she said, "Do you know what I observed at times ? As if this body was light personified. And the place that I was in was irradiated by the

same light."

Ma awoke at about ten a.m., then her face and hands were washed. She sat under a tree and I sat near her. Hearing of her arrival many people had come to take the dust of her feet and offer *pranama*. I was conversing with Ma. The topic of *shastras* came up. Ma said, "Do you know what *shastras* are? '*Sva astra*', that weapon *astra* (*karma*) which can cut the worldly bondage of *samsara*." Then the question that arose was, "What is the meaning of *shishya* (disciple)?" Ma said, '*Sva Sva*' — that means to establish one's real personality; to explain the real nature which is indivisible, that is to reveal it. '*Shasya*' — means to sow a seed in the ground and grow a *shasya* (plant). This is also like planting a seed in the ground, to grow a plant and reveal the nature of the fruit." Hearing all this from Ma, I was reminded of a song—

'Mon re krishi kaj ja no na.

Emon manob jomin roilo potit

Abad korle pholto shona.'

which means — 'O mind ! you know not the art of farming. This excellent land of human birth is lying fallow. If it were tilled it would yield gold.'

Ma and I slept around two a.m.

December 11, Saturday

Today Ma declared, "Other than God no one else can perform *leela*. The *sadhaka* can become God-like by performing *sadhana* but cannot become God. *Leela* belongs to God alone."

Early this morning the ladies from Yatish Guha's and Shachi Dada's homes came from Calcutta along with Narayan Babu. Dada moshai's health is very bad; he and Didi Ma want to see Ma once during his last moments. Everyone began urging Ma to go there. Finally after Bholanath and others had persuaded Ma, it was agreed that we would leave at twelve

today and board the four p.m. train which would reach Calcutta by nine thirty p.m. The next morning Ma would return by the eight a.m. train.

We got ready quickly and set out with Ma. We had to travel by bullock cart; as our departure had got delayed we wondered if we would be able to catch the train at Rampurhat. Meanwhile, A gentleman arrived in a car to meet Ma. Seeing us on the verge of sojourn he took Ma and some of us in his car while two or three of our companions started in a bullock cart. We were almost certain that they would miss the train. Surprisingly, however, the train was late by an hour and a half that day and all of us managed to board it.

We reached Calcutta at ten p.m. Many had not received news of Ma's arrival and so a couple of us set out to inform devotees who lived nearby. We visited three or four houses and returned to the Birla temple to find that some devotees had already gathered there. Ma was to halt here for some hours and therefore no one was willing to budge. Even those who were normally unable to bear the slightest chill, sat put. Rai Bahadur Surendranath Bāndopadhyaya, Prankumar Babu, Shachikant Ghosh and others were amongst those sitting around Ma. At about three a.m. in the morning some took leave, then Ma and the rest of us slept at four a.m.

December 12, Sunday

We set out by the eight a.m. train inspite of the attempts by Ma's devotees to make her stay longer. Ma explained to them sweetly that she could tarry no longer. Yesterday, on the way to the station she visited Didi Ma and while bidding farewell to her parents she took the dust of their feet. Devotees followed her and were left behind in tears as Ma departed.

Only Bholanath and I had accompanied Ma while the others had stayed behind in Tarapeeth. As we were conversing during the journey Ma suddenly said, "The conversation

that ensues between worldly people concerning their pleasures and comforts can be called '*pralapa*'. What is '*pralapa*'? That which is seen to be destroyed (*laya*) during *pralaya* (the great deluge)".

We reached Rampurhat at two thirty p.m. and set out for Tarapeeth by bullock cart. The drivers of the carts informed us that four or five devotees had gone to Tarapeeth yesterday and we guessed that they must have come from Jamshedpur or Barhampur. Ma, Bholanath and I were in one cart. On the way Ma said, "When I lay down that night in Tarapur do you know what I saw? Many people seemed to go past singing — their number could not be estimated, but it was large. What kind of a path were they taking? It was dense jungle with a river flowing by the side. These people were walking in the shade of the trees by the river and then this body "(indicating her body)" ran ahead of that group. Sometimes this body hid behind the trees, as if it were playing hide and seek, reappeared for a moment only to disappear again. The people followed, engrossed in *bhava*, walking in a haphazard way, the sound of their singing of the Name echoing from all directions. They sang, 'Krishna Kanhaiya, Banshi Bajaiya,

Gaiya Charaiya Hare, Re Re Re Re Ay Ay'. The place seemed to be flooded with bliss."

"Listen, do you want to hear the tune of that song?" So saying, Ma began to sing, 'Krishna Kanhaiya, Banshi Bajaiya, Gaiya Charaiya Hare, Re Re Re Re Ay Ay...'. She added, laughing, "I have come to Tarapeeth and whom do I see here — Kanhaiya — how beautiful this is!" Saying this, she laughed sweetly.

Ma continued, "Look, another kind of condition has also prevailed — when the bark of a tree was pierced, this body would develop the wound and would feel the pain. Leave aside revealing these experiences, if any one so much as mentioned such topics in its presence, this body would stiffen — probably

with the fear that the experiences would be manifested. In this manner, without anybody's knowledge, innumerable kinds of *bhava* have occurred. Now I see that at times these *bhavas* are suddenly mentioned and explained. But the *bhava* of nothingness within the body is never revealed. The truth is revealed within the body as different *bhavas*. Why, did I not understand anything? 'Did not understand' however, in your opinion is also not right. All kinds of *bhava* occurred there, didn't they? Whatever had to happen did happen. Whatsoever is desired by you all for your use, is performed."

Continuing the conversation she said, "Look, sometimes this also has happened — say I am talking to someone. My attention is focused there when someone else comes and says, 'Ma, how shall I do this job?' The answer that emerges is, 'Go on, do it.' He obeys. In this Ma's instructions have not been followed, for his own desires have been stronger. If you pay attention you can make out which of the utterances have been made from Ma's own *bhava* and which have been made to emerge from Ma as a result of your own desires."

We reached Tarapeeth after dusk and saw that Atul Babu, Amulya Babu and Kharesh (a Parsi boy) had come from Jamshedpur, Trigun Babu from Srirampur and Krishna Babu from Calcutta. It was late in the night by the time all finished conversing after which they all went to rest ; then Ma lay down to sleep.

December 13, Monday

Today many more people arrived from Calcutta. It has been decided that we shall leave this place on Wednesday. Devotees are making arrangements for tomorrow's worship of Tara Ma by Bholanath. The items required for the *puja* are being brought from Calcutta.

A couple of days ago while conversing with us at night Ma had said, "See, no one ever knew how I learnt to read books

in my childhood. The first reader was commenced. Your Didima made me sit down to read one day. Then she lost track for a month or two and the book also disappeared during this time. Then again she made me read — with two or three such sessions the first reader was completed. Then we found a tattered copy of the second part of the reader — that was also completed in three or four days. The village school started a primary class and I was admitted there. I hardly attended school and the book was rarely touched. Surprisingly, when I did glance at a couple of pages; the teacher would ask me questions from exactly those lines and I was able to answer correctly. No one tried to understand how this had happened."

"Similarly, in Bajitpur when assuming the role of the Lakshmi of the house, Kali *puja* was performed and Bholanath invited many people to partake of Kali Ma's *prasada*. Though nothing was in order, people who came ate whatever little had been cooked as *prasada* and felt extremely satisfied. Bholanath declared, 'Wonderful is Kali Ma's grace — so many people received *prasada* and nothing was wanting'."

Again in the course of conversation Ma once said, "Look, worldly people talk all the time of worldly joys and sorrows, but it is all *pralapa*. As I had explained earlier, *pralapa* is that which is destroyed during *pralaya*." I then remarked, "Ma, I have heard that during the time of *pralaya* everything is not destroyed. Everything remains in subtle form." Ma said, "Do you know how that is? It is just the way a tree bears fruit and dies. Its seeds contain innumerable trees in subtle form which later grow into so many trees. Actually nothing in the world ever gets destroyed. Creation, preservation and destruction keep occurring all the time."

Once while speaking to people present, Ma referred to the casually occurring playful *kriyas* in her early life — "See, in the context of the emanation of *mantras* and *bija* spontaneously from these lips, I now hear from you all that *mantras* also

evolved spontaneously from the *rishis* of yore who were seers of *mantras*. Probably all those *bhavas* were manifested in these body according to the needs of all of you."

December 14, Tuesday

There is nothing special to write about today. Devotees enjoyed themselves greatly in Ma's company. Bholanath is running a temperature.

December 15, Wednesday

Today Radhika Babu arrived from Dhaka. While speaking to Ma he said, "Ma, when the foundation is of the nature of Truth, whence did falsehood arise? I feel that the veil of ignorance within has got torn somewhere." Ma laughed and replied, "If the veil tears even slightly it cannot be repaired. This is just the way no one needs to be told when a pomegranate has ripened — its colour and fragrance are revealing. The outer veil tears of its own accord; having once been removed, it cannot be put back again." Radhika Babu laughed and said, "Ours gets repaired somehow." Ma remarked, "It is not torn — it just shakes and you feel it is tearing. And how does falsehood emerge from truth? Do you want to know what that is like? It is just the way in which the waves of the ocean merge into the ocean — the waves are but a form of the ocean itself; falsehood is nothing other than a form of Truth."

After conversing thus for sometime Ma went to the *Natmandir* and sat down, surrounded by devotees. Radhika Babu asked Ma, "Ma, what should I tell the people of Dhaka?" Ma replied, "Do you want to know what to say? Tell them — keep going towards That — do not stop. Do not stop even to see where you have reached. If you do that do you know what happens? The progress made is diminished. Therefore never stop, just keep going continuously." So saying Ma laughed.

In the course of conversation Shachi Dada said, "Ma, a

dead body is arriving today." Ma said, "I have heard that unless a dead body arrives here, Tara Ma cannot have *bhoga*. In truth, unless that which is impermanent and unreal is not finished, the true substance cannot be offered in Ma's *bhoga*." She continued, smiling, "How can that which is permanent and true be offered as *bhoga*? It is only to explain a point that such a statement is made."

As soon as Ma awoke this morning she had declared that she would leave today. It had been decided earlier that we should leave today and therefore though Bholanath was not keeping well the departure was not delayed. Bholanath performed Tara Ma's *puja*. Many devotees from Calcutta, Barhampur and Jamshedpur were present. The *puja* was performed on a grand scale and at four p.m., after *bhoga* was offered, everyone received *prasada*. We shall leave at eleven p.m. and catch the three thirty a.m. train at Rampurhat. Before *bhoga* was offered Ma sang in the *Natmandir*, accompanied by devotees —

"Krishna Kanhaiya, Banshi Bajaiya, Gou charaiya here, re, re, ay, ay".

After *bhoga*, Ma was made to lie down in a small room and the door was closed. A man asked the devotees outside, "What is Ma's name? Where is her home?" Ma was listening from behind the closed door. She got up and laughed, saying, "Who was asking all those questions outside? The reply that stemmed from within me was, '*Avyakta dhama, Svarupa grama, Sacchidananda Ghanashyama Nama*', which means 'Unmanifested home, the village of one's real nature, the name is Sacchidananda Ghanashyama'." So saying Ma laughed like a simple, innocent child. The devotees were delighted to hear this.

The wife of a *panda* sent some milk and jaggery balls for Ma. Knowing that Ma was leaving, these poor householders would bring whatever they could to give Ma — as though to

entertain their daughter who had come home after a long time; such was their attitude towards Ma. The *pandas* and their wives would declare — "Our Tara Ma and you are one and the same."

We set out at eleven p.m. in the moonlit night. A procession of twelve or fourteen bullock carts carried us and our luggage. We reached Rampurhat at two a.m. We got into the train at three thirty a.m. and reached Burdhan where we halted for about twelve hours.

December 16, Thursday

We reached Burdhan early this morning and halted for some time. We went to a *dharmashala* belonging to Sikhs. Lunch was arranged in the house of a person known to Shachi Dada. Last night Kamal had asked Ma in the train, "Ma, are dreams real?" Ma had replied, "Dreams are just as true as this *samsara* (world) is, but perhaps you can see a past incident or a future event in a dream. All of it is but a play of *samskaras*."

Ma would not enter the house and so she stood outside. Dadamoshai's cot was brought near the door and Ma sat on it. Everyone was talking when Dadamoshai suddenly looked at Ma and called out, 'Ma, Ma, Ma' thrice. Then heaving a sigh he said, 'Ma' again and fell silent. Ma also took particular notice of this *bhava* of his. It seemed that for a short while, his paternal instinct towards Ma had been replaced by a feeling that Ma was his mother.

On the day that we reached Tarapeeth, Ma was lying down and she had a vision of Dadamoshai saying, 'Take!'. Ma replied, "Clouds are still present". He asked, "What will these clouds do?" The meaning of this is that Dadamoshai appeared to be requesting Ma to take him and Ma answered that clouds were still present, implying that the bondage of *karma* was still present. Dadamoshai then said, 'So what? Take me any way'. This was the import of Ma's vision.

Ma said to me, "I see that slim clouds can even be torn". Then laughing in her own sweet manner she continued, "Your Didima is in the throes of trouble and is probably remembering this body keenly; the effect of that is being manifest off and on here."

Ma returned to the *dharmashala* and lay down for a long time; she ate nothing. In the afternoon she sat up. Hearing of Ma's arrival at Burdwan many devotees had already come from Calcutta and returned. Today again Prankumar Babu's wife and daughter, Yatish Guha, Rai Bahadur Surendranath Banerjee, his daughter Nani and others came to see Ma.

Ma reached the station with everybody to leave by the six thirty p.m. train. Naresh Dada, Amulya Dada, Lakshmi Didi, Jatin Dada and other devotees sat surrounding her. Since many women sat nearest to Ma, a discussion across amongst the men — that only ladies have the privilege of sitting near Ma. As such delightful chatter was in progress, the train arrived and many were now reduced to tears. Leaving her weeping devotees, Ma boarded the train. The devotees from Jamshedpur were going to accompany Ma till Asansol and were thrilled about it. The Parsi boy (Kharesh) whom Ma had named Keshavananda, had also come from Jamshedpur. People were distressed by the uncertainty of seeing Ma again.

The train departed on time. At ten p.m. the Jamshedpur devotees alighted at Asansol. Ma lay down. This time we are accompanied by Bhola, who is the brother-in-law of Kamal, nephew of Atal Dada. He is sixteen or seventeen years old and is studying for I.A. He is already showing a keen sense of detachment. He wanted to go to Haridwar and having met Ma he set out with her. It was decided that Ma would get down at Kashi and travel to Haridwar from there. We do not know yet whether we shall stay in Haridwar, Rishikesh or Dehradun.

December 17, Friday

Early this morning we reached Kashi and went to Vireshwar Pande's *dharmashala*. Later, on the request of the late Nirmal Babu's wife, we went to Hari's *dharmashala*. Ma told Swami Akhandananda to go to Dhaka and I was also given the same command. Having received permission from Ma to accompany her up to Kashi, I have come here. Ruma Devi is also here. In the afternoon many people arrived to see Ma and sat with her till ten p.m.

December 18, Saturday

From the day before we left Tarapeeth, that is from December 14, Tuesday, Bholanath resumed speaking. His fever was high. Though he was in that state, he sang Ma's *kirtan* and then started to speak. Yesterday we received a telegram with the message that Ma's father, Dadamoshai, passed away at eleven p.m. on December 16, Thursday. Ma had declared, "Some clouds remain." On receiving news of her father's death, Ma said, "He died three days after that. Clouds were remaining, but they were cleared." On receiving the telegram Ma said, "Every arrival is connected with the departure as well."

Ma's words had already indicated to us that Dadamoshai would pass away. He left his body at the age of seventy two. He was a very serious natured person.

Not seeing any difference in Ma's behaviour on being given this news, Bacchu's mother asked Ma, "Ma, when you knew about it, why did you not go to see Dadamoshai earlier? Even after hearing this news you are unperturbed. Ma, you are indeed hard-hearted." Ma laughed and replied, "That day (on the day that we went to Calcutta) I had told Baba, 'Baba, I shall go'. He had replied, 'Alright child, you may go.' He had already bid me farewell."

Later Ma told me, "When we were on the train on our way

to Kashi on Thursday, I could see everything vividly to the exact detail of where and what was happening. It can even be shown when we go there next. It will prove to be correct."

From last night Bholanath had been telling Ma, "After all, he was your father. You must do something. You have done many a thing earlier; being a daughter it is essential that you do some thing for your father." Ma replied, "All are but fathers. I never say, 'I shall not do' or 'I shall do'. Whatever you people are able to make me perform, you have that done. This body is generally in tune with your attitudes and needs. When that synchronization is missing, what can I do? Tell me. Whatever happens is all right. I cannot say anything." Saying this Ma fell silent. Bholanath said, "I shall do my duty." Hearing the news of Dadamoshai's death, Bholanath's eyes had filled with tears. He is a very softhearted person.

On the fourth day, however, Bholanath asked for arrangements to be made to feed brahmins and give alms. Ma said, "If you wish to feed brahmins, arrange for it in Bacchu's house. Do not do all this in a *dharmashala*." That was fixed. When Ma had been to Calcutta last she had told *Pisima* (her father's sister), "Serve him well."

Today Ma rose early. A few people arrived. One person asked, "If someone wishes to keep travelling is it right to travel?" Ma asked, "Why would you travel?" He replied, "There is no particular aim. It is just a whim that has arisen in the mind." Ma commented "It can never be without reason. A particular aim does lie within the mind. What you describe as 'no aim' is itself an aim. Very well, if you have the desire to travel then do so and satisfy the *vasana*. It can also happen that when you go to some particular place, or after you travel for some time, the desire will be satiated of its own accord."

On lady said, "Ma, the moment I sit down to repeat the Name, I feel sleepy or thirsty; the desire to go on repeating the Name simply disappears." Ma replied, "Very well, if you feel

sleepy, sleep for awhile, then get up and settle down to repeat the Name. When you feel thirsty, drink water and then resume the repetition. Do not feel that if you drink water you cannot continue the worship. You have to repeat the Name. Maintain the attitude that whatever the fashion of doing it may be, the *japa* has to be done."

Many people left in the afternoon. I raised the topic of Dadamoshai in Ma's presence. As she spoke Ma began describing events from Dadamoshai's childhood, "I have heard that even as a young man Baba had very little attachment to his home and family. Before his marriage he had even walked out of his house once after which he was tracked down and persuaded to return. Later, after he got married, he again went away and donned saffron robes as well. Then a daughter was born and subsequently she passed away. This body was born after that and was followed by the birth of three boys. But Baba hardly mixed much with us. When he returned once after a long absence his own children were unable to recognise him and feared him as they would a stranger. He used to be absorbed in his *bhajan*. Even after his marriage he would not return to his house for many nights at a stretch, spending his time singing *bhajan*. He used to be totally immersed in singing about the glories of God. In fact, the lives of your Dadamoshai and Didima were very different from the ordinary though there was no way of understanding this from their outward appearance. Their children who were born and died shortly after birth were just completing their quota of births that had to occur here. These facts involve many subtleties which are beyond the ken of ordinary people."

Dadamoshai was hot tempered. When this fact was mentioned Ma said, "It has been said that even amongst the *jivanmuktas* (realised souls) some emotion like anger remains strong. On closer inspection, however, it is found that they are under the spell of some enemy and such emotions arise from

within them of their own accord. You may have observed that when Baba grew angry his anger was terrible — not the kind you see in ordinary people. The next minute he would become perfectly cool. It is difficult to understand these moods." She then described the other beautiful *bhavas* that Dadamoshai experienced as he left his body. I was amazed that we had gauged nothing about Dadamoshai from his outward appearance.

This afternoon lunch was to arrive from the homes of a Kashmiri devotee, Bacchu and a doctor. Ma lay down before lunch. Once Ma had explained, "Look, sometimes it so happens that you are asked to do something but the job does not get done. Perhaps you feel, 'Though Ma asked me to do it, the good work was not accomplished'. Why does such a thing happen? I say that if you desire to perform some good deed but are unable to do it, just the good desire is sufficient to give the effect of having performed the auspicious *kriya*. Understand that nothing goes waste. It is similar to the belief that even if you die on the journey to Kashi the merit of dying in Kashi is achieved. It is, therefore, necessary to always entertain good intentions in one's mind."

In the afternoon some ladies arrived. One of them asked Ma, "Ma, you are always in bliss. How can you maintain that bliss in your heart?" Ma laughed and replied, "How do you keep your *dhoti* on? Whether you are in grief or in sorrow, in a storm or in rain, you maintain your *dhoti* in its position, for it has to be kept on. The necessity of doing this has become so much a part of your consciousness that even if the *dhoti* slips slightly, you wrap it on at once. With the same kind of practice this bliss can also be captured and kept intact." The lady was very happy with this answer and remarked, "That is perfectly right. In the Gita also the Lord has said that everything can be achieved by the *yoga* of practice (*abhyasa yoga*)." Ma slept around one a.m.

December 19, Sunday

Some men and women arrived early this morning. One person asked Ma, "Ma, how can *yoga* be attained?" Ma laughed and replied, "From whom has there been *viyoga*?" She then went on to explain, "The feeling that you are not able to see Him, 'Where is He?', 'Why am I unable to be united with Him?' — these feelings of non-unity (*viyoga*) are to be removed by *hatha yoga*, *raja yoga* and other methods. Everything can be attained by *Guru Shakti* and *Guru Sthan*." The person then said, "Ma, I have heard that it is necessary to test the *Guru* and that the disciple has to also be subjected to a test by the *Guru*." Even before the question was stated fully, Ma replied, "Do you know how that is ? It is just the way the son-in-law is examined before the daughter is given away in marriage to him. Once the marriage is performed no questions are supposed to be asked. Unless the *Guru* manifests himself how will the disciple understand him?" Some one else asked, "Ma, what is this called ? What is the name for it?" Ma replied, "See, there is no end to what you would like to know, everything is endless. Rather than ask such questions it may be better to enquire, 'How do eyes open?' or ask similar questions. Every question does not elicit an answer all the time. Neither are people able to make me utter solutions at all times. Perhaps it would not serve any purpose either."

Today Bholanath was to make Ma perform the obsequies for Dadamoshai and all arrangements had been made. The sixteen fold charities had been organized. After laying out all the items and decorating the room for worship, Bholanath took Ma and made her sit on the *asana*. Pandit Guruprasanna Bhattacharya read out the *mantras*. As soon as Ma sat on the *asana* she said, "Why accept charity ? He who gives in charity is none other than the one who accepts it." Then Ma's body became absolutely still. Bholanath touched Ma. Then after sprinkling water and flowers he began performing acts of

charity. Ma's body remained unmoving. Her eyes were downcast and unblinking. Bholanath attempted to make Ma touch the water and flowers with her hands as far as possible and somehow accomplished the *shraddha* rituals. The person whose *karmas* are all finished, who has no identification even with her own body, had been made to sit and perform rituals by the compulsion of tradition. Ma had said, "I never say that I will or will not do something—whatever has to happen just happens." In fact we have ourselves observed that Ma does not stand in any high or low position and is, therefore, able to accomplish any task without compromising propriety.

Then again, probably to demonstrate the various levels of penance (*tapasya*) Ma manifests in her body the condition of each level at each state, right to the end. At that time Ma was unable to perform rituals properly but now all work is being done fittingly by her; therefore we make her perform necessary rituals as far as possible.

By the time we finished lunch it was late afternoon. At three p.m. Ma sat down to eat and said, "How will it be if we go to Vindhyachal today ? What is the time now?" Many people had come for Ma's darshan but Ma's *kheyal* was such; the meal was finished in haste and she set out for Vindhyachal. Jitendra Chandra Mukherjee had come from Allahabad; he set out with Ma for Vindhyachal; I also went along. Bholanath was unwilling to go along as he had to attend to some important work but as Ma set out the two of us followed her. We reached Vindhyachal after sunset. The people there were delighted to have Ma's *darshan* unexpectedly. Ma went to see Shri Mahesh Babu. She also visited the Panchavati. She spent the night there. At five a.m. the next morning we came to the Vindhyachal station by Mahesh Babu's car and boarded the six thirty a.m. train for Kashi.

December 20, Monday

At nine thirty a.m. we reached Kashi. As soon as we reached, Ma had a wash and then she lay down with a sheet. Gradually devotees began gathering and Ma began conversing with them. All were delighted with Ma's sweet smiles and utterances. At one stage Ma said, "If you hold on to Him, there is no fear of falling." She also made other similar statements.

A few days ago Ma had said, "At first all the *kriyas* of *sadhana* like *puja* and *yajna* which occurred within the body, were manifested as so many *bhavas*. For example, if a *yajna* (ritual involving a sacrificial fire) was being performed a *mandala* (circle) was traced spontaneously upon the ground by these fingers. The items for worship were never actually present; but the *kriyas* were performed through *bhava* alone. Now that I remember, it was thus even before; at present, again, that is what I do. As soon as such a desire arises the fingers contort accordingly and the hand remains frozen in that pose for some time. I would then let go of the body and remain seated; gradually the hands would move to the correct spots and the fingers would be activated as required. The *mandala* was sketched — I would only watch such amazing sights. No *samskaras* of any kind prompt these actions."

Ma continued, "Again, whenever anyone narrated the life of a saint or recited the Gita or the Bhagavata, I would hardly begin to hear the narration when a noticeable alteration in my condition would render me incapable of hearing any more. This was not because of any trace of deficiency — the changes that the body underwent happened totally of their own accord." I remarked, "No effect of *samskara* or act of imitation could occur within you. Therefore such changes took place within your body and you could no longer listen."

Ma narrated an incident that occurred very long ago: Purnananda Swami has an *ashrama* in Rishikesh. When Ma was in Rishikesh along with Jyotish Dada, Purnananda Swami

did not go to meet her even though he had heard about Ma's arrival there; *sadhus* generally do not like conversing with women. Later, when they became acquainted with Ma, many *sadhus* arrived for her darshan. Purnananda Swami did not go himself but sent a disciple with a question and asked him to return with Ma's answer. The disciple came to Ma and asked, "What kind of dreams do you get?" Ma replied, "Sleep is possible only in a state of ignorance. And dreams can be experienced only in such sleep. For one who has no ignorance and, therefore, no sleep, how will there exist any dreams? And if you were to say that all that you see is all a dream, then that again would be different." Hearing this reply given by Ma to his question, the Swami was very happy. He then invited Ma to his *ashrama* and treated her with great respect and affection. Ma called him Baba. He cooked meals himself and fed Ma many times.

During the course of conversation today, regarding the circumstances in which Ma expressed her desire, she explained, "Look, this desire that you observe is manifested only in response to your *bhava*. Actually, no such thing as desire or the lack of it, is present within this body. Can a seed harbour the desire to sprout into a tree? Does a tree have the desire that people should walk under it to experience the coolness of its shade ? Just as that cannot be, though such effects do take place naturally, in the same way, emotions such as desires are also effected naturally within this body. Such emotions arise in this body depending on your needs."

I raised the matter of giving Dadamoshai the *sanyasa mantra* at the time of his death. Ma replied, "You people talk of *mantra* and *diksha* but I say that just as I have spoken about various topics to Baba, this was just another subject that was discussed." Regarding desire Ma elaborated further, "See, that which you all require is being performed by this body. You arrange for the *kirtan* and sing *kirtan*. The *bhava* arising from

kirtan is manifested in this body. Then you people arrange for Kali *puja* and take this body there; the *puja bhava* is then manifested by this body. Again, you approach me with *sanyasa* (referring to our trip to Manasarovar) and the *sanyasa mantra* emanates from these lips. I said nothing of my own accord. With whatever *bhava* you approached this body, you made it respond accordingly with that *bhava* and the accompanying *kriya* was manifested. This does not correspond to an emotion of either desire or non-desire in me."

Tonight again people sat around till it was late. Godavari has come with us and will accompany Ma to Haridwar.

December 21, Tuesday

Ma rose early today. A big crowd had already gathered for her *darshan*. Conversation was in progress. Ramtaran Babu's name was mentioned. He is a serious but very interesting person who makes profound statements. He has given Ma three names — (1) *Jnanapapi* (2) *Keotesap* (3) *Vishri Mithi Hansi*. He explained their meanings — *Keote Sap* or black serpent is a poisonous snake—once it bites, its poison cannot be removed from the body of the victim. Once a person understands Ma, he is unable to let go of her. *Jnanapapi* — because though she has all the power she does not give us anything. *Vishri mithi hansi*—explained as *Vishesha* (specially) *shri* (auspicious) *mithi* (sweet) *hansi* (smile). Ramtaran Babu always spoke in this strain. At the sight of Ma his eyes would fill with tears.

This morning I found some excerpts of the hundred names of Krishna written by Ma in her own handwriting and I read it out to all present. There were many mistakes in the script but the handwriting was beautiful. People who saw it exclaimed with great delight. The marvellous thing about Ma is that at times she can write so beautifully, and at other times she finds it difficult to even sign her name. Everything happens according

to the need of the hour. In the writing that we observed now, a word which was correctly written in one place was misspelt in another. These points were being discussed when Ma remarked, "I do not do anything as prompted by my own will, as you do; it is just as it happens at any time."

In the afternoon Ma was speaking to her devotees. A great number of people had gathered; Kumud Bhattacharya arrived. The topic of peace was raised — how can one get peace? Ma said, "When remoteness ends, peace is acquired. As long as you feel that He is remote, you experience the lack of peace." One person said, "Ma, I understand everything, but I am unable to do anything." Ma laughed and replied, "Baba, it is not understood properly. Had it been understood, *karma* itself would have revealed it." How can it be understood? In reply to this question Ma said, "Blind faith. Work as per your Guru's instructions. You will gain everything by the power of the Guru. Faith is blind — faith has no eyes."

A variety of attitudes from a variety of people are revealed when they gather in Ma's presence. Ma also responds with a reply in accordance with the attitude of the person and placates him. All people are delighted with Ma's words; many forget to eat and drink as they sit near her. At ten p.m. people rose to leave. Tomorrow Ma will leave for Haridwar at ten a.m. According to her orders I shall set out for Calcutta. Bholanath is also going to Calcutta for the *shradha* ceremony of Dadamoshai. When we were on our way to Tarapeeth in a bullock cart, Ma had explained the essence of Krishna's nature. Seeing a cow she explained, "See, a cow is an animal — that is to say, it has the attributes of an animal. What does the protector of those attributes do? He looks after the cows in such a way that they yield the maximum amount of milk. Milk is white and white signifies *sattva guna* (good qualities)".

"Tendencies have also to be nurtured in such a way that they yield *sattva guna*. Then, when churned, the *sattva guna*

yields its essence — butter. Where was the consequence of the butter? The consequence lies in Paramatma and hence the thief of this butter is Krishna. Now if you call Paramatma 'you' or 'me', it is essentially the same thing."

"Consider again the cowherdesses. What were they? Ten indriyas (senses) and six enemies (*shadripus*) make sixteen. The truth that superimposes the sixteen, which is of the essence of One — that essence (*Rasa*) is called *Rishi*. What did the *rishis* do? I have heard from you that during the incarnation of Rama, they had wished to worship Him as their husband. Rama said, 'Not now — in my incarnation as Krishna I shall satisfy your desire.' The 'One — essence' thus stood near Rama desiring the 'Union — essence'. At that time, without attraction, that essence (*rasa*) could not be established. That is why you people say that when the Rishis desired Rama as their husband he replied, 'When Krishna comes your desire will be fulfilled'. I have also heard you all say that Krishna Himself is attraction (*Akarshan*). Only when Rama is approached does attraction arrive; therefore the desire to acquire Rama as a husband rose in the minds of the Rishis."

"You all narrate the advent of *Leela* with the advent of Krishna. That *rasa* is the one which gives rise to *leela*. Therefore on performing the *Katyayani puja* the worshipper crosses the boundary separating the worshipper from the worshipped and becomes worthy of *leela*. *Leela* is said to be everlasting and indeed it is so." Having said so much Ma laughed and remarked, "I talk gibberish! Who played a part in that *leela*? The cowherdesses. Who are the cowherdesses? The same One — essence (*Ek-rasa*). I have heard you all say that the Rishis themselves came as the cowherdesses. That is a topic that is beyond sensory knowledge and therefore it is not understandable through worldly emotions. That supernatural sport, the *leela rasa*, is hidden (*gupta*) to those trapped in sensory desires — they are, therefore, called *gopinis*

(cowherdresses) and they are entitled to this *leela rasa*."

Laughing again, Ma continued, "Alright, look at it this way — outwardly it appears that the cowherds looked after the cows. Why were the cowherds called *gopas*? Because butter is present in its subtle form in milk and is not normally visible and these *gopas* reveal this hidden (*gupta*) substance, therefore they are called *gopas*." So saying Ma laughed like a child — Another such crazy thought came into my mind so I said it out aloud.

December 22, Wednesday

Ma will set out at ten a.m. today. People started arriving in the early hours of the morning. One lady said to Ma, "Ma, you are always surrounded by crowds and you are hardly able to rest, yet you are not fatigued. You are always immersed in an ocean of bliss. How can such a *bhava* be achieved?" Ma replied, "Alright child — imagine you are in a house occupied by many people. If you were to talk to them or sit with them, you wouldn't find it troublesome, would you? Again, see — this body has hands, feet and other limbs. Whenever necessary one exerts a limb for a particular purpose and does not experience any trouble in doing so." Saying this Ma laughed. I do not know whether anyone understood the import of this great *bhava* expressed by Ma but the lady who had questioned Ma was very happy to hear the reply.

Having taken leave of all present, Ma left Kashi at eleven a.m. and set out for Haridwar. By four p.m. I set out for Calcutta along with Bholanath.

December 23, Thursday

We reached Calcutta at nine a.m. and went to Yatish Dada's house. After a meal I went to the Birla temple to visit Didima. Swami Akhandananda has been staying at the Birla temple as per Ma's instructions. Dadamoshai's *shraddha* is to

be performed on Sunday. I heard from Didima that Dadamoshai was fully conscious and was repeating the Name as he gave up his body in Calcutta. Others informed me that Didima had sung the Name loudly during those moments.

January 1, Saturday, 1938

I have not received any significant news about Ma. Dadamoshai's *shraddha* ceremony was performed elaborately on December 26th 1937, Sunday. Bholanath and other devotees completed the rituals without encountering any obstacles. Didima remains calm and composed the way she has been all this time. She also helped in all the work as much as she could.

News about Ma has just arrived. She went to Dehradun for some time and then returned to Haridwar. Bhramar, Navataru Dada and others have gone to meet Ma during their winter holidays. On Ma's instructions, Yogesh Dada left Uttar Kashi a few days ago to come to Calcutta to meet his mother and brothers; then he returned to Dehradun. Now he is with Ma at Haridwar. There is no further news.

We are in Calcutta. Sangya Devi had come one day; she narrated the following incident. "One day Ma heard me say that some Mataji had cursed a person due to some provocation. On hearing this she laughed and said, 'See, whom shall I curse? If my finger nails scratch my body, can I curse the finger nails? Whatever I see all around is That. There is nothing other than the One. Whom shall I curse?'"

This *bhava* is often expressed by Ma. I have also heard this kind of expression from Ma many times. Today when I heard about this *advaita bhava* revealed by Ma from another person, I was thrilled. Such instances never become old. We believe Ma to be human and just play with her. We do not have the power to absorb even a drop of her knowledge. Sometimes when assailed by such thoughts my mind feels defeated — it certainly did so today. A limitless ocean stretches ahead of us

but we have not the strength to absorb even a drop of water. This is why Ma often says, "His grace showers down incessantly, but who cares to take it?"

On December 18, 1937, Ma had narrated an incident. The discussion concerned Dadamoshai. Swami Akhandananda and I were usually with Ma most of the time but on our way to Kashi from Tarapeeth Ma had told Swamiji to stay in Calcutta — in fact this had been decided upon before we had left Tarapeeth. Ma was conversing with all present at the Vardhaman station, waiting for the arrival of the train.

In the midst of the conversation Ma suddenly rose and in a somewhat strange manner addressed Akhandananda. The gist of what she said was what she often explained about there being many paths to reach the same destination, but she delineated the matter with different expressions — "Look, just as you attain Kashi even if you die on the way to Kashi — this is what you people say — similarly, if you begin any good deed you reap the merits of that deed even even if you are unable to accomplish it." Ma often says, "If you try to keep any good desire alive in your mind, then He gets it fulfilled some time or the other, but it may not always be revealed outwardly."

Ma told Akhandananda, "When you reach Calcutta, visit your Dadamoshai." May be many others would not have returned from Vardhaman and gone to Dadamoshai's residence the same night, but Akhandananda, in obedience to Ma's instructions, went to Calcutta and visited Dadamoshai only to find that he had left his body a little while ago.

Many people had gone from Calcutta to Vardhaman to meet Ma and they had decided to return to Calcutta only after the departure of Ma's train. Only Surendranath Bandopadhyaya did not want to travel so late in the night with his daughter Nani; as he wanted to leave early he went to pay obeisance to Ma. Ma told Akhandananda, "You also go with him." Surendra Babu said, "Come, I shall drop you by car." But Ma's train was not

due for some time and Akhandananda did not wish to leave Ma even for those few moments. Ma said nothing further, for she never categorically orders anyone to do anything. Swamiji was unable to understand this indication from Ma. After speaking to him, Ma returned to the bench amidst the devotees. Ma had spoken to Akhandananda alone — she expresses only what is necessary for each person. I write this because I heard about it later from Ma. The train arrived on time and we left for Kashi.

In Kashi Ma narrated, "While I was speaking to all the people at Vardhaman station, your Dadamoshai's picture in *sannyasa bhava* (attitude of renunciation) materialized before me. Do you know how? Just as clearly as I can see you now! The mother of this body had said that the father of this body had left home twice before seeing this body. The elder sister of this body has revealed that he (Dadamoshai) had once even donned the saffron robes — once before he got married and once after. People had forced him to return home after which this body arrived." Ma continued, "That *samskara* of his appeared before me."

Later on when I began feeding Ma in the train at ten p.m., Ma accepted a morsel and then suddenly lay down. Ma said, "Do you know what I was seeing then? Just as in your cinema, I could visualize everything clearly. See, there was your Dadamoshai's body and above that was another body joined to it. Do you know what the form of the other body was? It looked as if it was made out of smoke and white light." Indicating her own body Ma continued, "This body was also present there. Just as *mantras* and other incantations emanate spontaneously from this body, similarly such *sannyas* — connected *mantras* were uttered in front of the shadow like form. Then that shadow like form gradually thinned out and seemed to merge into the surrounding air. Do you know how? Just as a drop of milk, put into water, spreads gradually and finally merges in the water. Again, like the smoke from a cigarette or a *bidi* which is visible

clearly at first but then gradually disappears into the air. This was very similar, but no example is identical in all aspects, is it?"

Hearing about this incident I commented, "Ma, I observe now that this was a special occurrence with respect to your father." Ma replied, "See, I do nothing. This body responds to your requirements, doing whatever you people make it do. Then how is it a special occurrence? Just as I speak to you all and just as this body spoke to its father — so was that. I regard them all as being of the same nature. Why do you consider it to be special in any way?"

So saying Ma laughed in her own sweet way like a little child and looked at me. What could I say in response to that? To her it is all the same, but to us it is something very special indeed — how can I explain that to her? That for which *yogis* and *rishis* aspire through years of intense penances, is as simple and straightforward as laughter and play for Ma. Again Ma keeps saying, "I know nothing." Even in her knowing nothing she is illumined.

January 4, Tuesday

The winter holidays having come to an end, Bhramar has returned to Calcutta from Ma's place. Hearing this I went in the morning to meet her. Bhramar told me that on the very next day of reaching Haridwar, Ma went to Dehradun for a day and left Godavari there before returning to Haridwar. At that time Bhramar went to Haridwar for Ma's darshan. The next day Ma went to Lakshman Jhula with Bhramar, Ruma Devi and Yogesh Brahmachari; there they stayed in a *dharmashala* on the banks of the Ganga for five or six days before returning to Rishikesh. They stayed one night at the Kali Kamlivale *dharmashala* and came to Haridwar the following morning. As there was some inconvenience in staying at the Nanki Bai *dharmashala* Ma arranged for Nishi Babu and Mashima to stay elsewhere. Ma

stayed in Haridwar for a day and then went to Dehradun. Nishi Babu and Mashima stayed on in Haridwar but the others accompanied Ma to Dehradun. On the same night Bhramar left for Calcutta. So, since Saturday January 1st, Ma is at Dehradun in the ashram — there is no special news other than this.

I heard that Ma's health is just the way it was. In Haridwar one day a *sadhu* suddenly appeared at the door and declared, "Ma, my fever has not come down for the past many days." The same night Ma had slight fever which lasted for two days. From Ma's words Bhramar inferred that the *sadhu's* fever had been taken over by Ma. Ma had forbidden Bhramar to write about her fever saying, "Do not write about this fever to anyone. If the news reached far off places it will needlessly become a big issue." I was amused to hear this.

January 8, Saturday

Today we reached Dhaka.

January 14, Friday

Today Bholanath will install the foundation of the new *yajna mandir*. The king has donated the funds for the construction of this temple. People keep coming to the ashram to hear about Ma from us.

January 21, Friday

Today Bholanath left for Haridwar. We moved to the Siddeshwari Ashram. This time Bholanath was a source of great joy to us all. He danced like a child while singing *bhajan* and often took us all to the *kirtan* hall to sing *kirtan*. Though he does not have much knowledge of melody, rhythm and beat, he sang such excellent *kirtan* that everybody enjoyed the sessions thoroughly. Little children were his companions and he spent a lot of time with them. With his white matted locks, the white beard extending to his navel, wearing silken saffron clothes,

his tall person appeared striking. He sang a couple of songs ecstatically and was greatly appreciated by all.

1. ami je bhai mayer chhele
je amare bhoy dekhabe
ami abar bhoy kori kay ?
ami bole debo may.
2. nobo sojol jolodhor kay
rotori nupur pay (mayer)
hashite hashite danob nashiche
rudhir legeche gay (mayer).
3. putul bajir putul amra
jemon nachano temon nachi
jekhon boshan tokhon bosi
jekhon uthan tokhon uthi.

The meaning :-

- (1) I am, O Brother, the son of Ma. Then whom should I fear? Whosoever frightens me, I shall tell Ma about him.
- (2) With a body dark as a new moisture filled cloud, vermilion on her forehead, bells around her waist, bejewelled anklets on her feet, Ma smilingly destroys demons and her body is stained with their blood.
- (3) In this puppet show we are the puppets. We dance as she makes us dance, we sit when she makes us sit and stand when we are made to stand.
I received news that Ma is still at the Dehradun ashram.

January 29, Saturday

Bholanath has gone to Delhi from Dehradun. Hariram Joshi wrote from Dehradun to say that the Raja and Rani of Solan went to Dehradun for ten days to stay with Ma. On January 23rd Ma went to Raipur accompanied by Maharatan, her daughter Vimala, Ruma Devi and many ladies from Almora who had gone to Dehradun to see Ma and many others.

February 1, Tuesday

Today we are leaving for Calcutta. As per Ma's orders we stayed in Dhaka for the past so many days and now we are setting out for Calcutta again.

February 2, Wednesday

This morning when we reached Calcutta we got the news that Ma had fever. In the evening we received a letter from Bholanath giving a detailed description of Ma's condition. Having received a letter from Yogesh *Brahmachari* Bholanath had left from Delhi to join Ma at Raipur. He wrote that Ma continued to have fever which had started when Bhramar met Ma in Rishikesh. The fever develops after every two days. As Ma had forbidden everyone from mentioning it, we had received no information about her indisposition till now. Ma's body has become very weak. Though we learnt about Ma's illness we are unable to join her as she has not permitted us to go. We have to stay on in Calcutta to finish some work.

February 7, Monday

Today we received another letter from Bholanath. After much pleading Ma has been brought to the Dehradun ashram and her fever has abated slightly.

February 10, Thursday

Bholanath's letter that arrived today informed us that Ma's fever rose to 105 degrees and that she was extremely weak. So Dr. Shome was called and he took her blood for examination. He will prescribe some medicine after seeing the report. About the treatment Ma said, "You people can do whatever you like." Bholanath was very upset to see Ma so ill and therefore he decided to call the doctor.

February 14, Monday

We went to Puri for two days and returned today.

Bholanath's letter revealed that Dr. Shome could not diagnose anything from Ma's blood report and therefore he did not prescribe any medicine. Bholanath is also undecided about whether or not to give any medicine. The fever continues in the same pattern. Every two days the fever comes on rapidly and lasts for six or seven hours. On being requested to pacify the illness Ma replied, "Why do you dislike this fever? Just as you all come to me so also does the fever. It sports within this body. I feel no discomfort, in fact there is only joy." Bholanath is very worried about Ma's condition.

February 16, Wednesday

Today we left for Kashi. Devotees are very worried about Ma but no one here has had the chance to go to Ma because of other occupations. "Kumbha" festival is nearing. Some people have decided to go to Dehradun to touch Ma's feet on the occasion.

February 17, Thursday

Today we reached Kashi and halted at Hari's *dharmashala*. Belu and Nidhu are with us and will be going to see Ma.

February 20, Sunday

Yesterday we received a letter from Yatish Dada. He wrote, "Your Ma's fever continues just as before. The fever refuses to abate. No medication has been given and Ma's body has become very weak. Your Ma reached Haridwar at seven p.m. yesterday. We have all arrived at the *dharmashala* in which Nishi Babu and others are staying."

Today we received Bholanath's letter in the afternoon. He has asked us to proceed to Haridwar and has written that Ma's condition continues the way it was. She is very anaemic and weak. Civil Surgeon Pitambar Pant of Itawa has gone to Haridwar on leave and has started treating Ma. We decided to leave on February 25th to join Ma.

February 23, Wednesday

We reached Haridwar in the morning. This *dharmashala* is situated a mile above Bhimgoda, on the way to Rishikesh. We found that Ma has become very weak. Her heart is not in good condition. With the slightest sound, her heart beats wildly and her hands and feet grow cold. Bholanath told us that Ma's condition had become very worrying from the past two days. It is now eight or nine days since Ma came to Haridwar and her fever is now two months old. Ma has been taking medicines for some days now. From the day that the medication was started she has been bed ridden. Before that, though she had fever, Ma had been going about and conversing with people as usual. The doctor said, "Ma, I have never seen a patient like this in my life. Ma, my medicine can be nothing. How can I treat your body ? Please decide to get well. This is my prayer." Ma has also said, "When I have had medicine I must display all signs of a patient. That is why I have taken to the bed after starting to take medicines. That is bound to happen. Whatever happens has to happen in its entirety."

With the start of medication, unusual *yogic kriya* began manifesting in Ma's body. At times the illness seemed to get worse, but when the *yogic kriya* started the illness began to recede gradually. This time again, who can tell whether it is the *yogic kriya* or the medicine that cured the fever ? Ma alone knows. When we see this unusual *kriya* we feel over awed. It is true that the fever abated when Ma started to take the medicine, but at the same time Ma had the *kheyal* that now that the fever was gone, should not the heart begin to palpitate ? As she remembered that, her heart started palpitating. And now that is continuing.

The doctor lost his wife long ago; he has not remarried since, nor does he have any children. On the banks of the Ganga in Haridwar, he has a big house. He has been requesting Ma to go there for the past one year, but Ma has not been there

as yet. We heard that he has now called the house, "Anandamayi Sevashram" and is involved in its running. He still wants Ma to go there. He has just got his pension and come to Haridwar.

When Ma has set out alone with Virajmohini Didi, she had halted for sometime in Itawa. When she had a stomach upset, this same doctor had been to see her. He had arrived with medicines as soon as he had been told about Ma's condition. At that time Ma had said, "Let it be for now. If at any time I desire to have medicines, I shall take them from you alone for the first time." By a turn of events, Ma developed fever in Dehradun. After Dr. Shome examined Ma's blood, the question of medication was raised. At that stage Pitambar Pant was remembered and surprisingly we received information that he had retired and settled down in Haridwar some time back. Ma then told Bholanath, "Let us go to Haridwar now." At Haridwar Ma partook of medicine for the first time from Pitambar Pant.

The doctor said, "Ma, your body is not like that of an ordinary mortal. I cannot decide on what kind of medicine to give such a body. If you do not assume a *bhava* for better health of your own accord, there is nothing we can do." Ma replied, "Do you know what this body is like? All the knots inside have been untied—therefore whichever disease attacks manifests itself in its entirety. The knots have been untied right down to the roots of every hair. So the diseases roam about unhindered. Again, when the medicine has been taken, it has also spread to all parts of the body. This body does not usually consume medicine, therefore it takes time for any medicine to gain control over this body." Actually, even Bholanath was not keen on administering medicines to Ma for he knew about her condition. But the people around began accusing him of not getting Ma's illness properly treated, saying that she had been suffering for so long only because of his neglect. Compelled by such talk, Bholanath agreed to having Ma treated. Another special occurrence was that Bholanath saw Ma drinking

medicine in his dream. Therefore he finally agreed to giving her medicine.

Today again Ma said that when a *sadhu* had spoken to her in Dehradun about medicine she had replied, "Look, you people are *vedantic sanyasis*. Your attitude towards everything must be the same. Why do you dislike fever ? Why do you want to chase it away ? I do not chase you people away when you come to me. Why then should I turn away fever ? It does not trouble me in the least." The *vedantic sanyasi* replied, "Ma, it is difficult to maintain that attitude when one is sick!"

Nishi Babu, Mashi, Ruma Devi, Maharatan, Bhola (Abhay), Godavari and many others are here. Mankeshwar Raina's wife and daughter have accompanied us from Faizabad.

February 24, Thursday

Sharada and Lakshmi arrived from Dehradun today. We have reserved many rooms in the *dharmashala*. Everybody is worried about Ma.

February 25, Friday

Ma's state of health continues as before. Last night I sat for a long time near Ma. At five thirty a.m. this morning she told me, "Just call Bholanath here." I did so. Ma said something to him and he went out immediately. Later I learnt that Ma had sent Bholanath to Dr. Pitamber's house.

Dr. Pitamber had been inviting Ma to his house on the Ganges shore but Ma had not gone so far. Yesterday again he repeatedly requested Ma, "Ma, please come to that house. It is on the banks of the Ganga; the breeze from the river will definitely cure your bodily ailment." Ma had not said much in response to this.

This morning she sent a message to Dr. Pitambar saying that she agreed with his suggestion and that she would go to his house whenever he desired. She said she was ready to go

immediately if arrangements could be made this morning. But it was a little difficult to transport Ma, for in her present condition it was not possible for her to travel by car. She would have to be carried in a stretcher. As a stretcher was not available in the morning the Doctor could not take Ma.

The Doctor came in the afternoon and found Ma's heart in a bad state. Seeing her thus we felt utterly miserable. We heard that on earlier occasions when she had been given medicines her condition had deteriorated greatly to the alarm of Bholanath and others. All signs of approaching death had appeared. Ma once commented, "Really at that time it appeared as though the *bhava* that was manifested was that of lamp being extinguished — as you people would call it. May be you all still had need for that lamp, therefore just as the flame had started to flicker it got revived and continued to burn again. That day I could perceive all the signs which appear before a body ceases to live."

Today again Bholanath and we were extremely worried on seeing Ma's condition. The Doctor's remedy had been suspended for two days. Though there was nothing to fear, Ma's heart was in a bad way. The medicine that seemed to act favourably on the first day did not appear to be effective on the second day and actually had a debilitating reaction. At that stage Maharatan said, "Ma, there is no need for further medication. When the medicine is not helping in any way what is the use of taking it?"

After that the medication was discontinued. The Doctor folded his hands and told Ma, Ma, I will not give you any more medicine. Please recover your health of your own accord".

Today Ma was unable to speak and indicated that the medicine had affected her heart. She laughed and said, "It is all for the best. I always tell people to relinquish the outer world and go within. Therefore this medicine has also gone within and clasped my heart. It has happened as it should. I say —

make the outside and the inside one. Now the outside and the inside have been made one." So saying, Ma laughed.

In fact seeing Ma's condition this afternoon we were all frightened. Ma refused to even let the doctor examine her pulse, saying, "When the medicine is not being accepted by my body then what use is it for you to feel my pulse ? Whatever has to happen will happen of its own accord."

When Ma agreed, all of us accompanied her when she was carried in a stretcher to Dr. Pant's house on Harnath ghat, named after Dr. Pitambar's father. The palatial bungalow stood on the banks of the Ganga. We had initially been afraid to transport Ma even on a stretcher for her condition was so bad, but now we observed a slight improvement.

At night Ma referred to some incidents and laughed, but when I heard about the incident I was thrilled. The incidents were as follows. Ma said, "Look, what a wonderful happening! Almost like a cinema. Do you know I saw one day? A little girl's form (incident at Haridwar), with a beautiful face, entered the house and wanted to touch me. But my condition was very bad. As the girl moved forward to touch me, Nishi Babu and another man ran forward to stop her but found that they could not catch her, for she was a shadow - form. Like a flash of lightning, the girl was visible for a moment and had vanished the next instant. She could be seen here at one instant and there at the next. Finally Nishi Babu shut the door. But how would that help? The girl entered the room and stood there once again. In spite of attempts being made to stop her the girl tripped up to me, touched my feet and left. I could clearly experience that touch for a very long time."

Ma continued, "And yet another day, do you know what I saw? I was sitting still in one place, no one else was nearby. I was seated on an elevated spot covered with grass and pebbles called 'Kalyanavan'. Do you know what I saw? The gods had assembled, each with their own vehicles; they stood

with joined palms and bowed to this body. Many sages and *rishis*, *sadhus* and *sannyasins*, each in his own beautiful apparel stood in a different spot. Also clearly visible were the forms of spiritual seekers whose names are familiar, known and unknown. Some seekers came and left, while others stood where they were. Each one of them expressed his own kind of *bhava* and with this *bhava* they appeared as layers upon layers of an infinitely large ocean."

"This body was seated at a height and therefore they all looked up and bowed. This body was made up of an intensely pure and dense irradiance. This simile is not quite right. It cannot be described in words. The kind of illumination there, was very different. At that spot taking whatever..." Ma now fell silent.

Again she said, "Enveloping all, within all — 'this' — that does not sound right either. It cannot be expressed through language. Actually it is indescribable. At that very spot the words that were uttered were, '*Akhanda bhava ghana*' (unbroken, dense *bhava*). Unbroken implies encompassing all pieces, not leaving out any piece. Gods, *sadhus* and *rishis* were standing in such a formation that there was no end to their numbers. Like an ocean, as far as your gaze stretched, no end was in sight. All were near this body, steady, but this body lay on a bedding. Some *sadhus* moved about, they came to this body, touched its feet, prayed to this body and also prayed for the health of this body." Ma laughed and queried like a little child, "What kind of fun was all this that I witnessed?" Laughingly Ma looked at me.

My body had thrilled to this narration and placing my hands on Ma's feet I said, "Ma, we have just not been able to know you. Having got this opportunity we are losing it." Assuming some gravity once more Ma responded, "Such matters came up, so they were described. Keep all this to yourself. Ordinary people will not be able to fathom how true, realistic and deep

these matters are. Possibly they will be laughed at, for those people neither know nor understand these matters. Each one will express ideas according to the power that he possesses within him. After all, faith and scepticism are both natural. In all forms and expressions there is but Him." Ma added, "They are not to blame. They will speak as they understand, will they not?"

"Listen and I will tell you what I saw yesterday. I was lying down in the *dharmashala* — do not think that I was asleep and dreaming. This body feels just the same whether it is sitting, walking or lying down. You were seated nearby. It must have been around two a.m. I saw a form push you aside and seat itself between you and me. At that moment probably your *japa* had ceased and you were dozing off."

(Actually I had been repeating the Name mentally at that moment; in between my *japa* had stopped and sleepiness had overcome my mind, but I had not mentioned this to Ma.)

"That form then turned to me and asked very clearly, 'Where has room been made?' I looked towards her and said, 'Why should room be made?' On encountering my gaze the form appeared perturbed and ran away."

"At that moment I had the *kheyal* that Pitambar Doctor had requested us to go to his *sevashram* and had mentioned that the breeze from the Ganga would cure the illness. When this body had functioned according to his prescription for some time why should I not agree to this suggestion as well? The feeling arose that this body was his responsibility. May be it is necessary and therefore all this has happened. Then when morning dawned I asked you what the time was. You replied that it was five a.m. and immediately Bholanath was called to ask the doctor whether this body could possibly be transferred to the *sevashram*. But he replied that as there was no stretcher available he could not take me right then. At that moment do you know I felt? 'Where has room been made?' — that form

had questioned me thus. As soon as that thought occurred I said, 'I shall leave the place which I had occupied in this *dharmashāla* for you.' Soon after that I felt the urge to leave that spot which is why I called Bholanath early in the morning to go to the doctor."

Hearing this anecdote I was thrilled once more. This incident had taken place when Ma's health was very bad.

I said with joined palms, "Ma, if you don't desire it, who can preserve your body? It is your unbounded compassion towards us that makes you protect your body for our sake. Ma, we do not have the power to do anything. We can only pray at your feet that keeping us in mind you should continue to preserve your body in this way." Ma replied, "May be it is of use to you and therefore all this happened." At times I have heard Ma say to others, "This body has stayed on for your sake. Therefore your acquaintance has been possible."

Chapter Two

Ma in Dr. Pant's Sevashram

February 26 Saturday

Nothing of much consequence took place today. We all remain worried about Ma's heart not functioning properly. Ma stayed in bed. Doctors and others declared, "Ma, we have not been able to do anything. Now you please do something for yourself." Ma beckoned the doctor now and then and asked, "What shall I eat? How much shall I eat?" and questions to this effect. She also kept murmuring these questions to herself. In the afternoons the doors to Ma's room were kept closed for three or four hours so that she might rest. But on some days Ma just did not feel like sleeping. When the doctor requested her to rest, she lay absolutely still and did not utter a word — her body assumed a strange stance. Such was her condition.

On the first day when the doctor brought Ma from the *dharmashala* he had said, "Ma, now leave your affliction here and come to the *sevashrama*. I shall perform *kirtan* there. But now not a sound is made in that room. If a person so much as walks rapidly, Ma's heart starts racing wildly. Yet that day she was carried in a stretcher over three or four miles surrounded by the noise and the dust of the wayside. When we reached, Ma saw that the doctor was engrossed in organising the living arrangements for all of us; thinking that he might forget to perform *kirtan* after having promised to do so, she called me and said, "In order to safeguard the doctor's utterance it would be well to sing *kirtan*." On the doctor's request Bholanath called all of us into Ma's room and sang *kirtan*. Ma's condition appeared to improve as a result of the *kirtan*.

Today I heard of another incident. Earlier when Ma's condition had deteriorated some *kriya* occurred spontaneously in her body. After that the fever came down. Referring to that

event Ma said, "If all this happens of its own accord then it yields fruit. However it does not happen every time. At each moment whatever is necessary occurs." Many people arrived to see Ma. Many pilgrims have arrived in Haridwar for the 'Kumbha Mela'.

February 27, Sunday

Ma's clothes have not been changed for some days; the bedsheet on her bedding has also not been washed. This is because it has been impossible to move her. On being requested that we be allowed to change her *dhوتي* she said, "No, not now. When I can stand up and change the *dhوتي* on my own then I shall change. Why are you worrying about that? On many occasions earlier I have lived in the same clothes for days together." She also said the bedding could be changed at the same time. She has not been able to sit up as yet. Only when she stands up will she change her *dhوتي*. At one stage she even said, "Let me recover tomorrow and then we shall see."

February 28, Monday

This morning after Ma's face was washed and she was fed with some prescribed dietary food she told the doctor, "Please make me stand for awhile." He obeyed her and we made her stand up with support. While she stood her *dhوتي* was changed. She then sat for some time and also ate a little rice.

Today is the *Shivaratri* festival. Big groups of *sadhus* went to the Brahmakunda for a dip. The sound of the harmonium, incantations and invocations filled the town of Haridwar. Thousands had congregated in Haridwar for the *kumbha-mela* which was occurring after a gap of twelve years. The *sadhus* themselves are worth watching. One group consisted of *Naga sannyasins*, while *sannyasinis* (female *sadhus*) marched in another. Famous *sadhus* rode on the backs of elephants followed by their respective groups of disciples. In some places

disciples wielded staffs and swords.

This evening Bholanath sang *nama kirtan* with all of us.

March 1, Tuesday

Today Ma walked with support, went to the verandah and sat there for a long time. None of us could believe that she was capable of sitting up for she appeared so frail.

Sharada has come. We heard that for the last few days she has been experiencing beautiful *bhavas*. She had been like this for some time before Ma came to Dehradun. It is not as if she does anything with her effort. She is not able to sit for *puja* or *japa* for a long time. But once in a way she goes through these phases by entering into a trance as soon as she sits in concentration. It is also not as if she wills herself to sit down; she feels compelled to do so. This *bhava* takes place within. One day when she touched Ma she entered into a trance. As long as she is engaged in doing outward jobs, she is not overcome to that extent; the moment she sits still for awhile, knowledge of the outer world disappears.

On *Shivaratri* day, that is yesterday, Ma sent Swami Akhandananda to Mangalananda Giri's *ashram* in Kankhal saying, "You are a *sannyasin*. Join the group of *sannyasins* and take the ritual bath." He departed as per Ma's orders.

One fact is worth noting. Ma's condition was such that if anyone spoke loudly or walked in her room her heart would be affected immediately and would start pulsating rapidly. So much so that even if she opened her eyes, the view of the outside world seemed to make her heart ache. Though she was in that condition it had been decided that she would be carried on a stretcher through the noise and dust of a three mile journey; yet she showed no change for the worse. During the journey we could not perceive any difference in her condition; in fact she said she was alright. Then, day before, when she asked to be helped to sit up, it was done, but she lay down

soon after. Yesterday she asked to be made to stand up and stood for a few minutes. Then in the afternoon she sat up for two and a half hours on her own. Today she walked to the verandah and sat for five or six hours. She also sat up a number of times later on. She said to herself, "The breath is turned upward and cannot be lowered. Do you know why that is so ? The pace of breathing has become so. In that condition an ordinary man would not be alive. Because of that the breath is now continuing upward."

I heard from the respected Nishikant Mitra — "After taking medicine the fever lasted only for a day. On the next day there was no fever. On that day some *kriya* occurred spontaneously in Ma's body. Seeing Ma's *kriya* I felt that Ma would bid farewell to the fever."

At twelve noon everyday the doctor has been shutting Ma's door to let her rest. The door is opened again at four p.m. Today also this was observed. Some people came to meet Ma. She lay down for some time, sat up in between and conversed with all who came. At night the lights were switched off at ten p.m.

Ma lay down. I sat near her. The room was in darkness. All at once Ma laughed like a child and said, "Khukuni, did I tell you that day about the vision of Rama, Krishna, various gods and *rishis* that I had witnessed?" I laughed a little and asked, "What had you said?" Laughing in the same way Ma said, "I was seated at a higher level!" I asked, "Did you not say, 'Those people pointed upward, folded their palms together and did *pranama*'?" Ma also laughed lightly and said, "I had said that they were addressing this body." Now speaking with the simplicity of a child she continued, "I don't know what it is. You people remember anything that I say at any time. I blurted out whatever had happened and whatever I had seen. Whoever was seen, that one spoke, then that one also heard."

Ma continued, "Look, when you speak about this, do you

know what some will think? They will say Ma was running a fever every two days. The fever had affected her brain which is why she saw such visions." Ma laughed in her own sweet way. Sitting there I observed Ma's wonderful *bhava*, her beautiful smile and was enchanted. I felt there was no end to Ma's *bhavas* — they seemed infinite, limitless. Everything about them was beautiful and sweet.

Again Ma said, "Do you know how I saw them ? Just as I see you all in this day to day world — alive and real — exactly that way." Ma fell silent. Then she murmured to herself, "You watch yourself. You speak to yourself. You criticize yourself. You know yourself. Whatever is referred to as 'I' is the same as 'you' ."

March 2, Wednesday

This morning, after she had eaten the recommended diet, Ma went to the verandah overlooking the Ganga and sat there. She had walked up and down on her own and after lunch; in the afternoon she again walked for some time. Then at twelve noon she was made to lie down and the doors of her room were shut.

In connection with the piece (*khanda*) and the unbroken whole (*Akhanda*) Ma had said, "See, there can never be an unbroken whole without the piece. All the pieces are within the whole. Again, that which I refer to as the piece (*khanda*) and that which I call the whole (*akhanda*) are only so many words needed to explain. That kind of question does not arise in that place."

At four p.m. Ma sat up on her bedding; then the door was opened. Some people had come for Ma's *darshan*. Ma began speaking to them slowly. By dusk Ma was made to lie down. Till ten p.m. some people sat near Ma. Then as per the doctor's orders, as on previous days, every body left and the lights were switched off. The doctor had arranged to keep the doors of

Ma's room shut from twelve to four p.m. so that she could rest. Again after ten p.m. she was kept in solitude. This routine was being adhered to over the past few days.

March 3, Thursday

At seven a.m. as soon as Ma opened her eyes I washed her face and made her eat some food. Ma lay down and spoke to those present. Tarananda Swami had come to Haridwar from Vaidyanath. He arrived and chatted with Ma for some time. Other *sadhus* who were acquainted with Ma also came to meet her. At eleven a.m. Ma was usually fed rice but to day she was fed with *roti* and vegetable. She remained seated after lunch. Hariram had come. Again by twelve p.m. the door was closed. Ma walked for some time and then lay down.

Today Akhandananda Swami is going to Mirzapur on some work connected with the Vindhyachal ashram. Maharatan left for Bareilly today.

At four p.m. the doors were opened. After Ma had eaten a little food she was made to sit on an easy chair. The doctor, a *sannyasi* and four or five of us were seated in front of Ma. All the shutters of the windows facing the Ganga had been opened. The topic of *asana* was discussed. Ma asked Abhay (Bhola), "Do you still perform *asana*?" Abhay replied, "No Ma, I don't perform *asanas* nowadays." Ma asked, "Why?" and thus the topic of *asana* came up. Ma said, "*Asana* occurs according to the *bhava*. Each *asana* has a dominant *bhava* associated with it — just as one kind of *asana* is assumed while eating. Lying down while sleeping is yet another *asana*. Then while contemplating on sense objects a particular *kriya* or *asana* manifests in the body and accordingly the pace of breathing also changes. By looking at such a person it becomes evident that he is absorbed in contemplating sense objects. By sitting in that posture his contemplation of sense objects is aided which is why he has acquired that stance while sitting. Similarly

during spiritual contemplation also *asanas* are assumed of their own accord. *Kumbhaka* (holding in the breath), *Rechaka* (breathing out) and *Puraka* (breathing in) all occur spontaneously. When *asanas* occur thus of their own accord then it must be understood that the knot (of *samsara*) has been loosened."

Then another topic came up. The doctor said, "A certain person has written that if one sits in solitude with a pure mind and contemplates on the thought, 'Who am I?'" for some time, then knowledge blossoms forth within him spontaneously. I have been trying that for two months now, but I don't understand anything."

Ma commented, "The same arrangement does not hold good for everybody, does it?"

The doctor continued, "In Itawa Ma had once told me to repeat the Name.* The surprising thing was that on the first day when I sat down to say Ram Ram I saw that just as little balls of wheat are thrown to fish to eat, I seemed to be throwing the Name and a swan kept eating it. Later I reflected, 'What was it that I had seen?' Perhaps I did not possess the requisite purity of *bhava* and therefore I had this vision. The next day I bathed, sat on a stone platform under a tree and repeated the Name, 'Ram Ram'. That day I saw a light with the letter '*ra*' in the centre, but I could not see the letter '*ma*'. So I shut my eyes and turned my head around in an effort to see the letter '*ma*'. At that point my concentration broke. The vision of this *bhava* came about only because I sat down to practise meditation as Ma had instructed."

Ma went in and lay down after all the above conversation. Bhramar, Belu, a girl named Vilas and I were seated near Ma in her room. In connection with the doctor's vision of the syllable '*ra*' Ma said, "Listen, A man once heard that if one lakh

*Ma tells everyone to repeat the Name in this fashion — take His Name, say Ram Ram or Hari Hari, whatever you like. Ma does not tell anyone to repeat any particular Name.

japa is done in this fashion, an experience of this kind is bound to be felt within a certain period of time. So he sat down to practise. Do you know what happened after that? He began repeating the Name. Then hearing the sound of a lizard he thought that his experience was about to begin, He finished his one lakh *japa* in this fashion but could experience nothing. His *japa* was not fruitful at all because his mind was absorbed in listening for sounds all around and also because of his anxiety to have that experience. That is why it is said, 'Keep going on the path, do not look for the fruit. If you halt on the way to calculate your progress you fall back only to waste that much time. Go forward, therefore, with one pointed attention'."

At ten p.m. the lights were turned off.

March 4, Friday

Ma woke at seven thirty a.m. and was fed as usual. Tarananda Swami, who had been invited for *bhiksha*, came from Vaidyanath Dham. He is a worshipper of Tara Mata.

At twelve noon the door of Ma's room was shut. Ma kept absolutely quiet at that time. She had said, "Whatever is done at any time must be done perfectly." Even if anyone spoke she would not utter a sound; but lay very still. She obeyed all instructions given to her like a child, with the appropriate *bhava*. At some later time this may all get reversed.

At four p.m. the door was opened. Devotees had prepared a meal for Ma and brought it. They fed her with their own hands. After she had eaten, other devotees arrived one or two at a time for Ma's *darshan*. She wanted to hear Bhramar's *kirtan*, so Bhramar sang and the others joined her. *Kirtan* went on till the evening.

Before the *kirtan* started Tarananda Swami arrived with a *brahmachari* disciple. Ma had met this *brahmachari* in Vaidyanath. He was a young Punjabi. The glow of spiritual practice shone on his countenance. He respected Ma greatly.

Wearing a loin cloth and a copper coloured cloth on his fair skin, he looked very handsome. Referring to his devotion to his Guru, Ma said, "This kind of devotion to the Guru, this total dedication in the service of the Guru is not found often now." We heard that after having studied and practised for some years he has now set out on his own. On seeing his state his Guru himself had given him instructions to leave home. I was very happy to see the divine expression on this young *brahmachari's* face. Moreover, having heard about his qualities from Ma, I was enchanted. The Guru and the disciple stayed for some time and then left; after dusk the others also departed.

Doctor and some of us were seated near Ma. The condition of Ma's heart has improved. In the course of conversation Ma said, "Look, once a person had said to me, 'Ma, seeing you in such an elevated state if someone feels jealous, will he suffer?' I had replied, 'There is a good side to that also. That feeling of jealousy can lead him to progress. For instance the feeling that he can also improve may arise within him. So that though he began by feeling jealous the resulting emotion may actually lead to his welfare. That is why I say that there is good in everything and that this body can never harm anyone'."

In the night Ma spoke to the doctor on many issues. At ten p.m. lights were switched off.

March 5, Saturday

A few days ago Ma had said, "You must repeat the Name morning and night. Let us see if this heart gets well or not." So saying she had laughed. Ma makes such statements every now and then just to coax people to repeat the Name. But we do not find the time to repeat the Name regularly, even twice a day. Early in the morning Bhramar arrived and sat down to do *nama kirtan*. We joined her. Ma sat on her bedding and listened. *Kirtan* went on till seven thirty a.m. I got restless

because I felt that it was getting late for Ma's morning repast. Noticing this Ma said, "The repast can come later. Now keep singing the Name." And so it was. Ma was fed only when the sun was high up in the sky.

Ofcourse I understood that it was the Name that sustained Ma's body rather than external nourishment. We have received many proofs of this, yet we fail to understand.

After lunch the door of Ma's room was closed. At four p.m. when the doors were again opened many people arrived for Ma's *darshan*. *Kirtan* was sung at dusk. Yogesh Dada had come from Dehradun and he sang *nama kirtan* for some time. Abhay (Bhola) sings beautifully. He is but a child and his singing is endearing. He also sang '*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare*'. Bhramar and the rest of us joined in the singing. Bholanath also sang *kirtan*.

After *kirtan* was over the same topic arose for discussion. Some one had told Ma, "Ma, some people feel jealous on seeing you; that must be harmful for them." Ma commented on this, "This jealousy can lead to a desire for self improvement. Again, however it may occur, if the thought of something true comes into one's mind, then truth blossoms. Even in such a situation this body is engaged in some service. This body never harms anyone." So saying Ma laughed.

Today Bhramar will leave for Calcutta. Bholanath, hearing of the illness of his brother Reverend Kamini Kumar, is also leaving for Calcutta. At ten p.m. after their departure the doors of Ma's room were closed.

March 6, Sunday

This morning Ma rose and went to the bathroom. After her hands and face were washed the doctors arrived. Ma said to him, "Son, I had not asked you but I went to the bathroom today." Ma laughed. The Doctor joined his palms and said, "Ma, if you so desire you can do anything. There is no need to

ask me." Ma gives everyone due respect in this manner. As written earlier the Doctor shuts the doors of Ma's room for four hours everyday so that she gets rest and she lies down quietly without speaking. In any worldly transaction Ma does not leave anything undone. That is the reason why householders, *sanyasins*, women and men love Ma so much. Two or three *sanyasins* visit Ma almost everyday and they revere her greatly.

This morning again *kirtan* was sung. In the afternoon two gentlemen belonging to these parts came from Dehradun with fruits and flowers. They said, "Ma, we were very much upset by your illness." Ma is loved by all. After they left two *sadhus* came to enquire about Ma's health. At eleven thirty Ma was offered *bhoga*. All did *pranam* and rose to leave. The Doctor stands near Ma while she eats and did so today. After lunch the doors were shut. This morning Ma said, "The *kheyal* to say every thing is not there at all times. That day I had mentioned about seeing Rama, Krishna and other forms in Kalyanavana. Do you know about another incident that had occurred? '*Akhanda Bhavaghan*'. Each *bhava* is personified by one form. Like Krishna is for attraction, the *ramya rasa* (pleasantness) is attributed to Rama, in just that way from the *akhanda bhava* (unbrokenness) to the *ananta bhava* (infiniteness) within and without, these kinds of infinite forms are manifested — they are eternally present. That is why I said there was no end to these forms — they are infinite and limitless like the ocean. Who says all this? Who hears it?" Ma fell silent for some time after this. Then she continued, "It is all the manifestation of One." She laughed and said, "Why is all this seen or revealed? Do you gain from just hearing about it? Aren't there many kinds of occurrences?" I replied, "Ma may be you are expressing what *akhanda bhava* is from experience. But that *bhava* cannot be revealed through language. Perhaps, therefore, in order to make us understand at least a little you are telling us about

these *bhavas* and these forms." Ma said, "I don't know why you people make this body utter all this. Before this such talk has not been heard uttered by anyone else about that which has actually been witnessed — you have made these lips utter some of them. If you want to call it a cinema, then think that it is a cinema, what can be done ? Whatever happens is alright." So saying Ma assumed a serious expression.

Another topic arose next, "Why do diseases reside within Ma's body for so long ? Why does she not chase them away?" Biren had come from Delhi to see Ma and he made these queries. Ma replied, "Look, the *kheyal* that I have is that all belong to this body. Whatever you people may call them — diseases or sorrows, they are all within this body. Like the arms, legs and other limbs. Therefore there is no question of chasing them away. Do you ever say — 'chase away the arms, drive away the legs, or away with the head'? Just as the body cannot survive without these, it is so in this case as well, nothing else. I say to you house holders — whatever diseases and sorrows come to you, treat them like guests. Considering them to be guests, take a little trouble; bearing the suffering is a strength which is but this power. Just as guests mean a little extra work and perhaps a little inconvenience to the householder which he considers his duty to put up with cheerfully, so must you bear with the illness — personified — guest placidly." She said this and laughed sweetly. All those present were charmed by Ma's *bhava*. The state in which such utterances occur naturally is beyond our wildest imagination.

In the course of conversation I observed, "Trying to reveal your state in language and words leaves much incomplete. For instance, at times there is mention of your desire whereas you have no desires nor do you have the intention to perform any action." Ma said, "It cannot be said that there is no desire and no intention (*sankalpa*). What is and what is not — that is enough." So saying she ended the topic. I understood that

whatever is expressed in words will always be incomplete. Such *bhava* cannot be expressed through the medium of language. However, whatever has been seen, or heard from Ma, whatever has been understood has already been penned earlier. Ma says, "May be I see that this body has stood up and then I say — 'I shall go'. Before that there was no desire to leave at all. Probably there was no decision about where I would go either. In the same way, eating with my hands also came to a stop." Feeling that everything cannot be revealed through language Ma often leaves a subject incomplete and saying, 'Enough', she brings the topic to a close. Ma says, "In whichever way I express it, it will fall short of the truth. All matters cannot be explained through language."

This afternoon again Ma lay down. A boy named Dasu, seventeen or eighteen years old, has come from Chittagong. His mother had handed him over in Ma's care as she had been unable to keep him at home. Dasu had first seen Ma in Chittagong. Now they were considering sending him to Delhi for education. Yogesh *brahmachari* was to take him there. Devotees in Delhi had hired a flat to perform *kirtans* and other spiritual practices there. As per Ma's orders Sadhan had gone to Delhi for some time. Knowing that Ma had sent him, the devotees looked upto him with great regard and affection. Dasu would now be sent to him.

Yesterday Biren Bandopadhyaya came from Delhi. He wanted to take Ma to Delhi for the Holi Purnima festival but Ma's body is still very weak so she will not go. All were told to assemble here and sing *kirtan* in Ma's presence. The Doctor also expressed great joy about this. Biren Babu will leave tomorrow accompanied by Yogesh *brahmachari* and Dasu. At four p.m. the Rajmata of Solan arrived. She loves listening to kirtan. Biren Babu, Yogesh Dada and all of us sang *nama kirtan* for her for a long time. At dusk they all left.

Some people sat near Ma and conversed with her. It is said

that when Ma's condition had become very bad her head turned so cold that Bholanath had to apply warm compresses to warm it. Even now her head becomes cold now and then, and without some warming her body is not normal. Today again Ma's head had become cold, thus requiring some warm compresses. As people continued to converse the hour drew on to ten p.m.; eventually the lights were turned off so that Ma could sleep.

March 7, Monday

As on other days, today also Ma rose at seven a.m. At five thirty a.m. Nishi Babu arrived and started *nama kirtan* accompanied by Biren Babu and the rest of us. *Kirtan* was sung for a long time. Ma's health recoups only with the repetition of the Name. After *kirtan* Ma was fed. At twelve noon the doors were shut and Ma lay down with her eyes closed. Sometimes she probably opens her eyes but does not speak for she says, "If any rule is to be observed it is better to follow it entirely."

People from many places came for Ma's *darshan*. At four p.m. today when the doors were opened, some *sanyasins* and other people arrived. One *sanyasin* enjoys narrating the *shastras* and so Ma often tells him to speak on good themes. He then narrates episodes from the *shastras* one after another, with great delight. Though others tire of it Ma listens with great pleasure and quiet attention. However, Ma alone knows how much of each topic actually reaches her ears. If anyone mentions this topic to Ma she says, "Let him speak — he is happy in repeating what the *shastras* say. No one's *bhava* should ever be destroyed. *Shastras* are words about God after all."

One thing that we have observed is that some men and women who perform spiritual practices after meeting Ma, begin to imitate her language and *bhava*. Observing this in many instances we have brought it to Ma's notice. But Ma responds

with, "Let him say that. Do not stop him. Even if you do stop him because you are here now, he will still do it when you are not here. How will you stop him then? Even an imitation of anything true, of any truthful *bhava* is good." Pausing awhile, Ma continued, "Look, when a mango is ripe it does not come and tell you, 'I am ripe'. You go and observe that it has reddened, that its fragrance is just right and that it has ripened. Similarly, if the pure *bhava* awakens within a person it is not necessary to tell anyone else about it. From that person's behaviour and expression it becomes obvious to others."

At four p.m. the Rajmata of Solan arrived. At six p.m. we all sang *nama kirtan* together. At ten p.m. Ma was made to lie down.

March 8, Tuesday

At ten a.m. Nanki Bai came with her daughter-in-law for Ma's *darshan*. They wanted to hear Ma's advice. Ma responded saying, "Everything can be achieved by following the Guru's advice. One-pointedness is necessary. All have come from the One, all are within the One and all will merge into that One. We speak one word at a time, eat one morsel at a time and walk one step at a time." After mentioning one or two other points Ma summed up, "Maintain this attitude." They sat for some time and then left. At twelve noon the doors were shut.

At four p.m. when the doors were opened and people gathered again Ma began speaking and said with a laugh, "I just had the *kheyal*. When this body was photographed at Siddheshwari with a pulled down appearance, it was actually quite plump. But by the fruit of earlier spiritual practices, the *sadhaka's* body had lost weight and that was now substantiated in this body as well. Since that *kheyal* arose when the photograph was taken, the photograph revealed a pulled down appearance. During that *sadhana* no food was eaten, nor did the body require sleep; in fact, from entertaining guests to

serving every member of the family, every household chore was performed conscientiously. Though the body lost weight it possessed an inner strength. I was very well indeed — though you people could not see at that time. May be that was the reason why the *kheyal* of the pulled down appearance arose when the photograph was being taken at Siddheshwari. Therefore you have only seen that pulled down form.

March 9, Wednesday

This morning Akhandanandaji arrived from Vindhyachal. Bholanath's letter informed us that his brother's health was improving and that Bholanath would return in three or four days' time.

March 10, Thursday

This morning, as soon as she woke up Ma suggested, "Come, let us go for a stroll today." With that she walked all around the Doctor's house saying, "If people come they can be accommodated in these rooms."

When she returned Ma sat in her room. Just then Niraj Babu and family arrived from Itawa while Maharatan's older daughter, Professor Dasgupta's wife and others came from Bareilly. Ma laughed and said, "I have just walked around to check if there is room here for you all to stay." They responded with, "Ma, you know it all and therefore we did not send any prior information."

All sat around Ma. Niraj Babu's wife asked, "Is there any need for practising *asana* and *pranayama*?" Ma replied, "Why not? Breathing in and out is going on all the time. Even while musing over worldly thoughts *kumbhaka* (breath retention) occurs sometimes as also some kinds of *asana*. Meaning to say that while a person is seated in that *bhava* and engaged in that thought for a length of time, the mind gets engrossed in a particular fashion. This happens spontaneously. Similarly the

posture and kind of breathing that causes the mind to engage in thoughts of the *atma* (soul) must be practised. For those whose minds are turned towards the *atma* naturally such practice of *asana* and *pranayama* is necessary. While they are thinking of God, *asana* and *pranayama* occur spontaneously. In each *asana* the tendency towards one worldly action (*kriya*) is particularly roused. During those actions such *asanas* occur spontaneously. Examples can be found in worldly actions if you observe attentively. By watching your posture at this moment the thought which is predominant in your mind can be revealed. By your gaze, even by listening to you or by watching the manner in which you write a letter your nature can be deciphered clearly. It is visible as lucidly as the reflection in a mirror." So saying Ma laughed. Everyone listened to Ma enthralled. Ma continued, "The mind is just as good as it is restless. It is never fully satisfied with only the outward objects."

After a long conversation Ma was offered *bhoga*. At twelve noon the doors were shut.

At four p.m. when doors were opened Ma said, "At first by taking refuge in pure actions the impure *samskaras* have to be destroyed. After that even pure actions cease. Just like soap which is used to remove dirt from the body, is itself, after all an impurity. Soap is used to remove the dirt and then water is used to remove both the soap and the dirt." She spoke on similar matters for some time. Swami Akhandananda had come with many women devotees for Ma's *darshan*.

March 11, Friday

Ma got up at four a.m. today. At five a.m. her hands and face were washed. As the day dawned people began gathering around her. We too were seated near her. In the course of conversation an incident that had occurred years ago was mentioned. When Ma lived at Shahbagh she could not discern the distinction between fire and water. Ma now described that

condition. "Do you know what it was like ? I would look at water but its action seemed to be exactly the opposite of what it was. Just as I went places and climbed or descended stairs, this body would enter water after which no attempt was made to swim or emerge from it ; because the nature of water did not exist in my *kheyal*, that kind of *bhava* did not arise. It was just like walking or sitting on the ground, that was all. In that condition these people "(indicating me)" had carried me back any number of times. The condition you people refer to as *samadhi* occurred to this body in the water. It was again the same with fire. The heat of fire was just not experienced, yet the action of fire would take place on the body as it does normally. But I did not notice it at all. In that state I placed fire on my feet and hands. It felt like placing a flowers on the palm and playing with it. There was no distinction between the two.

Then the question raised was how was it that Ma could not eat fruit that had been pecked by a bird yet she had been known to eat food half eaten by another. So much so, that one day, when a dog was eating Ma had run to it saying, "I shall eat with him." These sort of contradictory events have occurred so often in Ma's life that recording them would become a never-ending job. We have seen different *bhavas*, big and small, innumerable, being constantly enacted by Ma's body.

The next topic was about the dimensions of the pit in Siddheshwari. Ma said that it had the dimensions of a *yajna kunda* (sacrificial fire pit). Not quite one and a half arm's length, may be a little less than that. The length and breadth were equal. Ma would remain lying down in it. Ma's body sometimes became heavy and huge and sometimes light and tiny. This fact is known to all. Today again Ma mentioned, "How could I have remained lying in that pit without compressing this body?" We too had wondered how Ma's entire body could fit into that tiny pit. Today we heard the truth of that incident from Ma's lips.

Lavanya's *bhava* during Vasanti *puja* at the time of Chaitra Navaratri, was also discussed. Today we heard from Ma that when she laughed aloud and stood with the alacrity of wind, Lavanya said, "What is the matter with Kakima?" and embraced her, for Lavanya had never before witnessed Ma in *bhava samadhi*. As soon as she touched Ma, Lavanya's condition became such that she swayed across the room and fell outside. The house was made of mud, the *kirtan* resounded; the fear of the clay status of Durga being knocked down in the terrible storm caused the people to run hither and thither in a panic and therefore nobody noticed Lavanya.

At three thirty a.m. Ma went to the lavatory. On returning she lay down and spoke — "See by watching certain characteristics the level of each person can be gauged. The manifestation of a great *bhava* is very different. Ordinary *bhava* manifestations with an image are not called *leela*. It is true that all *bhava* is but God's *leela*; but what happens to a *sadhaka*? He starts with one *bhava*, then some may go into a *bhava* that needs no imagery and may also attain *bhava samadhi*."

"And as I mentioned earlier, some may attain an exhausted like *bhava* because of bliss. The characteristic behaviour of such a person is indicative of that. There may be a particular attachment for a certain deity. That may give rise to a wonderful *kriya* in the body, inspired by the depth of the *bhava*; but having descended from that state, the ordinary *bhava* arises within again — like worldly thoughts and the feeling that the body is the soul and such other emotions. Because the *bhava* of worldly enjoyments is not wiped out suddenly within the mind. Only in particular spots, like temples, or in the presence of the worshipped deity, all kinds of *kriya* happen. Therefore he is able to converse later about matters pertaining to the body and other mundane topics just as ordinary humans do. But the one who is actually elevated to the height of *samadhi* changes colour altogether. For has he not ripened? Also the essential

truths pertaining to that state are revealed. Just like a mango which, when ripe, does not have to declare, 'I am ripe, come and pluck me'. Rather its colour and scent make it obvious to people that it is ripe. Therefore I say, may be he is immersed in one form or deity. So with *kirtan* or because of some other reason even if some special *bhava* does arise within him, he ultimately attains stability only at the ordinary level. It is very difficult to understand the nature of this *bhava* perfectly."

"Those who have attained the greater *bhava* do not need to take recourse to any particular deity or *bhava* in order to experience *samadhi*. In the most natural fashion all kinds of play occur within them simultaneously. For example at one time one may observe the characteristic of *samadhi* as a consequence of some cause; at other times the person may attain *samadhi* for no apparent reason. That is the nature of such a person. There is no need for causes to exist. Natural *samadhi* is the play of one's natural self, is it not?"

Once while describing her condition Ma had told Charu Babu, "Do you know what this body is like? Seeing water, fire or wind it would merge into that *bhava*, as if this body were the waves of the river, or the glow of fire or a part of the wind. The feet touched the ground only very slightly — this body swayed with the breeze, hither and thither, but did not fall. That was because this body had become as light as air. Similarly while going in a boat on a river this body would sometimes want to merge with the water. And in that *bhava* this body attained such unnatural strength, that these people "(pointing to me)" could not hold it back. Of its own accord this *bhava* would then cease. May be it ceased because this body had to be preserved, otherwise no one had the strength to keep back this body."

Now again explaining about that *bhava*, Ma said, "The great *bhava* — it can be seen in this fashion as it sports. Yesterday I had told you about the merging of this body with

the nature of water, fire, wind and space. Do you know what that is ? *Prakriti* (Nature) performs the *leela* (sport) while the formless *Purusha* (Person) lies inert, *Prakriti* manifests her sport within Him. The *leela* of *Prakriti* is like *Shakti* and *Shaktiman*. But He is not governed by *Shakti*. With *Shakti* the *leela* goes on, just as a husband and wife play the games of householderhood. Sometimes the husband may act according to the wife's wishes but that is also because the husband or the doer grants it. The Lord (*Swami*) is independent. The word *swami* means *sva + ami* that which is true, that is the Self (*sva*) is what I am (*ami*). Therefore a *sannyasin* is called *swami* which means *so aham* (I am That) what else ? When this great *bhava* plays within someone all other *bhava* can also play simultaneously. True his body appears to be made up of the five elements, but the *leela* of that which lies beyond the senses occurs within him all the time. Unless they are beyond the senses, two kinds of *bhava* cannot manifest in one substrate at the same time."

"The actions of Rama, Krishna and other *avatars* is called *leela*. The word *leela* means one who can take (*le*). Whosoever He takes is merged within Himself. He is Himself many. He takes Himself and plays — that is *leela*. *Prakriti* performs the *leela*. *Prakriti* attains *laya* (dissolution) in the *Purusha*. This *Prakriti* accepts everyone equally just as a river flows away with dirt and sandal paste alike; fragrance and stench are both borne by wind, the sun shines equally everywhere; these are all games played by *Prakriti*. A river is called a river until she merges with the sea. As soon as she flows into the sea she is called the sea. Actually it is all the *leela* of the One who is Great."

Ma was quiet for awhile before she continued, "It is very difficult to discern such *bhava*. Even when this great *bhava* plays within someone spontaneously you may still find some worldliness in his personality. Because worldly and other-

worldly sport can occur simultaneously within him. It is so naturally beautiful it feels as if great *Prakriti* Herself is manipulating the hands, feet and other limbs of that person. Even if there is some desire left in the mind the great *bhava* may still sport within that person." As Ma spoke the day dawned.

I heard about yet another incident. While Ma was at Siddheshwari, Nani Babu had gone to offer *bhoga* on a particular occasion. Ma offered Kumari *puja* to one of his daughters. It was not a worship consisting of flowers and leaves. Perhaps the *bhava* that this worship should be performed with was manifested within Ma's body.

Once when Ma had gone to Vikrampur Pargana from Dhaka, she happened to visit a village called Noadda. *Kirtan* was performed regularly there and Ma was engrossed in *bhava*. She then experienced a most wonderful condition, which can hardly be described. Ma was seated on the verandah. All at once the upper part of Ma's body with her head, moved with snake-like speed and descended the stairs into the courtyard, while the remaining part of her body remained on the verandah. The top half of Ma's body had moved into the courtyard below, with exactly the kind of swift motion that is peculiar to snakes. This would have been impossible unless Ma's entire body had been stretched. Then, when Ma rose, still in an ecstatic state, and began to move about, every pore of her body seemed to exude blood. Later Ma had herself explained that she had had the *bhava* wherein every pore seemed to bleed. And every hair stood up in such stiffness that it resembled a thorn, the end of each hair having become as sharp and every pore seemed to have come out of a gland. A red glow suffused the whole body. That was the condition of Ma's body. Such kinds of *bhava* have been manifested at other times also in Ma's body.

Today when the doors were opened at four p.m. a *brahmachari* came and announced that Niraj Babu and others

had arrived. Niraj Babu read out a verse from the Gita and asked, "Ma, what is all this about worshipping the formless (*Nirakara*) and the One with form (*Sakara*)?"

Also the Gita says, 'Keep the mind steady in the *ajna chakra*'. Ma replied, "Look, it is possible to attain that state by keeping the mind steady in the *ajna chakra*. Other than that, however, the heart is the seat of experiencing joy, sorrow, bliss etc. Therefore some seat their Lord of the Universe in their hearts. Once He is seated, no sorrow or lack of joy can touch the spot. Once the mind is thus stabilized in the heart it is automatically elevated to the *ajna chakra*. And having reached the *ajna chakra* it moves into the *sahasrara* in its natural course. Just as water when poured over a raised spot flows down naturally."

"About *sakara* and *nirakara*. First when He is seated in one's heart, it is *sakara*, then on going to the *ajna chakra* the *nirakara* is experienced. After that there is no concept of either form or of any one particular opinion. The mind then enters the unmanifest state. Then again you may observe that sound, form, touch, smell and taste — these five essences are each present within the other."

In this fashion many incidents and topics were discussed. At ten p.m. Ma lay down but her body looked very strange. Her head had become very cold and after being fomented it warmed up slightly. She then lay down silently.

March 12, Saturday

Ma rose early. Yesterday her body appeared ill and therefore she was moved upstairs. In the morning a batch of thirty to thirty five men and women arrived from Delhi to sing *kirtan*.

At ten a.m. one hall in the Doctor's house was decorated and *kirtan* was started. Ma came down as the *kirtan* commenced. Devotees anointed Ma with flowers, garlands and sandal paste. Then they all donned garlands and sandal paste

and started moving around singing.

*'Shri Krishna Chaitanya Prabhu Nityananda
Hare Krishna Hare Rama Shri Radhe Govinda.'*

Mridanga and cymbals were played in accompaniment and the whole house reverberated to the sound of God's Name chanted by the devotees. This house is always pervaded by the gurgling sound of the Ganga and now the vibrations of the Name added to it to heightened the joy in the hearts of the devotees. Above all Ma was present and her power seemed to fill the devotees with renewed enthusiasm as they sang —

*'Shri Krishna Chaitanya Prabhu Nityananda
Hare Krishna Hare Rama Shri Radhe Govinda.'*

At four p.m. Ma again came down and sat in the verandah adjoining the *kirtan* room. She was surrounded by the women. The *kirtan* had gained momentum. Many *sadhus* and *sannyasins* arrived and participated in the singing. After dusk Ma went into the *kirtan* room and began moving around amidst the singers. Her face took on a wonderful glow and at that moment there was not a trace of illness on her countenance. As soon as the Name was chanted, some *kriya* began to manifest in her body and she kept controlling it. Seeing Ma moving around some of the women joined her amidst the group of men, without any inhibition, for Ma was amidst them. As soon as Ma's condition began changing she moved aside and then went and sat down in her place. Even as she was seated she was controlling the *bhava* rising within her. As she stood up *kirtan* was sung even more vigorously and the devotees took up the refrain of '*Jai Ma, Jai Ma, Jai Ma*' in between. *Kirtan* was sung for a very long time before it was finally concluded.

Ma was taken to her bedroom. Devotees stood around and talked to her. Charu Babu said, "Ma seemed to attain a strange *bhava* during the *kirtan*. We wondered if the condition which occurred in Simla was coming on again. I can never forget what I witnessed in Simla. Alright Ma, is not this *bhava* full of

bliss ?”

Ma replied, “The *bhava* is identical at all times. There is no question of bliss or the absence of bliss. Even without *kirtan* the body assumes various states. And may be it is necessary, so the body responds to the Name with such manifestations.”

In the course of conversation Ma again said, “Look, there are any number of *bhavas*. In some cases, perhaps, the body experiences *kriya* in accordance with the form of the worshipped deity when *kirtan* is going on. For example, those who worship Krishna or Kali may, while in ecstasy during *kirtan*, pose like Krishna or Kali. That may be followed by a *bhava* of inertia when the body just lies inert — people think it is *samadhi*. But it is just not *samadhi*. It could just be that the joy of hearing the Name renders the limbs numb. People mistake it for *samadhi* but actually it is a gross manifestation of worldly *bhava*. This gross *bhava* is just not *samadhi*. While living in the world of joy and sorrow, the seeker cannot attain the *samadhi* state. These *kriyas* occur in the body one at a time because of fragmented bits of *bhava*. Though these bits of *bhava* do elevate the mind beyond the ordinary level, they are by no means capable of raising the individual anywhere near the great *bhava*.”

It was nearly ten p.m. and so the doors were shut.

March 13, Sunday

The devotees from Delhi will stay on today. A Seth who lives next to the Doctor's house heard about the *kirtans* going on here and requested that *kirtan* be performed at his residence. So today *kirtan* was to be sung there. Biren started ‘Nimai - sanyas’ *kirtan* in the Doctor's house. Early this morning Bholanath arrived. As soon as ‘Nimai sanyas’ was concluded Bholanath started singing the Name and once he starts he does not let anyone else stand by quietly but persuades each one to participate. He can lead *kirtan* for hours on end

and when the *kirtan* gains momentum he also becomes incensed with it. At eleven a.m. Ma said, "There is no need to stop this *nama kirtan*; let it be carried across to the Seth's house." And so it was. The *kirtan* was continued next door.

That house was also situated in the lap of the Ganga. An uninterrupted fire is being protected in that house, and everyday five brahmin boys perform sacrificial rites. We went to see the sacrificial fire. The sacrificial rites are performed in a part of the house situated in the lap of the Ganga. The brahmin boys wrap a cloth with the Name of Rama on it and perform the worship — it looked very nice. At two p.m. Ma came to listen to the *kirtan*. At dusk many *sadhus* and *sannyasins* also arrived and some of them joined in the singing — there was a veritable flow of bliss. Some time in the night the *kirtan* was concluded. A group of devotees sang 'Ma, Ma' and accompanied her back to the Doctor's house. Some of them returned to Delhi. Many stayed on for the ritual Purnima bath in the Ganga and to enjoy Ma's company.

March 14, Monday

As soon as Ma awoke, devotees sat surrounding her. When the sun rose higher Ma went for a stroll on the terrace. At eleven a.m. during Ma's *bhoga* some men and women arrived from Jasidih. They were disciples of Balananda Swami of Deoghar. They had heard of Ma's exalted state from Prangopal Babu and had come for her *darshan*. After *bhoga* they came and sat near Ma. They asked, "Ma, what action leads to peace?" Ma replied, "Follow your *guru's* instructions unquestioningly. Just as a tree whose roots are watered, grows gradually, shedding old leaves and spouting new ones automatically, so must you go on. You will see that slowly whatever has to be shed will be relinquished and whatever has to be gained will be attained. Do not resolve to give up this or that. Just cling to one Name. You will find that everything happens of its own accord."

They sat for some time and then left. They were very happy to have Ma's *darshan* and kept saying so. Before dusk everyone sang *kirtan* for some time. At twelve midnight the doors were shut.

March 15, Tuesday

While speaking to me casually Ma said, "When a variety of *kriyas* began manifesting within the body the kind of *asanas* that gods and goddesses are observed to assume, began to take place within this body. Each god was seated on his vehicle (*vahana*) in a particular posture and that would be replicated by the body. Seeing one such posture your Didima was greatly frightened and called out to your Dadamoshai to have a look. But though he came he did not observe it; perhaps it would serve him no purpose."

March 16, Wednesday

Today is Holi Purnima. Some people have come from Delhi; Jotish Babu and his wife have arrived from Jamshedpur. They all began playing with colours with Ma. Ma was weak but she just did not seem to notice it. Happily she made everyone sing the Name, "Jaya Radhe, Jaya Radhe, Jaya Radhe". Bholanath, steeped in joy, enthused everyone to sing. There was a flood of bliss. After some time Ma sent everyone to have a dip in the *Brahmakunda*. Before playing with colour, Ma and Bholanath were photographed on the bank of the Ganga. Bholanath looked at Ma for some time and sang the *kirtan* "Ma, Ma". When the devotees raised the subject of photographing Ma and Bholanath together Ma suddenly went to a slightly elevated spot, sat down and told Bholanath, "Just saying 'Ma, Ma' is not sufficient — sit near me like a son" and she laughed. Bholanath also laughed and the devotees broke into laughter. Bholanath then went and actually sat at a slightly lower level near Ma. I said, "Very good now take a photograph of mother and son."

When Bholanath went to the Brahmakunda he had departed singing *kirtan* and now he returned with the rest, still singing. They had all had a dip and Ma proceeded to anoint their foreheads with sandal paste and vermilion. The devotees felt blessed by Ma's grace; they put their heads at Ma's feet and did *pranama*. *Kirtan* was concluded after a very long time.

At twelve noon the doors of Ma's room were closed as per the routine. Ma had not been given her meal because the bath and the *kirtan* had delayed the chores. Ma said, "When a particular routine is being observed it should continue, so shut the door now. Wake me up when the cooking is done." That was done. At the time of *bhoga* when Ma sat up, she was surrounded by devotees. After her *bhoga* there was a scramble for *prasada*. Ma returned to her bedroom and fell silent saying, "Unless I observe *mauna* you people do not stop talking". Actually every activity Ma performs is beautiful in every aspect. She performs all kind of *leela* just to set examples for people.

Before they started playing with colours, the devotees made Ma and Bholanath sit on two chairs placed side by side, so that they could offer vermilion at their feet. When they put flower garlands around Ma's neck, she smiled and indicating Bholanath and said, "Put garlands around this boy's neck as well." Then turning to Bholanath she asked, "Shall I bless you?" And then stroking Bholanath's head with her hand she said, "Let there be good thoughts and good intelligence, leave the house in a good manner." Bholanath began to laugh. The devotees were staring at Ma and watching this *leela*. I do not know what emotions rose within the people, but they were all dazed. Ma laughed again and turning towards all present she said, "Why are you all staring at me like this?" So saying she laughed again.

Today again *kirtan* was sung before dusk in Ma's presence. All those who had come from Delhi departed except for Panchu Babu.

March 17, Thursday

This morning even before Ma opened her eyes, I started massaging her feet with mustard oil. With her eyes shut, Ma smiled sweetly and said laughing, "Listen Khukuni, people like you were singing the Name for me just now." Ma then hummed, "Jaya Guru Jai Ma, Shri Madhusudana, Gopala, Govinda, Nama, Bhakta, Narayana." I asked, "Ma who sang for you?" Ma laughed and replied, "I saw many little children — some were naked, some had no buttons on their garments, some were very dark — they were all like that. They got themselves together and sang the Name. Some were dressed in dirty clothes, some in clean clothes — but they all swayed and moved like children and sang the Name whole heartedly. The room is still reverberating with their singing." Indicating her body Ma continued, "They made this body stand in the centre and went all round singing. Sometimes they folded their palms. None of you was present in the room."

Other people entered the room and other different topics were raised. Ma mentioned the unbroken *intense bhava* (*akhanda bhavaghan*) of the previous night. "See, like the sun and its rays, these forms began emanating at that time. The radiance may have been greater at certain spots and less at others. See, even when we cannot see the sun, it is still present on the other side of the earth, so I have heard; therefore the sun is without beginning and without end. Even during *pralaya* (ultimate dissolution) the seed remains intact. It then leads to light. This coming and going is without beginning and without end. Therefore I say, everything worldly is also without beginning and without end. For after all, everything is That. Therefore everything is without beginning and without end".

Professor Satya Babu arrived from Dehradun accompanied by a young relative who had donned the saffron cloth since seven years and is a *brahmachari*. Satya Babu had

brought him to meet Ma. In the course of conversation there was mention of the spot where the Brahmakunda is situated. Ma said, "You must imagine that you are actually bathing in the Brahmakunda." The *brahmachari*, understanding the deeper import of Ma's comment asked, "Ma, I will be able to bathe in the Brahmakunda, will I not ?" Ma said, "You are going on that path alright. Why do you let doubts assail your mind ? Keep doing your work."

This morning Niraj Babu arrived. He will visit Ma again on his way back to Amritsar.

At four p.m. when the doors of Ma's room were opened, everybody assembled around her. From the last two or three days people were commenting that Ma's health had improved because of *kirtan*. Ma had herself said, "See, food is being eaten from the very next day after *kirtan* was started." Actually Ma's digestion has not been good at all, and there has been a feeling of heaviness because of which she eats very little. The Doctor had been requesting her to eat a little more, but she was unable to do so. From the day after *kirtan* was started, she has been eating just a little more. Her heart beat also seems steadier. Ma remarked, "Your *kirtan* has improved the state of my body."

She then continued, "You people always complain, 'The mind cannot become steady — the mind cannot become steady'. Why does it not become steady ? You do not understand that. It is because your mind is constantly dwelling on impermanent objects. How will the mind become steady when it is thinking of unsteady matters ? It is a question of imbibing the qualities of the objects whose company it keeps. You constantly think of impermanent objects and then sit in the *puja* room for an hour or two and then complain, 'I did so much, yet the mind refused to become still'. Medicine and a correct diet are both necessary to cure the body of a disease. Thoughts of

worldly objects only cause a feeling of loss (*abhava*) they do not allow you to enter your true nature (*svabhava*)."

The conversation then turned to the subject of God's mercy. Satya Babu, wanting to hear Ma's opinion on this said, "Ma, do emotions like compassion and the feeling of possession exist in God ? If so, then He must also experience sorrow. But how can that be ?" At first Ma hedged the question, saying, "Son, then can you explain the aim of all these prayers and invocations?" These discussions did not seem to answer the question raised. Then Ma said, "Why do you think there could be no feeling of compassion or feeling of possession in God ? Everything is in Him and again nothing is in Him. Both these situations can play within Him simultaneously." The *brahmachari* then addressed Satya Babu, "So, now your question has been fully answered, has it not?" Satya Babu remarked, "Only by making such comments do we get anything out of Ma about herself." Ma explained, "That is absolutely turn Baba — you are the ones who get anything out — I am your daughter after all". And Ma laughed sweetly in her own natural manner. Everyone was charmed by Ma's smile and her talk. After a while Satya Babu and the *brahmachari* did *pranama* and departed. The *brahmachari* prostrated fully on the ground (*sashtanga pranama*) and begged for Ma's blessings.

A *sannyasin* had come. He mentioned that he owned a house in Delhi. Niraj Babu asked, "Why should a *sannyasin* have such feelings — house, *math*, temple?" Ma replied, "Look, the saffron clad *sannyasin* you observe now is just someone who is trying to become a *sannyasin*. Therefore he has adopted the garb of a *sannyasin*. Sometimes some householders have more elevated *bhava* than saffron clad *sannyasins*. Again, lowly *bhava* may be apparent in some of these *sannyasins*, time and again. In the householder the elevated *bhava* rises in the mind and is then absorbed in the mind. But sometimes there is evidence of this being useful. Just as the

glowing embers of a sacrificial fire may be used to ignite and start another sacrificial fire."

After conversation of this nature, *kirtan* was sung for an hour before dusk. Then people left gradually.

March 18, Friday

Today Ma rose a little late and was immediately surrounded by devotees. At eleven a.m. Ma was offered *bhoga*. Ma has been suffering from a cold and cough from the past few days. Today *dal* had been cooked with tender mango in it and Ma ate a little of it before partaking of other vegetables. Panchu Babu was present. Ma told him, "Just call Bholanath." When Bholanath arrived Ma said, "See, the bowl full of *dal* with tender mango — shall I eat it all?" Bholanath asked, "Is it very sour?" Ma replied, "Taste it and see." Bholanath began humming and hawing. Ma told me, "Just put a spoonful into his mouth." I laughed and did so; everybody laughed. All enjoyed this *leela*. Bholanath said, "Alright eat it — it is not too sour." Ma immediately piped up with, "You will feed me, won't you?" Bholanath said, "I will not be able to scoop it up properly." Saying that he scooped it up expertly and fed Ma. Ma laughed and said, "When the Doctor comes I shall tell him that Bholanath asked me to eat the sour *dal* and fed me, therefore I ate it." Bholanath also laughed and replied, "Alright, the fault is all mine."

Ma did not allow any food to be left over in the plate. She made Panchu Babu, Benu and Abhay sit closer and had the *dal*, rice and vegetable distributed in their hands. Having finished the meal thus, Ma stood up. After a wash she went and sat on her small bedding. As per the Doctor's injunction to shut the door at twelve there remained only another half an hour; yet everyone sat put, refusing to budge from Ma's presence even a minute before the scheduled hour. At twelve, however, the doors were shut.

At four p.m. when Ma rose, a large group of ladies came for Ma's *darshan*. Ma made them all sing *nama kirtan*. Abhay started singing first, followed by others. Ma was seated with all the people in the small room overlooking the Ganga. Since Ma ate the *dal* with tender mango, her cough had stopped. Everybody joked about the fact that Ma took an excellent medicine to cure her cough — how could the cough persist after this treatment? As on other days the doors were shut at ten p.m.

March 20, Sunday

Ma's health again suffered a setback last night. This morning Jiten Babu arrived from Delhi for Ma's *darshan*. Gangacharan Babu and family have come from Baroda. Seeing that Ma's health had deteriorated again, everybody felt depressed. Ma's heart was beating faster and within a short time her countenance looked wan. After a while, though, her face appeared to brighten up. Today she seemed to be in ill health the whole day and by evening her head, hands and feet had turned cold. On being fomented they warmed slightly. Engrossed in her own *bhava* Ma murmured, "Alright, a *kirtan* is in progress within this body." But everyone harbours fear about what Ma might do next.

March 21, Monday

The whole night through Ma's heart continued to palpitate fast and this morning she appeared pulled down. This morning Bhupati Dada arrived on two months leave from Dhaka. In the morning Ma came to the room downstairs and began conversing with the people present. As she was unwell we kept requesting her not to talk too much, yet we were afraid that she might then have *kheyal* to clamp up completely and observe *mauna*; so when she spoke of her own accord we participated in the conversation.

Doctor Jatish and family arrived from Jamshedpur. Their six month old daughter sat in Ma's lap and made all kinds of sounds. Hearing that Ma said, "These are signs of imminent speech — she is making all kinds of sounds. Then suddenly she will say 'Baba' or 'Dada'. It is not as if she is making these sounds of her own volition — it happens spontaneously. The knot of speech unravels of its own accord. A kind of vibration occurs within the body." Ma continued, indicating her own body, "When *mantra* and other chants emanated from within the words were pushed out just like this. But in the case of these children there is *samskara*, external teaching; is there not the play of ignorance? For example, 'Baba' and 'Dada' are words taught externally. But in this body there was none of that — everything happened naturally."

Ma continued, "The states attained by a *sadhaka* (one who performs spiritual practices) are so beautiful. At first when the *bhava* of *advaita* (non-duality) evolves then one feels 'I am this', 'I am also that', the emphasis lies on that. Then what happens? The *bhava* arises — 'There is nothing other than I', 'Only I exist'. To say 'There is nothing other than I' is impure, for language (*bhasha*) is after all that which is revealed (*bhasa*). That great *bhava* cannot be revealed through language."

Ma then said, "The impressions of *samskaras* are present even within the one engaged in spiritual practices. However exalted be the state which he attains, the effects of the first threads can still be felt. Because the *sadhaka* exists, so does the state. It is a different situation when the *sadhaka* goes beyond that state. It is true that the seeker may do a lot towards educating the people, but on paying attention one can discern what is done for educating others and what is done as a consequence of inner *samskara*. But in an *avatara* (incarnation) there is no play of *samskara* at all. Therefore his actions are called 'sport' or '*leela*'." Saying so much Ma laughed.

This morning Ma caused some commotion. She had gone

to the toilet. The toilet is poorly ventilated. Suddenly the bolt of the door dropped and she came to the door and started calling out loudly like a child, 'Khukuni, Khukuni'. At first we could not understand what had happened. But the next moment I got hold of Belu and went running to the door. It was some time before Ma managed to open the door. When she came out she said, "The door got shut and there was no *kheyal* to open it. So I called out. When I finally opened it I was pushing at the door from the wrong side!"

On occasions we have observed that Ma just does not have the *kheyal* to open or close a door, so much so that she is unable to even release an ordinary bolt while at other times she performs with great ease tasks that ordinary people find difficult. This is the reason why when Ma goes to the toilet in a train I always leave the door slightly ajar and stand holding it. Even when I am not present, she leaves the door of the toilet ajar and holds on to the handle. For it is possible that if she were to bolt the door and then not have the *kheyal* to open it people outside would believe that Ma had not finished, whereas in the closed room Ma's body may have assumed a completely different rhythm. In this manner Ma's behaviour is sometimes completely ordinary and next moment it may suddenly become extremely unusual. We have observed many such kinds of *leela* within that one substratum.

March 22, Tuesday

Ma awoke around eight a.m. and still did not appear well. At eleven a.m. she had *bhoga* and at twelve noon the doors were shut. I was seated near Ma. Ma spoke about her childhood. Everytime I hear about Ma's wonderful life I find something utterly new. Ma said, "This feeling of pleasure that all people gain from touching, by embracing mother, father, brother sister or children, that has never transpired with this body. Now I see all around how much pleasure a mother derives from

embracing her child; but I always had my back turned to my mother as I lay near her. Later during *kirtan* when this body went through all kinds of contortions you people have got yourselves embraced by it. When the inside and the outside appeared the same, then perhaps this body placed its head on the father's shoulder and a photograph was then taken. But before that happened such a *bhava* had never been observed. Perhaps it was not required and therefore the body never behaved thus."

Bholanath has always declared that Ma is a permanent *brahmacharini*. I have mentioned this earlier. That urge which no one in this world has been able to escape, never arose in the body of my Ma. Ma says, "May be that would be of no use to you people. Nothing is manifested in this body unless it is needed. No *bhava* in this body is detrimental to it." Bholanath often used to say about Ma's childhood, "How wonderful it was — I have never heard of anything like this." To which Ma had replied, "Perhaps it is just not necessary. So much so that if such an emotion did arise even slightly within Bholanath, Ma's body would immediately assume such alterations that Bholanath would become afraid and would start fussing around anxiously, trying to reinstate Ma in her normal condition. Ma says, "There was no need to touch anybody. I would be lying on my bedding. If there was any change in Bholanath's *bhava* this body immediately reacted by assuming a supernatural condition."

Ma says, "There was no feeling as to whether I should accept this or relinquish it. This body just went along a certain path. Perhaps that is what was necessary for you and therefore this body behaved that way. Suppose you were to ask why this body did not indulge in such pleasures, such a question would be meaningless. But you can also ask why I do not speak in English. Why do I not eat the food of English people or that eaten by some other race of men? Why did this body acquire that colour or that *bhava*? Such questions can be

asked about every subject. Why should I go? Where? Every action can be questioned with a 'why?'. Many such points can be raised endlessly. Therefore I say whatever you people need, that happens within this body."

In connection with these topics the subject of the Kalyanavan incident came up. Ma said, "See, some matters are such that as soon as they arise within they cannot be withheld from being revealed outside — just as it is difficult to withhold the urge to puke. These matters that are being discussed are in a manner vomiting out." At times when Ma is lying down at night she suddenly turns around and says, "Tomorrow remind me about this matter." And then she lies down quietly. Referring to that Ma now said, "I have no carry-bag with me — even if I did have a bag it has no stitches on its underside — or it is like what you people all a 'pipe', open at both ends. There is no room for anything to be stored in it. Therefore you people keep everything. Only after displaying everything to you all do I find release. Again sometimes you also do ask. You people keep all articles and things, also food and drink are your responsibility. Only conversation is presented before you." So saying Ma laughed in her own sweet fashion.

After some time she laughed again and continued, "Look, one matter has come up. If I do not tell you about it you will depart after shutting the door and I shall remain laughing all by myself. That is why I shall tell you about it. It was during my childhood — I must have been eleven or twelve years old, when all of a sudden there was a marriage proposal for this body from some place along with a photograph of the bridegroom. We girls in the village had not seen a photograph till then. Everybody looked at it. At that time I used to hum some verse of a song to myself, play and talk to plants and trees. That day, hearing the word 'photograph' I sang, 'Photograph, photograph, photograph, photograph! This body's grandfather heard the song through a chink in the door and coming before

me he asked, 'What is happening?' I had no notion that the photograph had come in connection with my marriage. Yet at that moment grandfather's laughter caused me such a degree of embarrassment that I burst into tears." Narrating this incident Ma laughed and said, "What kinds of amusing incidents have occurred !" I also laughed heartily on hearing this story.

At four p.m. many people arrived and Ma began conversing with them. Jiten Babu is to leave today. On being asked something concerning the Delhi *ashram* Ma said, "Look Baba, I do not want your *ashram*, I do not want anything. I only say that you must also live together peacefully. I only want that pure emotions should develop and increase within you. All of you try to live in peace and happiness. If you talk of an *ashram*, that is again for your sake and you can make it. After all, the aim of the *ashram* is to increase the peace and happiness within each of you. If that is not achieved and only factions are created then what is the use of having an *ashram*? It is better then not to have an *ashram* at all. There is joy only in your joy. If you speak of 'my *ashram*' then the whole world is but one *ashram*, or the *ashram* is limitless." Jiten Babu did *pranam* at Ma's feet and said, "Ma, we shall try to follow your advice to the best of our abilities. Please give us your blessings so that we may obey your instructions." Ma replied, "His blessings are always there. Keep your attention in that direction and keep doing your duty."

March 23, Wednesday

Ma woke up at nine a.m. today. From the last two days she has instructed us, "Do not call me in the morning before I wake up on my own." This is being followed. I washed her face and hands and made her drink some water. She then started speaking to the people who had assembled for her *darshan*. Some impressions of Ma's palms and sole were taken. At eleven a.m. *bhoga* was offered and by twelve noon the doors

were shut as usual.

From the past two days Ma's health has deteriorated. At four p.m. Ma got up and sat on the verandah where many people had assembled. Ma is able to establish empathy with each person therefore all who come to Ma feel so happy. Before dusk Ma went to the terrace and stayed there till ten p.m.

After meals Ma was brought downstairs. One gentleman came and said, "Ma I have heard that you are not keeping well. Ma, if you want to you can get well yourself, so please get well now." Ma laughed and replied, "I am always well. What you people observe in this body is but the play of this body." Later in the course of conversation Ma again laughed and said, "What you said just now about getting well only when there is the desire to do so is quite right. If the *kheyala* arises then what you people deem as 'healthy' will certainly come to pass. But now there is just no *kheyal*. What can be done about that ? Tell me."

Conversation went on in this manner till ten p.m. after which the lights were switched off.

March 25, Friday

Last night around eleven p.m. we had barely laid down when Ma got up softly and slipped out on her own. Suddenly I awoke and found Ma was not on her bedding. I went upstairs to find her lying down on the terrace. Seeing me Ma said, "I just did not feel like sleeping. I also felt some kind of pain in my stomach." Abhay was sleeping in the same room. I picked up Ma's blanket and went to her room. The whole night through Ma's body was unwell. In the morning the door was shut for some time and opened at eight a.m. is said, "What is the use of lying down ? The body is restless and therefore it has sat up." I washed her hands and face and made her eat some food recommended for patients.

Soon after, people arrived for *darshan*. Shankari Mata came with her disciples to meet Ma. She began showing her regard for Ma in various ways. Ma also addressed her as 'Ma' and spoke to her. Shankari Mata said, "I have seen you often in my dreams — seated in my lap." She spent some time with Ma and then went to Kankhal. Another *sadhu* arrived to speak privately with Ma. Later on I heard that he had said, "Ma, I come to you to ask many questions, but because so many others are present I am not able to speak to you alone. However, the surprising fact is that in my presence, when you speak to others, I find all my doubts being clarified by what you are saying. I find that most astonishing."

Today Shri Jatin Kaviraj of Dhaka returned with family to Haridwar after a tour of Agra, Delhi and other places. Before lunch Bhupati Dada raised the subject of the Dhaka *ashram*. Ma said, "There is no need for this body to say anything about the *ashram*. You people do exactly what you think best." During festivals there is a lot of confusion in connection with the opening of the doors of the Kali temple. Bhupati Dada requested Ma to make a clear injunction on this matter. The clarification made was that on the birthday, that is the day on which Ma's body appeared on earth, after the morning's worship at the temple, the door of the Kali temple should be opened, and an accounting done on the money collected in the donation vault. Then the doors of the Annapurna temple should be opened. At that time everybody should be allowed to enter the temple. The doors are to be kept open till eight p.m. Then the doors of the Annapurna temple are to be shut, the temple cleaned and the Kali *puja* performed.

After that, at the time of the appearance of Kali Ma, that is, in the remaining hours of the night, Ma's *puja* is to be performed. At dawn, after the worship, the doors of the Kali temple are to be shut. This was the schedule on the first occasion. Ma also said, "If the image of Kali suffers even the smallest bodily

injury then as far as possible it should be set right in all purity. And if, when the doors are open, it is ever observed that any such part of the image is destroyed which, if it had happened to a human being, would have caused death, then the doors should be closed immediately. The doors should be securely fortified with bricks. Then the money collected should no longer be counted nor should it be spent. At the end of the year the money should be totalled and given towards the amount that is intended for donation to the *mahant* of the *KaliBari* of Ramna.

Gangacharan Babu asked Ma, "Ma, Why is your bodily health so poor? If you so desire you can get well at once. If not for your sake, then at least for ours, please get well." In reply Ma said, "This body exists only for the sake of you all. If this body serves you all in some way, you people will preserve it, otherwise it will go. I have no worry at all." As she said this Ma's countenance appeared to acquire a particularly relaxed and composed expression. Every syllable that Ma utters is perfectly true — this is always vividly apparent from Ma's behaviour and also from the expression on her face. All those who were present stared at Ma's face in awed silence.

After dinner, since there was still time to go before ten p.m., people kept sitting in Ma's room. As Gola and Godavari had done something wrong around four p.m. today, Ma told them, "Do *japa* ten thousand times and repent for this."

Gola is a particularly religious minded girl. She often observes *mauna* and says she does not have the desire to speak. A *brahmachari* who is here saw Gola and suggested that she should be invested with the sacred thread. Ma said, "Alright, you people get everything ready." But Ma did not seem very insistent. The day before yesterday Ma had stopped Gola from observing *mauna* all the time. This morning, in connection with some matter Ma had said to her, "It is worth thinking about whether it would be appropriate to give you the responsibility of such a big task (the *kriya* of investiture with the sacred

thread)." Ma laughed slightly.

We were not able to understand Ma's words properly. The girl's attitude was good but Ma broke her *mauna* and then made a comment like this today. What was the reason for it? Ma never clarifies any of her statements fully. She only says, "You should understand by what happens."

Tonight we understood the significance of Ma's comment. Then Ma explained Gola's mistake and told her to do ten thousand *japa*, the girl became absolutely still. Ma called her and spoke to her very sweetly, explaining patiently. Suddenly the girl rose, walked into the verandah and began wailing loudly. As she sobbed and wept she became nearly unconscious. We realised then that though the girl was good, she was a little weak in the head. We also understood then the reason for Ma's interrupting her *mauna* and expressing that kind of an opinion about the girl. The girl was again brought to Ma. She lay on the ground and began weeping uncontrollably again. Ma said gravely, "If this kind of behaviour continues, then no special task can be entrusted to you, is it not so?" Ma was smiling but did not reveal that to the girl. When Gola heard a reference to the sacred thread ceremony she cheered up immediately and thus Ma's comment put a stop to her weeping. Ma looked at us and laughed. We then realized that Ma had spoken in this fashion only to halt the girl's outburst.

Ma instructed that Gola be taken and given a wash, after which the girl sat placidly near Ma. Later Ma explained, "Having discerned this trait in her character I did not encourage the idea of the investiture. The sacred thread is no frivolous matter, is it? It will not be possible for this girl to maintain the *kriya* required." Ma told us, "You people would not have understood this girl's nature, therefore I said nothing. But now that her disposition stands revealed, you must have all gauged her condition. This is why I always say that words cannot establish anything. Deeds reveal the truth; and I also reiterate

that every occurrence has its use. Today this incident occurred only because Gold and Godavari committed a mistake. That also had its use." So saying Ma laughed. At ten p.m. the doors of Ma's room were shut.

Chapter Three

March 26, 1938, Saturday

Today Ma looks better. Turiyananda Swami from Puri and Ramratan Babu from Calcutta have arrived. In the morning a gentleman asked Ma, "Ma, why is it that this place was named Brahmakunda when a drop of nectar fell here? It should have been named Amritakunda". Ma replied, "*Amrita* (nectar) cannot live without *Brahman* (the Supreme Soul). Everyone has to dip into the Brakmakunda in order to obtain the flow of nectar." So saying she laughed.

The process of taking Ma's hand and foot prints has been on for the past two or three days. Yesterday when the print was being taken both her palms had been painted thoroughly and Ma had made the impressions. On observing Ma then it appeared as if she was deeply engrossed in the job. Many impressions were taken on paper. When making the prints Ma had said, "Let me see how many more prints you will take?" And as she said that she made print after print.

We know that sometimes when we start on a certain job Ma cooperates in such a fashion that it appears that she is involved in the work day in and day out. She does not appear to have any other thought. After some time, however, when the job is halted, a hundred pleas may not result in our being able to make her do the job even once. And it is also necessary to explain that at present this *kheyal* to give impressions is going on. Casual observers may surmise that Ma is eager to make the prints. But a closer look would reveal the inner condition prevailing within her. As Ma made the prints she said, "See, may be some people feel embarrassed to make prints. They may even feel shy. But what is this body doing at present? You can see it, can't you? It is as if I have discovered a game. Why should there be any embarrassment or shyness? You want an impression made by this body? Take it. You people watch and

so will I." Saying this Ma made many impressions with both hands. Whenever Ma does anything her whole body expresses its involvement in the work. Today I observe the same phenomenon. This is yet another aspect of Ma's wonderful being.

This sport continued for some time. Ma then said, "But everything has its own allotted time. After the allotted time is finished that job will not be accomplished again." Ma explained further, "Just as I sit and speak or listen to *kirtan* so also is this yet another form of *kirtan* that goes on. You people must spend your time in doing good work."

The same topics came up when Ma came down after lunch. She said, "Alright, about these imprints that are being made — do not think that Ma is very keen to make imprints to further her fame." So saying she laughed very softly. I said, "Ma, an opinion has to be expressed only after viewing all characteristics. It is not right to draw conclusions after viewing just one fraction of the subject's characteristics."

Ma was quiet for awhile. Then she said, "See, there are many kinds of *bhava*. It is difficult to recognize them all. Do you know what happens at first ? The *sadhaka* (one who is attempting spiritual practices) is full of humility — he feels, 'I am so insignificant, why do people give me so much respect?' And in this *bhava* he is embarrassed by the respect shown to him by people. If anybody does anything in his honour he naturally feels shy; some such people do not even mix in society as a consequence. The feeling that prevails is, 'What will people think?' Then again there are some who go to any extent in order to acquire fame. These are all levels of a *sadhaka*. The characteristics manifested may be beautiful, but the feeling of humility is necessary otherwise the bondages will not be severed."

"Then again, do you know what yet another stage of a *sadhaka* is like ? It is like that of children who paint their own bodies and then make impressions on the wall. They are not

bothered whether anyone sees them or not. They just laugh and play, immersed in their own *bhava* as they paint. If someone catches them doing mischief, they feel no embarrassment or a sense of guilt; their *bhava* is unaltered. There is no covering anywhere within — it is all open. Such a *bhava* is a little difficult to understand. Like you people see someone in trance during *kirtan* and think it is *samadhi*." She smiled, looked towards us and then continued, "It is difficult to understand *bhava*. It is not possible for an ordinary person to gauge who is at what level, therefore he commits mistakes."

By the time this conversation was concluded it was twelve o'clock; Ma immediately assumed silence and lay down. The devotees departed and the doors were shut. Actually if Ma had not herself assumed *mauna* between twelve and four in the evening and also after ten at night, it is difficult to say how long this practice of shutting doors would have continued. Ma said, "You people have accepted this rule laid down by the Doctor and this body also does sometimes listen to what everyone says. But then again at times it refuses to obey. As long as it has to be observed it should be done methodically."

This evening Ma went up to the terrace and at dusk she went into the room upstairs. A young man arrived and questioned her about incarnations and Brahman. Ma replied, "Look, it is all a matter of experience. It cannot be explained in words and even if it is explained you will not be able to accept it implicitly. Therefore try to experience these matters within yourself." After discussing one or two other topics the young man left.

Ma told Ramratan Babu, "Do you know how this conversation proceeded? I have not even passed the matriculation examination and I want to understand a complicated subject at the M.A. level. How would he understand? So it is better to meditate. All this exists and can be understood, but without first hand experience all doubts are not cleared."



Then Ma spoke about the real essence of Krishna — “Krishna *tattva* (real essence) lies beyond the senses and man wants to understand it with his senses. It is not an object that can be grasped with the senses, so how can he understand? So people interpret it according to their capability.” Saying this Ma laughed lightly and then fell silent. After eating, at nine p.m. Ma strolled about a little and then sat on her bedding. All the people sat around her till ten p.m. When Ma lay down they did *pranama* and left.

March 27, Sunday

Last night again Ma's body was unable to calm down for a long time and she could not sleep at all. But Ma says, “When ordinary people sleep their bodies become still and when this body assumes that kind of stillness you observe it as being at rest. But this body's condition is unchanged whether it lies down, sits, or walks about.” This morning Ma got up at eight a.m. After making her drink some milk I began taking imprints of her hands and feet. Ma appeared to treat this as a new found game. She made impression after impression on quires and quires of paper sheets saying, “Bring more paper, bring more ink.”

People who had come for *darshan* became extremely eager to meet Ma and so the doors were opened. As the people entered Ma's *bhava* was disturbed and so even after the doors were shut once more and the job of taking impressions was resumed, the imprints did not turn out properly. Ma said, “Now the mood is gone. Having been obstructed it seems to have changed.” After Ma's meal some more imprints were taken. Then Ma lay down and the doors were closed as usual.

At four p.m. Ma rose. A person from Dhaka who sings *kirtan* very well had come to sing for Ma. Many people had come. Ma sat on the terrace. Then the *kirtan* was started and it went on for nearly two hours.



At eight p.m. Ma sat down to eat. In the course of conversation with Ramratan Babu and others the topic of taking imprints came up. Ma said, "Look, all this that is being said — 'Bring more paper, bring more ink' and this imprinting on sheet after sheet — it is not as if I am doing this of my own will. This just happens. When Khukuni took those prints on the first two days, such a *kheyal* did not arise. From the third day when she started to take the impressions this *kheyal* arose. In spite of bringing more paper and ink repeatedly she was not able to meet the demand. Such a situation arose earlier in connection with food. On being coaxed to eat and when the feeding started, the *kheyal* that, 'I would eat more', 'bring more food', would arise. As people kept feeding me I would eat it all up."

Ramratan Babu asked, "Cannot such a grace be aroused?" Ma assumed a grave posture and replied, "I cannot say that it cannot be aroused. It has happened sometimes — these people have seen it. If the *kheyal* is there it can happen." Saying this she pointed towards us. Ramratan Babu said, "Alright Ma, then let the *bhava* of grace be aroused." Ma said, "What happens is what you people get done. Khukuni got paper and ink and took the footprints and handprints of this body. At that time there was no *kheyal*. Only on the third day when the job was resumed did the *kheyal* to make the prints arise. If you people can induce such a *kheyal* by dint of your actions then a similar thing can happen. I do nothing by my own will. Whatever you people get done, happens. Everything is alike to this body. Whatever happens at any time is alright." Observing Ma's *bhava* and the manner in which she spoke, all those present gazed at her face.

Ma continued, "Listen further. Do you know what happened earlier? When some unusual *bhava* occurred, then the face also assumed an unusual expression. Everybody discerned it. But now it all happens most naturally and no one can make out anything by looking at my face".

Yesterday at four p.m. we took Ma to the banks of the Ganga. Suddenly she said smilingly, "Look, do not trust me. I may just start walking in the river. I can see the other shore and I am standing on this shore. The fact that the river lies in between never enters my *kheyal*. Such a *bhava* has occurred earlier but then an unusual *bhava* also occurred within this body. And watching the expression on my face people were forewarned. But now that does not happen. I speak and laugh in an ordinary manner and an extraordinary rhythm begins simultaneously."

After this conversation Ma came downstairs. People sat around her till ten p.m. Then they did *pranama* and left for the night. The doors to Ma's room were closed and the light was extinguished.

March 28, Monday

This morning the person from Dhaka sang *kirtan* till nine a.m. Then Ma's face and hands were washed and she was made to drink some milk. People sat surrounding her once again. Women living here perform Ma's *arati* almost everyday, with incense and camphor. Today again they did so. At eleven a.m. Ma was offered *bhoga*. Ma then conversed for some time and at twelve the doors were shut.

One incident that occurred when Ma's hand prints were being taken is as follows. On the third and final day when I went to take Ma's hand and foot prints, the whole exercise had become a kind of game for her. I conjectured that she would probably let no more prints be made after this and that it would, therefore, be best to make as many as possible straight away. Ma started making print after print on quires and quires of paper as if she could think of doing nothing else. She did not even bother to notice which imprint had come out well and which had not. She just made prints one after the other just like a child who had discovered a new game of colours. She went

on in this manner most eagerly. Ma had explained ever so often earlier, "You people come to this body with some emotion and just like a mirror reflection, the same emotion blossoms within this body." I seem to be responsible for having concretized the *kheyal* to make prints for I had been taking the prints for the last two days. The third day when Ma's *kheyal* was aroused she made prints continuously as if it was a great job. The *bhava* was manifested in her whole body. Hand and foot prints were made with black and red colours and Ma was delighted to see these colours. I was interested in getting the imprints of the lines on Ma's palm. The lines were not clearly visible on all the prints, but Ma just did not notice. She seemed greatly delighted to see each print. As she continued to make the imprints a strange *bhava* manifested within Ma's body. Looking at the black and red prints of her feet she suddenly commented, pointing towards her own body, — "Oh good ! You have made an excellent decoration — you have made half this body Krishna and the other half, Radha." With this comment there was a sudden change in her demeanour — she fell silent.

When the imprints were done Ma came downstairs. Seemingly a bit flustered she said to me, "What did I blurt out ? That day I made Gola and Godavari perform ten thousand repetitions of *japa* to atone for their mistake. Today I too should do *japa* because I mentioned Krishna and Radha in connection with the imprints. That was wrong on my part and it is necessary for me to atone for this by doing *japa*. But I will not be able to do so much *japa* — perhaps it will cease as I start doing it — or then again it may go on throughout the day. As the body has been unwell you people want to feed it and rest it at specified times, but it may not be so, for the *japa* may continue ceaselessly and the *bhava* to lie down may not exist at all. What can I do in such a situation ?"

I replied, "Ma's representative can do the job." Ma said, "Will you do it ? Then you do ten thousand *japa* for my sake."

I said I would do just that.

I saw this as one more of Ma's sports. She played it for the benefit of the people. For otherwise, why was there anything wrong in what she said when she in that mood? But for the benefit of others she arranged for the atonement.

In the afternoon Gopinath Babu and some others arrived. A girl called Shobha from the Raha family of Kumilla, is a disciple of Santadas Baba. We heard that she is in an exalted state. Today one of her brothers came for Ma's *darshan*. His name is Shishir Kumar Raha. He narrated several stories about Shobha. He is also a disciple of Santadas Baba and has lived with him for a long time. The *brahmachari* is very simple and straightforward. He wished to speak alone with Ma and that was arranged.

In the night Ma told me a number of things about *samadhi*. From what I understood of Ma's words, the gist is this. *Samadhi* is of many kinds. Yet again *samadhi* is unique. In between there is only mention of some direction. A gross state may be reached by concentration on an idol. But that is not *jada samadhi* — it is forgetting oneself. Then rising from that *bhava* the *bhava* of that idol is acquired. This is just the state of that *bhava* — it cannot be called *samadhi*. A kind of *samadhi* state can be achieved. The *brahma bhava* could blossom in the *bhava* for the idol and that could be called a kind a *bhava samadhi*. This is the form manifested prior to *savikalpa samadhi*. Again, when embedded in the *brahma bhava*, there may be a *bhava samadhi* — like manifestation.

Ma said, "When the sadhaka reaches a state of truth then what you people call *savikalpa samadhi* — that is what it is."

"This body never had a chance to hear the different names of *samadhi* for it is not literate. Hearing whatever you all say, I repeat a little here and there. Ofcourse if the *kheyal* were to occur, everything would appear for sure. The fact is that if you people sit nearby and think about *samadhi* then this body

resolves the subject to some extent. You know already that whichever *bhava* you bring forward, this body reveals something in the same *bhava*. And then again, sometimes, nothing at all is said. May be then there is no use for it at that time."

Saying so much, Ma again revealed, "You people mention so many names like *nirvikalpa*, *chaitanya*, *samadhi*, *mahabhava* and *mahashunya*. Their radiance is wonderful."

Once a gentleman questioned Ma, "How is it that *leela* (divine sport) can occur after *Brahma bhava* (realization of oneness with the Brahman)?" Ma replied, "Did you not understand that? Unless that *Brahma svarupa* (nature of Brahman) or that *Atma svarupa* (nature of Atman) is not experienced, how can one enter the realm of *leela* which lies beyond the senses ? It can happen only if the former has been attained. Just as water turns into ice and ice turns into water, so that ice lies in water and water lies in ice — so does is *leela*. His sport, manifest in an expressly unique fashion. Where do *Nityadham*, *Nityaleela* manifest ? Tell me. You have perhaps understood it to be the unbroken, unmanifest Brahman. That is something that lies in that direction. That which is within a form (*Sakara*) also resides in the formless (*Nirakara*). He has to be attained in all forms (*Sarvakara*). Is he not unbroken (*Akhanda*)? Just as innumerable (*ananta*) seeds and innumerable trees reside within one seed. Then again, within that countless (*ananta*) entity, there is an end, only One. He has to be reached from every direction, in different aspects. Then one has to go beyond the many — all forms, all directions. He has to be attained in all parts — outside, inside. Whatever you perceive, that is whatever you see, is from within your spectacles. Therefore it is not quite correct. Do not keep your goals limited. Keep your sight on that supreme state. You have to attain that which is replete with all forms (*sarvangina*) manifest, unmanifest, unbroken and complete."

"Do you know how that is ? In between there are many

states, many details, their description is endless. It is just like climbing from one step to the next in a stair—for a moment you are in space and yet there is a joint between the step you just left and the one you are about to mount. One matter is to climb on to a stair, the other is to remain there. In between these two, again there are innumerable states. Look, at first, the identification with the idol arouses the grosser *bhava* but it later leads to the higher *bhava* yet it may appear to be the gross *bhava* with its associated restlessness."

"This is very difficult to understand. So many points are left out. However much I may say, there is always still more to be said. Nor can it be understood properly. Just as it is impossible to describe the beauty of a flower in words — it remains unexpressed — this too is just like that, what else? And, do you know? I do not understand the language of your scriptural texts and therefore it cannot be explained in that language though in truth it cannot be explained in any language. Only a mere sign can be made. Therefore I say that much has been written in the scriptures. Without understanding all that do not mistake the forcefulness of *bhava* to be *samadhi*."

In this manner Ma spoke at length about *bhava*. I listened and mused that all this is *ananta* (endless).

March 29 Tuesday

Early this morning a gentleman arrived from Dhaka and began singing *kirtan*. Ma woke up even before he arrived. *Kirtan* went on for nearly two hours and everyone joined in. The local women performed *arati* for Ma and sang a song for the ritual.

Ganesh Babu's wife, Jatu and many others had come from Dhaka today. Yesterday Shankarananda Swami and others had come from Kashi. The whole house was filled with guests.

After the meal Ma lay down. I sat near her. Ma spoke softly. She spoke in detail about her earlier *bhava*. She spoke

about the many states in a single *pranama*. Although we had seen all this, we had not noticed anything particularly. With Ma's explanation our attention was attracted to many details. We realized that an entire book could be written on the subject of a single *pranama*.

There was a time when Ma bowed down to all — even to cats and dogs. Whenever she stepped on any object she would instantly do *pranama*. Ma said, "Ma had told me that if I touched anything with my feet, I should do *pranama*. Therefore in my childhood, whenever my feet touched any object I would bow down immediately. So much so that when I climbed on to a mattress I would do *pranama* to the mattress. Again before getting off on to the floor, I would bow down to the floor. With the knowledge of That being all pervading I began doing *pranama* to all. Then it so happened that I would not accept *pranama* from anybody but would offer *pranama* to all. This was followed by a phase when I could neither do *pranama* to anyone nor could I accept it from anyone. To whom could I bow down and who was to bow down to me? Later all this ceased. People would bow down and so would I. You people have seen that sometimes. I would do *pranama* to Ma and Baba or to Bholanath and then touching my forehead to the ground I would bow to all. Then it so happened that for the next five minutes I would offer *pranama* to all and then suddenly cease to do so. All these are stages which occur in the lives of *sadhakas*. Joining these palms together happens in temples of Gods, it happens before you all as well. The *bhava* is the same everywhere. May be you have observed at times that my head has not bent down in a temple, yet this body has touched the feet of its parents and Bholanath."

When I asked what the reason for that was, Ma replied, "Whoever has been offered *pranama* has had the feeling to receive *pranama* in that spirit at that time. Whatever feeling arises in anyone at anything, the *kriya* (action), in perfect

response to that feeling, occurs within this body at that very instant. You all have observed that happening all the time. Then again you may have noticed that my head has not bent down while doing *pranama*. Bowing or not bowing the head is one and the same thing. Again, the moment someone brings a hand forward to touch these feet, my head bows down at that person's feet. You all have observed that. These are all levels in a spiritual seeker's progress. Such sport has occurred within this body."

Therefore it cannot be categorically stated that Ma does not do *pranama*.

Ma continued, "Hands and feet are the same, wherever you may touch them. And if anyone were to do *pranama* to this body or kick it, it is all the same!" So saying she laughed.

In matters concerning diet, all that I have heard as '*divine bhava*' and '*sadhaka bhava*' has been enacted in Ma's body. When the prevailing rule was that she would not accept food from anyone, she accepted nothing from anybody. So much so that she could not even touch vessels belonging to other people. Ma explained it saying, "I could not use vessels belonging to others, because whatever wear and tear my usage would cause in the vessels, would be counted as my acquisition." In this manner all the levels of a spiritual aspirant manifested within her one by one. At one stage she could not eat anything tested by others; not even a fruit pecked by a bird. If anybody's gaze full of longing happened to fall on any edible item, it would not be offered as *bhoga*. We had to prepare Ma's food with great care and until she ate it we feared as to whether she would accept it or reject it. Ma would eat with such strict rules of purity at that time. But within a few days she readily ate leftovers from anybody's plate. She even ran towards a dog to eat what it carried in its mouth. Such are the absolutely contrary emotions that mingle within Ma which we had witnessed earlier and which we continue to observe from time to

time. The instances are simply innumerable.

At four p.m. the doors were opened after the noon's rest period. All the devotees gathered around Ma. In the evening Bholanath sang *kirtan* with all those present. *Kirtan* was being sung on the other side of the Ganga. Bholanath took everybody there and sang for some time. Bholanath enjoys singing *kirtan* greatly.

In the night Ma conversed at length about the state of *samadhi*. In connection with the *bhava samadhi* that occurs after the gross (*jada*) state and before the *savikalpa* (with form) *samadhi*, Ma said, "while worshipping an idol during spiritual practices the involvement causes the *jada* state. In that state sometimes a touch of the *Brahma bhava* is possible. That is also called *bhava samadhi*. It is one thing to stabilize in that state and quite another to experience its touch. It is very difficult to understand this difference."

Shantadas Baba's disciple Shishir asked Ma, "Alright Ma, can a spiritual seeker acquire the nature of the God that he is meditating upon?" Ma replied, "There are many explanations regarding this matter. Raise this topic some other time." Later Ma once mentioned to me, "Look, at some spots a *sadhaka* meditating on a form acquires a feeling of oneness with it. At that instant the seeker takes on the stance of the God he is meditating, upon, be it Kali or Krishna; then the seeker walks and moves like his idol. But as soon as the *bhava* of being one with the idol disappears, it all ceases. There is yet another *bhava*—do you know what that is? Without any meditation the *bhava* of various gods and goddesses manifest in the body of the *sadhaka*. the difference between these two states is like the difference between night and day. As I said earlier — one implies stability in the state and the other merely a momentary experience of the state. As soon as the experience is over the seeker finds himself in the previous state.. Why doesn't he acquire the form of that?"

The conversation again veered towards Gola's sacred thread investiture. But nothing could be finalised. Ma remarked, "Whatever has to happen will happen!"

March 30, Wednesday

Early morning *kirtan* was sung. Ma had a wash and was then made to drink some milk. At noon when *bhoga* was offered she was surrounded by people. All were keen to have some *prasada* from Ma's plate but hesitated to voice their desire. Ma said "Will you all eat? I am receiving *prasada* — so must you all. All people receive *prasada*." So saying she laughed.

In the evening a *sannyasin* arrived and questioned Ma, "Ma, we have all come from the same place and will all return to the same place. All are one — then how did this feeling of difference arise?" Ma replied, "Actions cause this feeling of difference and actions will cause this difference to disappear." Again he queried, "Where is worry located?" Ma smiled, stroked her head with her hand and replied, "It originates here." He averred, "I say it comes from the heart". Ma laughed and said, "Baba, the heart experiences joy and sorrow. God is to be installed there. Does not everything lie in the root? The head is the root of the body, yet again the root is present in all locations."

Another person asked, "Is it proper to maintain caste differences?" Ma asked in reply, "What is your opinion?" He replied, "In my opinion it should be observed." Then you must observe it, because it is not right to spoil one's behalf. Whatever beliefs you possess because of your *samskaras* (past actions), you must behave according to their dictates. There is no one path which suits everybody. Just see, what a Hindu observes as pure and impure behaviour and thinking is not observed by a Muslim or a Christian. Because of this can you say that there are no great personages amongst them? Whatever be the *samskara*, each one should behave accordingly.

Again one should also try to see how these *samskaras* arose. Sometimes it so happens that certain rules are not observed because of lethargy. Yet again some habits are inculcated from childhood and they continue later. But the *samskara* from within is of another kind. That *samskara* may cause doubts in your mind but habit does not allow you to function according to your *samskara*. Many other thoughts also prevail on this matter."

This evening *kirtan* was sung. At night Ma told me about *samadhi* in the course of conversation, "See, it is difficult to understand how many kinds of *samadhi* there are. Sometimes brass is mistaken for gold and at other times gold is mistaken for brass." After saying so much Ma sat still for some moments and then proceeded to speak in detail. Finally she said, "Look, all the *bhavas* that you have now heard about, help to move along this path though they are not *samadhi*. *Bhava* manifesting restlessness and immobility does not appear in those within whom the existence of the *atma* is illuminated by intellectual thought alone. *Bhava* may blossom to a greater extent in the feeling of *bhakti* (devotion) within some people, and in some people, according to their *samskaras*, the ability to maintain a sharp thinking attitude to reason out intelligently is limited."

March 31, Thursday

Shishir Babu was here today, he visits almost everyday nowadays. Dr. Pant returned from his home today. In his absence his servant Sur Singh had lost a *durree* in the Ganga while washing it. He was nervous about what the doctor would say about it on his return.

Meanwhile there had occurred another incident when Ma had come here and stayed at the *dharmashala* and was very unwell. At that time the doctor had told Ma, "Ma, today I have prayed to Ganga that you should have the *bhava* to get well. Ma you should get well and save my honour!" After this when

the doctor took Ma to his house, Ma stood on the floor and changed the *dhoti*. She then had the doctor throw away the *dhoti* she had relinquished, in the Ganga.

Today when the doctor returned, Ma spoke to him alone and said, "Look, you had prayed to Mother Ganga to arouse the *bhava* of good health within me and had offered my cloth to Mother Ganga with your own hands to achieve that purpose. And then Mother Ganga also took away your *durree*." Understanding the spirit in which Ma said this, the doctor replied, "That was just as it should have been Ma. The cloth was taken and the bedding was also desired. Therefore it was taken." Ma laughed and agreed with him. On the day that the *durree* had floated away, at four p.m. Ma was strolling on the terrace. She said, "Mother Ganga took it away," and smiled. I asked, "Did she say so to you?" Ma replied in a low voice so that no one else could hear, "Absolutely clearly — just as you people speak, so did I hear her speak."

Today Shishir Babu cooked a vegetable and fed it to Ma. Today was also the day of the new moon ritual bath. The *sadhus* took out a procession (*shobha yatra*) which was a wonderful sight. I commented that it appeared to be Lord Shiva's entourage. All the *sannyasins*, many of them naked, all besmeared with ash, yet without any shortage of horses and elephants and other decorations. We stood on the terrace and watched it all. The *sadhus* walked in a line on the banks of the Ganga. Some riding elephants, some seated in palanquins, some on horses with a band of instruments marching alongside. In between police officials walked about. This *shobha yatra* went on till five p.m., appearing like an ocean of humanity.

By ten p.m. the doors to Ma's room were shut as per the rule. For several days now Ma's body has been refusing to lie quietly.

The *sannyasins'* glory and esteem are revealed during the

shobha yatra. Enormous crowds gather in Haridwar during this time to witness the Brahma Kunda bath and the *shobha yatra*. There is barely any space on the road sides to stand and watch. If a person squeezes into someone else's encampment, he does not then show any signs of leaving. A certain amount of aggressiveness is prevalent. What can be done ? There is insufficient room, yet merit has to be earned. Therefore even when chased away, nobody wants to budge. That is the state of things. But at the same time each one tries to serve the travellers to whatever extent possible. Daily *bhandara* (feasts) for the *sannyasins* and donation of clothes goes on somehow, we hear. This festival takes place on a mammoth scale. The first ritualistic bath is on *Shivaratri*, the second on the new moon day and the third is the *Kumbha snana* which is on the *Shankranti* day of the month of *Chaitra*. The mythological significance is that a drop of the immortalizing nectar fell on this spot and therefore the *Brahma Kunda* is a great pilgrimage spot for the Hindus.

Ma's devotees have been arriving group after group, in the event of the Brahma Kunda bath for Ma's *darshan*. But because of Ma's ill health the routine of keeping the doors closed between twelve noon and four p.m. and also after ten p.m. is continuing. Yet Ma's body does not recover at all. We cannot understand the reason for this. Ma says, "It is the feeling within you all that causes this." Tonight again the doors were shut at ten p.m.

April 1, Friday

Today Vimala Ma, Anandbhai, Sachidada's sister, Didima and others arrived. There was no incident particularly worth mentioning.

April 2, Saturday

Ma awoke at the crack of dawn — she did not appear to be

in the mood for sleeping. Even when she is made to eat she seems to be least interested in eating and starts talking about other matters. Although this *bhava* is prevalent all the time, it is more noticeably manifest at some times. It is very difficult to feed her, she almost always wants nothing to eat. From many days she has been saying, "See Khukuni, forgetfulness — like illusions will be noticeable in this body during this time." And in fact that is what I will perceive now. Referring to that Ma said, "Look, does the condition of forgetfulness usually occur within any body with prior warning ? Do you know how it happens in this case ? It is like the game of Holi. People play intensely, slapping on mud, ink and what not and turning themselves into demons. But they know that they are only playing and they keep water ready for a bath before they start. They know very well that after playing for awhile they will wash it all off. They do not hesitate to apply colours generously and also wear old, tattered clothes in preparation for the games. When the game is finished they bathe with soap and warm water and sit back as they were before." Laughing, Ma continued, "It is just like that, what else!" It is just a question of a variety of *bhava* within Ma; these *bhavas* perform *kriyas* within Ma's body.

One day I jokingly said to Ma, "Ma, suppose we were to imitate one of your myriad *bhavas* and pass it off as our own amongst people. If someone were to do this, how would we detect such an imitation?" Ma replied, "He would be hurt. Because those who have any experience in these matters would spot such an imitation immediately; the one who tries to imitate would himself receive an injury, fall down and come to grief." She continued, "Look, whatever great people preach by way of spiritual practice, follow it with one pointed determination. Do not try to do what they do." So saying she laughed and sang, — "Shohoj bhabe shohoj nam

Poorna hoy monoshkam"

which means,

"Just repeating the name, results in fulfilling all the mind's desires."

Ma then began speaking about herself, "You know that education was almost negligible, then leave aside imitation. When the sport of *sadhana* began manifesting in this body, whenever anyone narrated a life history, any scripture, play, novel or story, it was like lightning striking this body; whatever was being narrated seemed to fly away somewhere. The natural pace of the body prevailed most powerfully all the time. Nothing could enter within from outside. Do you know how? Just as a piece of brick when flung against a strong wall hits it and bounces off without making the slightest mark on the wall. If the piece of brick had been stronger than the wall it could have chipped the wall."

"But now I can say this much — that when anyone narrates anything now I sit beside the speaker. One day Sharada Shankar had come to narrate the *Bhagavatam*. After staying in that state for some time I got up alone and left. Again on another day someone had come to narrate something and I was unable to even sit beside him. Other than those two days, no one came to narrate anything on any other day. Seeing my condition no one came. If the person to whom you are narrating does not show any signs of listening, will anyone want to narrate anything to that person?"

One day Shishir Babu spoke to Ma alone. I was present. Shishir Baby asked, "Ma, I heard that you do not give *diksha*. At one time I greatly admired that. But Shobha says that in fact, without giving *diksha*, power is not distributed. If that is true then truly, you are doing nothing for those who are attached to you for succour." Ma replied, "Look, whatever is of use to each one is happening anyway. It is not as if nothing happens without a *mantra* being whispered into your ears. It is not possible to explain whose job is being completed and which *bhava* is being used."

Looking towards me Ma said, "You tell us." I said, "It has often been observed that although Ma gives *diksha* to none someone who has taken refuge at Ma's feet may have discovered the *bija mantra* within himself either in a dream or in the waking state. And that has served his purpose. And who knows how many other kind of *bhava* exist?" Ma then narrated a number of events in agreement with what I had said.

At night I was seated near Ma and no one else was present. Referring to the subject discussed earlier Ma said, "Do you know what it is like ? Suppose a tree grows out of a seed. Then you take a pen and draw another tree from its branches. No seed was used but the tree drawn with a pen will also have fruits and flowers. In this fashion the purpose may be achieved in a variety of *bhavas*. There are many such matters within this." I said, "I have heard that *mahatmas* roam in the world with many kinds of bodies. It is not as if each one has to be born from a mother's womb." Having heard this comment from me earlier Ma had spoken about the pen drawing mentioned earlier.

April 3, Sunday

This morning Purnendu Babu, the son of Rai Saheb Radha Govind Babu of Dinajpur arrived. He expressed the desire to ask some questions of Ma. He comes often to Ma. He has travelled to several places of pilgrimage. He asked Ma, "Alright Ma, does God really exist ? Can he be seen?" Ma replied, "Yes, He does exist and He can also be seen. Just as you are seeing me and I am seeing you. He is more true than even that."

He then asked, "Then why does He not remove afflictions? Why is He so heartless?" Ma said, "He is not heartless. With the aim of making you achieve completeness He takes you through joys and sorrows. Moreover, there is yet another point. He plays with Himself — it is His *leela*."

Purnendu Babu asked, "Alright Ma, why is it that the mind cannot be steadied in any way? I have visited many places of pilgrimage, sat for years on end quietly repeating the Name, but why is it that the mind refuses to be still?" Ma replied, "Look, I speak in any old haphazard fashion. I am after all only your daughter."

Purnendu Babu rejoined, "Fine, you may be my daughter, but your father has become senile and only his daughter can explain to him. Tell me Ma." Ma said, "Do you know what the matter is? The meaning of *tapasya* (penance) is *tapa sahana* (endurance of heat). This sorrow that you are experiencing is the penance (*tapasya*) being performed to attain Him."

Purnendu Babu asked, "What is achieved by visiting places of pilgrimage?" Ma replied, "Firstly it exerts an influence. Moreover, once the curiosity to see all the places is satiated you will be able to sit in peace. It is all necessary. Also it is possible that you may have the *darshan* of a *Mahapurusha* in a place of pilgrimage. According to one's fate many special benefits may accrue in these places. After all, the place of pilgrimage also showers mercy (*kripa*). Baba, I am unable to speak ill or depreciatingly about anything. Do you know what I perceive? Everything is necessary and whatever is spoken by anyone from his situation is all true. It is not as if all are situated at the same spot."

This morning Swami Devananda of the Ramakrishna Mission brought Prasanna Babu and family of Dhaka to Ma. Prasanna Babu's wife sings very well. She sang many songs to the delight of all present. Another lady arrived with a gentleman. Inebriated in divine *bhava* she sang beautifully and danced. She seemed steeped in her own *bhava*. We heard that after the death of her husband she has relinquished the life of a householder and has come away.

In the afternoon Ma explained a few things. She was lying down and I was seated beside her. No other person was

present in the room. Ma said, "Look, sometimes it so happens that while speaking, speech is halted suddenly and no sound can be uttered. There are many facts underlying this occurrence. Sometimes it could be that there is no need for speech and therefore no speech emerges. Then again do you know what it could be? There is a level at which speech is uttered, is there not? Having gone beyond that level, no speech emerges; it is as though everything has been destroyed. The *bhava* that is manifested as *nirvikalpa samadhi*, for example, makes it impossible to speak in that state. Call it an *avatara* (incarnation) or call it anything else, if taking birth is perceived, then a limitation is observed. In this manner, depending upon how long a sport has to be played the appearance lasts accordingly. The sport is manifested in accordance with the duration. Within the limitless lies the limit and within the limit lies the limitless."

"Then listen to yet another point. When you heard Prasanna Babu's wife singing did you not hear the rise and fall of melody, rhythm and beat? When *stotras* were uttered by this body there was no end to the number of *chhandas* there were in it. It was all infinite—how shall I describe it? One by one the *stotras*, or whatever you people call them, emanated. *Chhandas* after *chhandas* emerged and then each *chhandas* seemed to merge into the other. Just as the melody, rhythm and beat can be of innumerable kinds. It is as if one by one the melodies merge into the Great Melody, the sound into the Great Sound."

I said, "Ma, in Calcutta, at the residence of Pramatha Babu, you had once sung '*Hari Bol*' with innumerable tonal variations. Listening to it Professor Khagen Mitra had exclaimed in surprise—'I had never imagined that *Hari Bol* could be sung in so many different tunes!' And he is a good singer himself."

Ma replied, "I have stressed already that everything is Infinite. And after all how much had emerged that day? And

that again was what you all had extracted. Because the *kriya* that occurs within this body is always in response to the *bhava* that you present before it. Khagen Mitra is a good singer. He sang and with that many melodies emerged. But it does not always happen thus. In fact I have never learnt music. In villages women plant a hand on their cheek and begin to sing — it is just like that. Where did so many melodies come from? Whatever you people make happen, that transpires. Whatever is necessary, exactly that much occurs. Someone could ask, 'Why did you become a good singer?' There is no end to such 'why' queries. Then this could also be asked, 'Why do you not speak in English? Why do you not wear their clothes? Why do you not eat food consumed by Muslims?' So many such questions could be put. Therefore I say, you people get done by me whatever is needed by you."

At another time Ma had said to me, "Look, it is difficult to understand how many states exist within a *sadhaka*. No speech emerges — this *bhava* could be the result of so many other *bhavas*. One example is the infant, who utters only 'Ba, Ba' when speech first emerges, and is unable to say anything else. It is not as if the infant knows more and yet utters nothing else. He has neither the knowledge nor the ability to speak. Yet another *bhava* is this — after witnessing some incident, a young or an old person wonders — 'O ! what is this!' and is unable to speak because of being wonderstruck. The infant says 'Ba, Ba' and then says no more. The young or old person also says nothing but in these two conditions there is a world of difference. Similarly there is great difference in the spiritual condition of one seeker from that of another. Therefore it is always not possible to judge the inner *bhava* of a *sadhaka* by observing the external condition."

This afternoon as soon as Shishir Babu arrived Ma asked, "Do you laugh or do you cry?" He replied, "Why do you ask?" Ma laughed and said, "I just asked!" Later he said, "Ma, you

understood correctly. Just today there occurred an incident which I will not narrate before everybody; I shall only reveal it to you in private."

Till sunset Ma remained on the terrace. Then she came down and drank some water after which the doors of her room were shut. Tonight again I was seated alone with Ma. In the course of conversation Ma said, "See, what do children do at first? They only babble incoherently, for they do not know any better. Then gradually their words become clearer, though knowledge has still not dawned. After that, little by little, one or two words are uttered. Even at that stage the child's parents and nearest relatives look after him and serve him. As the child grows a little older and speaks one or two sentences, though not clearly, questions like, 'What is this?' and 'What is that?' begin arising in his mind. At that point everybody starts answering his questions and the child begins to learn. The whole world is then his *guru* and he is the questioning pupil. Spiritual seekers are in exactly the same condition."

April 4, Monday

Ma sat up early this morning. A boy came to sing for Ma. Some others gathered and the singing continued till ten a.m. Ma's face was washed and she was offered *bhoga*. She had eaten nothing this morning. She had once remarked, "By organising this regular schedule of eating and drinking, you people are further harming this body. Why don't you revert to the earlier system when there were no fixed times for meals?" Yet, noting the condition of Ma's health, the doctor did not have the courage to allow Ma's diet to assume its usual haphazard schedule. He would say, "Ma's body also has its *dharma*. Ma remains absorbed in her own *bhava* and does not think of her body at all. That is why her health goes down." Her diet and rest can never be regulated. Sometimes she would eat nothing the whole day and then perhaps have something at sunset.

This pattern would continue for many days. Then again whosever appeared in front of Ma would feed her something or the other and she would accept it. In Dehradun particularly this went on for some days. Kashi Babu's wife Lakshmi Rani and others were surprised to observe that day and night, whenever people walked in, they brought some eatable or the other which they placed in Ma's mouth and she accepted the offering without any reluctance.

In the afternoon a man arrived. He could produce a flute like sound from his throat; he could also produce a melody as played on the *been*. He also sang *kirtan*. Ma sat on the terrace, surrounded by men and women on all sides, and listened to the *kirtan*. After sunset Shishir Babu and Gopinath Babu came and sat near Ma. Shishir Babu wanted to ask Ma some questions so he, Gopinath Babu and I took Ma inside her room and shut the door. Gopinath Babu indicated Ma's body and said, "It is essential that Ma's body should be well." Ma laughed and said, "Tell me Baba, whose body?" Gopinath Babu laughed in turn and exclaimed, "She has again dragged in the philosophical viewpoint. We speak from our point of view — 'Your body'." Ma replied, "Alright, then I shall also say that. People say that I do not speak straight at all." Gopinath Babu laughed and said, "Ma has all the answers well defined to begin with!"

Shishir Babu asked, "Do these incarnations (*avataaras*) like Rama and Krishna take birth as ordinary human beings? Who becomes an incarnation? Does an *avatara* have a previous birth? Was Rama or Krishna a *jiva* in his previous birth?"

Ma laughed and said, "All these people here are all incarnations." Shishir Babu implored, "Please explain in a manner that we can understand." Then Ma said, "Look, if you ask whether Rama, Krishna and other incarnations had previous lives or not then it can be said that there may be innumerable Ramas and Krishnas who come and go, but their births are not like yours." Shishir Babu said, "Do they come in the form of

jivas like us?" In reply Ma said, "As the *jiva* attains more and more exalted states it becomes more like God and God as an incarnation behaves manifestly like a *jiva*."

Ma then entreatingly requested Gopi Babu, "Babu, say something in this matter; what do the *shastras* opine?" Gopi Babu replied, "There are two states possibly. One is when the *sadhaka* reaches an elevated state and becomes like God, and the other is God Himself." Shishir Babu asked, "Then which of these appears as an incarnation?" Ma replied, "God Himself appears because He is self-enlightened. He is everything, in all *bhavas* and in all forms. He who resides in one is present in all the various *bhavas*. Previous lives and future lives are for you. All births are His births and again He is never born. So where does the question of previous and future births occur at all?"

Shishir Babu asked, "Then does that mean that those who acquire godliness by practising *sadhana* do not come back again?" Ma replied, "How can they possibly come and go? *Sadhana* is performed to cross over the limitations of coming and going. Yet, from another point of view it can be said that they do come. Do you know in what sense they come? Just as the waters of the streams and waterfalls flow into the water of the Ganga. Now if you were to take one mug of water from the Ganga, some part of the water of the streams and that of the waterfall also comes with it but you claim to have brought back one mug of water from the Ganga alone. The water of the stream and that of the waterfall have merged into the water of the Ganga and become part of the Ganga, there is no difference between them now." Looking at Shishir Babu Ma laughed and said, "You told me to speak in a manner that would be understandable to you. That is why I am telling you in a straight forward way. Yet this is just the view from one angle. For look again, consider those seekers who have become God like. If God Himself incarnates them along with Him, those seekers who have become one with God also come for they are now not

separate from Him. Wherever you look, whether in separateness or in oneness, you will find Him."

Shishir Babu said, "God is complete. How is there compassion and pity in Him? Why does the Gita say, '*Yada yada hi dharmasya...*'? Does God experience pity on seeing the state of the people? Do those answers arise from that? Then does that mean He has compassion and pity?" Ma replied, "Look, compassion and pity are there within you and therefore compassion and pity are manifested. But in truth they are not compassion and pity."

"Yet consider, if there be no compassion and pity in Him then where would you get them from? He is all in all and He resides within everything. There is no question of compassion and pity. But again all compassion and pity lie within Him and He pervades all compassion and pity. He is complete and therefore everything is possible within Him. Do you know how that is? That is just His natural rhythm. Like thunder arising if there are clouds and like lightning flashing, because of natural causes; no desire is necessary to produce either thunder or lightning. Then again desire also occurs regularly and naturally within Him and similarly the cloud, that is the wail of the people, causes His appearance naturally. What has been said, is like that. How will He 'come' again? He always is. Just as it is natural for you to ask for the revelation of Him to whom you belong. Therefore it is said that by knowing yourself, everything can be known."

Ma then went on to explain a particular state — "On reaching a certain state no speech emerges, everything is dissolved, but there remains some trace of it. It is said that no speech emerges. Sometimes internalised speech emerges through external behaviour. Then no external force can obstruct it, it emerges endlessly."

The topic that came up for discussion next was whether any state exists beyond the *nirvikalpa samādhi*. Ma said, "It

exists. In *nirvikalpa samadhi* some may give up the body while others may retain it in the same way as fan blades which continue to move even after the fan has been switched off. Without a cause a body cannot survive. Is not *samadhi* also a particular state, Baba?" Gopinath Babu said, "It is only a state, Ma"

Ma said, "Each of these is but a single point of view." Then Shishir Babu asked, "Ma, For those who remain after attaining *nirvikalpa samadhi*, due to some reason, do the different elements of *samsara* exist for them? And how do they view the world?" Ma laughed and was quiet for awhile; then she spoke slowly, "Look Baba, if someone holds the hand of your body and asks, 'Who is this?' you reply, 'I'. Again on holding your leg if he asked you the same question you would still say 'I'. If he held your finger and asked you, you would again say 'I'. Though the hand, the leg and the finger have different names you still call them 'I'. Understand it to be an identical situation."

Shishir Babu said, "The reason for my asking all these questions is the following. I remember that in one narrative Nara and Narayana are born as Krishna and Arjuna while it is stated in another scripture that Krishna is God Himself — what is the ultimate analysis of this?" Ma entreated Gopinath Babu, "Baba, what do the *shastras* say about this?" But Shishir Babu intervened, "I want to hear the answer from Ma's lips." Ma acquiesced, "Very well, I want to hear from Baba what Baba has understood." Gopi Babu laughed and said, "Ma will give the answer to this problem. Only a person situated at a particular level can answer from that level." Ma said, "Look, it appears that in making such a statement all are situated equally. No one can be left out. All are infinite. Bholanath calls me 'Appealeshwari' because I say that everything is correct; but do you know what the fact is? I perceive that each one is connected to the other. It is not possible to function by saying 'Yes, yes' to each and every opinion; yet it is not right to negate

it either. By thinking 'Tat na', 'Tat na' (that is not) it can be perceived that even One-ness is infinite. This is very true."

April 5, Tuesday

Tonight as Ma spoke to me she suddenly came up with, "Look, the sport is done. Do you know what happened ? A place; the place is frightening and terrible, as if it is going down; there is nothing to hold on to. In that place are some bundle-like objects. In the sport this body has gone there to hide. The body is about to fall. Standing there it says, 'How shall I come?' Hearing this people at different levels present themselves; they animatedly clear the way so that this body may go near them. This body holds the bundles one by one and they slip and fall. This body gradually moves towards those people. Their aim is to get to this body and therefore they do not notice the bundles that are falling. The main person leading the others is bent on taking this body and has cleared the path for this body with great reverence. Indicating that person in particular this body said, 'You are my greatest friend. I bless you, you will attain bliss.' The one who gave the blessings was this body." Saying this Ma pointed towards her own body and continued, they were waiting reverently for that with which this could go to them."

I asked, "Ma, what was the purpose of this sport?" Ma replied, "It is but the game of hide and seek between the *Atma* and the *Paramatma*. The bundles are bonds of desires and *vasanas*. The mind and intellect help in making the way. The one who gave the blessings is the *jivatma*. 'Entry' — it is but a game of hide and seek played by the *Paramatma* with Himself, what else?"

April 6, Wednesday

Today while speaking to me Ma said, "The example that we talked about the other day — if your hand is held you will say

'I', if your leg is held you will still say 'I', and even if your finger is held you say 'I'. Do you know it is all about? If anything is put into fire it is the nature of fire to turn that object into its own form. Similarly once you reach your own nature, only what you are exists. There is nothing other than One, everything dissolves into the One. It is not correct to call it One, nor does Two manifest the *svarup* (one form); which is why that is unmanifest (*avyakta*). Then again do you know something? Creation, existence and dissolution are not facts at all." Saying this Ma laughed.

Again Ma said, "Look, unless all this is experienced by actions prompted by one's own nature one will not be able to understand this correctly. It will seem fictitious." I said, "If creation and existence are infinite then what is One-ness?" Ma replied, "That is *svabhava* (one's own nature) and *svayamprakasha* (self effulgent). Just as it is your *svabhava* to yearn for unbroken bliss. He claps His own hands together, He sings and He experiences sound, form, taste, smell and feels satiated." Laughing, she continued, "Look, Khukuni, what a beautiful frolic it is! You yourself over eat, then while swimming with great delight you bathe too long—then you yourself suffer a stomach ache and a cold and a fever and then you wonder, 'How long will it take for these illnesses to end? How shall I get back to what I was?' You brood thus and feel disturbed. Well, don't you find all this beautifully entertaining? This is why I say, just take as much as you need. If that is done then what is, reveals as it is. In that state you will observe that even when your body is not keeping well you still have a constant feeling of health within yourself. This is the reason I stress, it is your nature (*svabhava*) to want *ananda* (bliss) even at that time, that is, you ask for what you really are."

"Then the different qualities (*gunas*) take on different forms and result in the formation of figures. In this variety arise auspicious figures as well as inauspicious figures. From this

variety to reach the One-ness it is necessary to take refuge in the auspicious figures. In this arise good qualities (*saguna*), a state beyond qualities (*nirguna*) and so on. This is the sport of Siva, is it not? Then by the special effulgence of all qualities and forms the crores of *jivas* (creatures), crores of *ishvaras* (gods) which you all speak about, are manifested. You were complete and healthy when you went into actions related to your *svabhava*, so you are now again complete, healthy and at peace. Just see how wonderful this game is. Where will you all go if you do not call it a game? The child of the house remains in the house !"

Ma continued, "Look, why have such matters been discussed? Shall I tell you why? I am living in a house beside the Ganga. I observe that many people bathe and swim in the Ganga then get fever and cough. Some others eat with great satisfaction, some have fever, some a cold, some others suffer from stomach ailments; now I am in a doctor's house and he gives medicines whenever necessary. Seeing all this, such topics came up for discussion, now how can I help this, tell me?" Laughingly Ma said all this.

It is surprising that Ma never says anything of her own accord or with any ordinary intent. When speech emanates from her she speaks continuously regardless of whether anyone listens or does not listen. Today she spoke in that strain and discussed a couple of matters. Didima and I were present and Ma was lying down. Surprisingly, though Didima and I heard Ma's words, the very next moment we forgot all that she had said. I also could not remember much of what Ma had said. When she was told about this Ma laughed and said "Only what is necessary will happen anyway." I asked Didima but she could not recall anything. Ma laughed saying, "You always complain that you cannot write anything sitting next to Ma, Ma never says anything. Now see, by a coincidence the same statement has been uttered by you. You are also feeling sorry

about it, how beautiful !”

Ma said all this at night, lying down. In spite of shutting the door Ma does not always quieten down. Yet she does not listen to useless conversation from our side, nor does she let us speak; she speaks out whatever emanates from her in her own *bhava*. Tonight she spoke late into the night. I stopped her and said, “What are you saying Ma ?” to which she replied, “What shall I do, I speak whatever emerges from my mouth.”

Today Vinay Babu and Jnan Babu came from Maimansingh. The doctor's house is full. Bholanath sang *kirtan* with everybody else with great delight. An immense *bhava* of bliss seems to pervade him from within. Outside, in Haridwar, a fair of joy is in progress, all around.

April 7, Thursday

Early this morning Girin Babu arrived and sang an *arati* song. Then Bholanath and others sang *kirtan* and went across to the other side. After singing *kirtan* for a long time they all returned slowly. Even after their return Bholanath led the *kirtan* for a long time. What great bliss !

In the course of conversation, when I asked Ma about her condition, she said, “Look, for some time it so happened that the *asana* of gods and goddesses occurred within this body. So much so that when the *bhava* of gods who had four arms, played within this body, the manner of standing and holding up the hands seemed to portray the existence of two more arms. The *bhavas* which blossomed within this body were exactly those which characterized those gods. When I was the daughter-in-law of the house, once the door of the room was shut and I got down to doing the domestic chores, such *bhavas* occurred. Is it not but a sport ? Everything is just a game !”

In the afternoon two or three people arrived and draped a *dhoti* and shawl on Ma. A boy put his Gandhi cap on Ma and she laughed. Everyone gazed at Ma's face. She then took her

own shawl and wrapped it around the boy. Seeing Ma with a cap, a *dhori* and a shawl everyone bent down to do *pranama*. Ma walked wearing the costume from room to room, joking and laughing. She went on thus for some time and then she took off the costume, got into her own *dhori* and sat on her bedding.

An ache has developed in Ma's hands. On the request of the doctor and other devotees she has agreed to wear a *kurta*. Everyday there arises some ailment or the other in her body. Whenever the doctor enquires, "Ma, how are you today?" she tells him about some discomfort or the other. Then she whispers laughingly in our ears, "The doctor had started the treatment, he is dispensing with the disease very carefully. By becoming a patient and speaking incessantly as one, I have to put him in a tight spot." So saying she laughed.

April 8, Friday

Today Ma travelled in Sanjnya Devi's daughter's car to the other shore of the Ganga at the invitation of Achalananda Brahmachari (disciple of Kuladananda Brahmachari), to attend a *yajna*. Kiranchand Darvesh took Ma from there to his tent. After bowing at Ma's feet he held her hand and said, "Ma, Ma, please place your hand on my head." Ma smiled and said, "Do you say such a thing to your daughter?" But Darvesh did not relent. At which Ma said, "Then sit up." When he sat up Ma stroked his head and all his limbs saying, "It is not sufficient to touch only the head, therefore I have touched all the limbs as well." Filled with gratitude he gazed at Ma with tear filled eyes.

After spending some time there we returned. As usual many people gathered for Ma's *darshan* at four p.m. Ma was made to sit on the terrace. After sunset she was brought down for a drink of water. At ten p.m. the doors were shut.

April 9, Saturday

Tonight Ma began talking about her state — "Look, I did not

even know the names of such things as *mudras*, yet do you know what I saw? Each god was offered a *pranama* with a particular *mudra*." Then referring to the ritualistic touching of the body and the hands (*anganyasa*, *karanyasa*), Ma said, "Just as you see in pictures there are so many gods in the body of a cow, similarly so many *bija mantras* are packed in this body, each *bija* being accompanied by its presiding deity. When *kriya* was performed, the hand touched each one of those spots. It was all clearly visible. These levels of a spiritual seeker manifested in this body. Earlier I have told you about the time when no other person could be touched. During that period even if I were lying down with my eyes shut and a person walked past soundlessly, I could still make out his presence." I asked, "How did you know Ma?" Ma replied, "Do you want to know how? A ray like the sun's rays always emanated from this body. Therefore though there was no bodily contact, the moment anything entered within the ray, it made contact with this body. Therefore even without physical contact, another person's presence was discernible. But that was also a level."

April 10, Sunday

Today Vilas's thread ceremony was performed. She looked beautiful in the garb of a *brahmacharini*. Bholanath was her *acharya* (*guru*). Today Jotish Guha, his mother and his daughter and Prankumar Babu and his family arrived from Calcutta. Since Ma's health is indifferent the doors to her room are kept shut most of the time. But the devotees are very eager for her *darshan*. Therefore as soon as the doors are opened a huge crowd collects in the room.

Today I asked Ma, "Well Ma, how can another person's thoughts be known?" Ma replied, "Do you know how it is done? May be you have not seen a curry being cooked, but by *tasting* it you can say whether the salt, chilli and spices are too little

or too much. Understand it to be something like that. Then again it may so happen that you do not see the food being cooked but by its aroma you can make out what is being cooked. In the same way even without seeing, or without hearing the name, the innermost thoughts in a person's mind can be divined. It is visible as clearly as an image is seen in a mirror. All facts have not been disclosed, only whatever you have made me say has been spoken."

Thoughts about Ma's life arose in my mind. Once Ma's body was bedecked with jewelry. One ornament fell off in the train. Ma noticed it but said nothing. When we alighted from the train and noted that the ornament was missing Ma laughed and said, "It fell off in the train but just look, there was no inclination to tell you about it and therefore I was unable to do so. So many things keep lying around anyway!" And with that she laughed sweetly.

In the afternoon Ma sat down to eat. Ramratan Babu and Sanjna Devi sat near her and obtained a little *prasada*. Ramratan Babu cracked a joke at which Ma laughed and said, "You are a big devil (*shaitan*)."

When all laughed at this Ma asked, "Do you know what *shaitan* means? He who has put *tan* (fast moving note patterns) into *sva* (Self), is called a *shaitan*." This interpretation delighted Ramratan Babu immensely. I commented, "Ma has devised a new meaning. Now the word *shaitan* will be one of praise rather than one of derogation."

From many days Ma's right arm has been aching badly. The glands are swollen, and in the left arm she has a different kind pain. Ma is hardly aware of it. As a figure of complete bliss (*anandamayi*) she converses with everyone, but we have been observing the deterioration in her physical condition. She is troubled by one ailment or the other. Dr. Pant said, "Ma, please get well of your own accord, for what can we do? For five days we shall say nothing, please set this right through your own *bhava*." Ma replied, "Now that medicine has been administered

to this body, let us see what result emerges; how much medicine can you people give, after all?" So saying she laughed.

April 11, Monday

Ma's hand shows no improvement. The doctor and Swami Akhandananda are worried about it. The house is full of people and Haridwar is also full of crowds. A *yajna* goes on here, a *bhandara* (feast) elsewhere, instruments play through the day and night. In solitude I asked Ma, "Ma, what is *Ananda Bhava Ghan*?" Ma answered, "That which is permanent and impermanent, constant and ever changing, that which can never be broken — now understand for yourself." and she burst into charming laughter.

Today Vinay Sen asked Ma, "Ma, how do you understand humour, fun and frolic? You have never entered such *bhava* at all!" He thought he had Ma at a loss for words but Ma immediately shot back, "You people think of so many different persons and offer your advice. How do you understand? Have you people done such work?" As she said this and laughed all the people present burst out laughing. Vinay Babu also laughed and said, "That was a quick repartee Ma!" Ma said, "I never think and speak. You people extract from me the response that you want. Listen to one more point about this. There is no question of understanding and thinking here. 'That' is always manifested in various forms and in various attitudes. Whatever you say, that is so."

April 12, Tuesday

The atmosphere of Haridwar seems to have undergone a radical change. It is difficult to even breathe. The pathways and the river banks are crowded with people. A constant din pervades day in and day out, the noise is deafening. Tomorrow is the day of the bath. Today Shachi Babu, Rai Bahadur Suren Babu, his daughter Nani and many others from Calcutta. It was

decided that Ma's *puja* would be performed in the *panda's* house followed by *kirtan* throughout the night. The worship was started in the evening. The *kirtan* will be sung on the bank of the Ganga.

April 13, Wednesday

Today is the day of the *Kumbha* bath. This festival is celebrated only once in twelve years in this spot. Lakhs of people have gathered. The police and many groups of volunteers are working hard. Although they are all making a great effort to maintain peace and order, several people have been injured. Many make-shift straw huts and tents have been erected; some have caught fire and people's property is burning. People are dying and the condition is terrifying.

Early morning the *kirtan* was started,

*"Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare,
Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare."*

In the morning Bholanath set out with a batch of *kirtan* singers as he had been doing everyday. On the banks of the Ganga where the *kirtan* had been initiated, some people sat and continued singing the Name. The place had been decorated beautifully with a dais at the centre. At about nine a.m. Ma's worship was commenced. Shri Manmath Chattopadhyaya performed the *puja*.

After the *puja* Ma was offered *bhoga*. Then the doors were shut so that Ma could rest but she could not lie down for long. Devotees have come from far away places for Ma's *darshan* and some cannot stay for more than a couple of days. In the afternoon Ma went down and attended the *kirtan*. On the requests of those around her she entered the waters of the Ganga and sprinkled some water on her head. Devotees immediately put some of the water on their heads as well. Some people did not go to the Brahma Kunda. They put the Ganga water touched by Ma's feet on their heads and felt

blessed.

Today Ma had a bath with hot water. Meanwhile the pain in both her arms has become so great that she is not able to move them. She also has a cold and fever. She showed the doctor all her symptoms like a little child. The doctor said, "Ma, if you only arouse the will to recover from within yourself, everything will be alright. Please accept this prayer from us."

At ten p.m., a little while after the doors were shut, Ma sat up. Since this afternoon there has been talk of going to Dehradun. Ma also agreed saying, "It is a good idea, try it." But the present situation in the town makes it practically impossible to leave. At eleven p.m. Ma went down to sit for the *kirtan*. Men and women sang *kirtan* in Ma's presence. Everyone was garlanded and anointed with sandal paste *tilak*. The *kirtan* gathered momentum. Ma was also decked with garlands and sandal paste. In between Ma stood up and waved her arms to the beat, inspiring the others. Seeing her wave her arms the devotees raised their singing of the Name to a crescendo. The four quarters shone in the moonlight which mingled with the gurgle of the Ganga and the sound of the Name to make it enchanting. All those present drank it in. The voices of those who had come specially for the festival from different places, could be heard above the rest. *Sannyasins* shouted, 'Hare Hare Ganga' and jumped into the Ganga. On the other bank of the Ganga, the *shobha yatra* (procession) of the *sadhus* was on from morning. Even at night some groups had walked past on decorated elephants, camels and horses. We were all engrossed in *kirtan* with Ma. Then a small group of men sat up to continue singing the Name while the rest went to sleep. With great effort I got together some women and together we went down to attend the *kirtan*.

Chapter Four

April 14, 1938, Thursday

Purna Kumbha has been celebrated in Haridwar. Ma is staying on. In the afternoon some people took their luggage and reached the railway station with great difficulty. They, however, returned in exasperation after some hours. Some of us had stayed on at our lodging with Ma. No one was able to leave because of the crowds. The entry to the station has been barred. Ma said, "Try to leave. The town is getting hot. Disease has spread. With so many people here it is necessary to leave as soon as possible. But there seems to be no way of leaving." It was finally decided that at midnight we would travel by car to Dehradun.

After sunset Ma went and sat on the terrace. Today Ma's body seems ill. She could not sleep for a long time. May be she is in the mood to leave and since that has not been possible, her body is restless. She lay down for some time on the terrace and then sat up. Her countenance was happy — she sang as she strolled on the terrace. Everybody was waiting for the car. Ma laughed and said, "The doctor took so much trouble to keep this 'bird' in the house and shut the doors every night at ten, but now the bird has cut away the fetters and is leaving." So saying she laughed.

Around midnight the car arrived. By the time everything was arranged and we departed it was two thirty a.m. The rest of the devotees left by bus to go to Dehradun via Saharanpur. In Ma's car were Hariram Joshi, Rai Bahadur Surendranath Bandopadhyaya, his daughter Nani and I. We travelled through jungle and spotted herds of deer and rabbits. We heard that the forest is also inhabited by tigers and elephants. Englishmen visit these forests twice a year to go hunting.

Ma's health was bad but if we had not made this arrangement and got away from Haridwar we would have suffered

great inconvenience.

April 15, Friday

We reached the *ashram* by five thirty a.m. this morning. Ma has fever but her countenance is radiant. We are afraid about Ma's condition because her body is so weak and now she has fever in addition. By nine a.m. Bholanath arrived with all the others. Dr. Jotish of Jamshedpur has rented a small house opposite the *ashram* and is staying in it with his family. They are extremely happy that they have Ma so close by. Another big house was rented near the *ashram* where the householder devotees are camping.

In the afternoon, in the course of conversation, Ma said, "Action exists as long as language exists; action continues as long as language exists."

Because of Ma's ill health the doors of her room are being kept shut for longer periods of time in order to regulate the crowds. She has continuous fever night and day.

April 16, Saturday

This morning when all were seated around Ma, Shachi Babu suddenly came up with, "Rai Bahadur had decided before he set out from Calcutta that he would take Ma to Mussorie." Ma immediately responded with, "Very well, make preparations to leave right now." But now seeing Ma's poor health Rai Bahadur had no desire to take her to Mussorie. Finally Ma said, "I shall be quite alright, you people watch and see. Come let us go there." Receiving such encouragement from Ma, about sixteen people set out with Ma at eleven a.m. and returned by four p.m. In fact Ma did appear to be slightly better after the trip. At six p.m. Rai Bahadur, Shachi Babu and others left for Calcutta.

April 17, Sunday

We received news that right after Ma left Haridwar a

disastrous incident occurred there. A big fire destroyed many people. The police and the social workers clashed violently. The chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Govind Vallabh Pant, has reached Haridwar and is staying at Dr. Pitambar Pant's residence. The house is now full of police men. If Ma had not departed when she did, we would have been put to great inconvenience. We all realized why Ma, who must have had a premonition of such trouble, had come away from the crowded place. Hearing about all the occurrences in Haridwar Ma smiled gently.

Today Prankumar Babu and family arrived here from Haridwar after much difficulty. They were not in the yellow house with us but were put up elsewhere which is why they could not go along with us. The crowds in Haridwar were so great that it was not possible to communicate with anyone else. The situation was asphyxiating. People were dying right, left and centre. The level of maintenance of law and order which was very good to start with had considerably deteriorated. The condition that had developed was terrifying.

April 19, Tuesday

Today Ma's fever has come down slightly and she is also looking better. Massage and fomentation has been stopped. Ma had said, "You have tried it all for many days. Now stop it."

At about four p.m. Ma went out into the verandah. Somebody sat in the room kept aside for *japa* and sang the Name. Every morning and evening *kirtan* is being sung. In the course of conversation Bhupati Dada said, "Ma, that day you had said that nothing ever goes waste." Ma replied, "Nothing ever goes waste. It only gets transformed. Do you know how? Like the tree that grows out of a seed. The seed is destroyed. Yet from the tree that grows out of the seed, thousands of seeds of the same kind are produced. Again everything is destroyed and yet nothing is destroyed — both statements are quite correct."

In response to another statement Ma said, "Just as I see you people so also do I see the personifications of diseases clearly, whether it is day or night, whether I sleep or sit or exist in some other condition." Even though it may appear to us that Ma is resting, she does not actually rest — she made the above statement in reference to this.

April 22, Friday

Today Ma woke up a little late. Some people spoke to her in private. At eleven a.m. Ma was offered *bhoga*. Some English ladies came to meet Ma. Till noon they all sat around. Ma and talked about various matters. At twelve the room was emptied and Ma lay down to rest.

At four p.m. Ma went out for a stroll. Some people came for *darshan* and one of them was the Rani of Gidhond in Bihar. She is related to the Raja of Solan.

April 23, Saturday

At four p.m. I went with Ma for a drive in Sanjna Devi's car. Hariram is sick; the car stopped in front of his house. Finding Ma in his home he came down slowly for her *darshan*. We also halted at Kashi Babu's house and visited the Manohar temple before returning to the *ashram*. Today Jotish Chandra Guha and Prankumar Bosu were to leave for Calcutta with their families. But their departure was postponed to tomorrow because Prankumar Basu's mother-in-law is very unwell and also because the train did not arrive on time.

April 24, Sunday

When Ma woke up in the morning some people took her out for a walk. Since Ma's body is weak they walked only a short distance and returned. Ma sat in her room. Nowadays she is eating *chapati* with a little milk; she eats nothing else. Ma said, "If you people feed this body in its natural manner, it will not

remain well as you see it." Ma, of her own volition eats very little. She has practically stopped eating rice, vegetables, fruits and other foodstuffs. Her arm is still painful. At the request of all those around her, she keeps her arms warm for awhile. Then she unwraps the covering and casts it off saying, "Till now you people made all the arrangements, now let my arms get some fresh air."

I now remember something that happened in Haridwar. When Bholanath, wearing flower garlands and sandal paste, went out with a group of people to sing *kirtan*, he would appear very handsome while in the throes of singing. Actually he derived great joy from *kirtan* singing. Groups of people thronged the waysides to touch his feet. On the day of the *Kumbha* bath when he had gone to the Brahma Kunda for a dip accompanied by his group, the *naga sannyasins* arrived there and bathed him. They themselves did not know what divinity they saw within him. Social workers came forward to rescue Bholanath from the *sannyasins*, but the latter were reluctant to let go of him and they bathed Bholanath with great delight. Later Bholanath told us, "They caught me in such a state of mind that I cannot even explain what happened; I hardly knew where I was." Bholanath had been going out everyday with his group to sing *kirtan*, as I have mentioned earlier. At six a.m. Ma would go out into the courtyard. Then Bholanath and others would sing the Name before her for some time before they set forth. Gradually more people would join the group as they proceeded, singing *kirtan*. Bholanath would sing for about three hours and used to return singing. He never felt tired or fatigued while singing *kirtan*. He would sing with great enjoyment and dance as he sang.

This morning at nine thirty a.m. two *brahmacharis* (disciples of Sant Das Babaji) arrived for Ma's *darshan*. They were going to Mussorie. One said he had left the householder's fold nine years ago to become a *sadhu*. Even while he was at home

he used to visit Kamakhya and Vashishitha *ashram* in between and sit for *japa* and meditation with one pointed attention. At that time many deer would come and stand near him. That made him think that if, as a householder, just a little *japa* made deer come and stand near him, then perhaps if he renounced everything and started taking God's name, even tigers, bears and other wild beasts might forget their aggressiveness and come near him. But then, he said, that kind of grave *bhava* is no longer present. The other *brahmachari* has a wooden loin cloth. He has been away from home for the last eight years. Both of them stayed on in our *ashram* for the day.

At four p.m. Kashi Babu's wife Lakshmi Rani arrived. Day before yesterday she was very ill with a stomach ailment. Today she came to Ma and narrated a wonderful incident. She said, "Ma, on the first night of my illness I saw a black figure approaching me in my dream. The figure was not terrifying; in fact it was radiant as if it was shining. That figure came before you and stood with folded hands. I thought, 'Such a beautiful figure must be that of Mahadeva Himself, but where is the serpent?' Meanwhile the figure seemed to have received some orders from you by way of a signal from your eyes and the order seemed to concern me. You were seated steadily and the order was conveyed only through your gaze. As soon as it received the order the figure opened its joined palms and a terrible snake emerged; it had an enormous hood. Before the snake emerged fully the black figure disappeared. The snake then proceeded to eat my clothes. It pulled off so much of my apparel it appeared as if it would consume all of it. You watched unmoved. Then I shouted out of fear, 'Ma, you sit and watch while this snake eats me ! Please save me, save me!' When I screamed piteously the snake also disappeared. I awoke and felt as if Lord Yama himself had been there. By Ma's grace I was saved. May be I was to get some dreadful disease, but I would not die, I would recover. The next morning

I had such a terrible illness that I felt my limbs were breaking. Yet the very next day I recovered."

Ma heard this narration and laughed lightly. I said, "The figure that you described is very similar to the figure of Yama that you see in pictures."

The incident roused within me the feeling that Dharmaraja had asked Ma's permission to proceed with his work. On receiving Ma's orders he appeared in the form of the Great Time serpent and began swallowing everything as Ma assumed the form of the Changeless Observer and watched the sport of destruction. Absolutely no change was possible within her. Even the mere thought of this form is enough to stabilize a restless mind. Again, Ma also demonstrated the result of prayer. These *bhavas* are possible only within the Eternal *Purusha*. As the Lord says in the Gita, "I do everything, and yet I do nothing." These totally contradictory phenomena are perceptible within Ma. This kind of *leela* goes on all the time within Ma, yet we people are unable to understand it every time.

At six p.m. Shri Jotish Chandra Guha and others left. Even before the ailing elderly lady was brought to the door of the *ashram* and made to sit in the car with great difficulty, Ma said to me, "Disease is but another form of His. Come, let us go and see this Disease form of the Almighty." As she said this and took us to the wayside, the car drove up near us. On the old lady's insistent plea Ma got into the car and she touched Ma's feet. She caught hold of Ma's hands and touched her head and body with it. Ma told her, "Meditate on Vishwanathji as you go along." The old lady was being taken to Kashi. As soon as she left Sanjna Devi arrived with her daughter and son-in-law in their car. Ma and I went in the same car some distance in the direction of Mussorie. The Gujarati Vyasji has returned from Europe two days ago. After dusk he sat down to speak to Ma.

When the devotees departed this evening they all, particu-

larly because of Buni's weeping, had tears in their eyes. Ma said, "I am laughing. Then why do you all weep for me?" The other day when Belu and others were leaving Ma laughed and said, "You people are weeping but I am laughing. Both are essentially the same." This caused Belu to weep louder. She noticed that Ma's eyes were glistening with tears. The result of this was that after returning to Dhaka she ceased to enjoy the life of a householder any longer. Every time she remembered Ma's eyes glistening with tears, she felt like casting everything aside and running to Ma. It is humanly impossible to understand the myriad forms of attraction that reside within Ma. Yet we want to move away — how unfortunate ! In spite of getting such a wonderful opportunity we lose it lose it fruitlessly. Do we have the power to understand the innumerable ways in which Ma is showering her grace on everyone ?

At four p.m. today during conversation I said, "Ma wants to take everything." Ma laughed and said, "But who gives ? It is doubtful as to whether, after preserving everything for Himself, He will part with even a fraction of what remains." Everyone experienced the truth of this statement in their hearts.

Shri Kunja Mohan Mukhopadhyaya has been given the name of 'Turiyananda' by Ma, but he has not been initiated into *sannyasa* with a *viraja homa* (sacrifice). It is now two days since Ma sent him to Mangalananda Giri's *ashram* in Kankhal to perform the *viraja homa* according to scriptural injunctions. This morning Bholanath and Akhandananda Swamiji went to witness his initiation into *sannyasa*, as instructed by Ma. His *sannyasa* will be taken during the remaining part of tonight. As Bholanath was not feeling too well Ma told him not to go but he got ready to go nevertheless. Ma told me in solitude, "Bholanath has contracted a disease." I asked, "Then shall I stop him from going?" Ma replied, "It will be fruitless. He will go for sure. The disease will also come on for sure." Saying so much she shut her eyes and kept lying down. A few days before this Ma had

said, "Something that seems to you to be a big calamity will occur within a few days."

April 25, Monday

When Ma awoke this morning her face was washed and she was made to drink milk. Just then Baba Bholanath, Akhandananda Swamiji, Turiyananda Swami, Shanti and others returned from Haridwar. Shri Kunja Mohan Mukhopadhyaya had been initiated into *sannyasa* yesterday. Bholanath has returned very sick; he is suffering from a stomach ache and fever.

Shri Amulya Chandra Datta Gupta has published a book about Ma entitled, "Sri Sri Ma Anandamayi Prasanga". Today a copy of the book arrived by post. In the afternoon I read out from the book to Ma. The book is very well written. Every time Amulya Dada meets Ma he questions her on some topic and elicits answers from her. Ma, in her turn, enjoys listening to him as he is serious and grave by nature and does not speak uselessly. In his presence only good topics come up for discussion. I read out to Ma from the book that he had written. Some errors are present at a few places, but it is no fault of his for it is natural that mistakes will occur when anyone attempts to write about Ma's life because one's own interpretations and language are bound to come up even if one does not desire it.

At one place the book reads — 'Ma said, "I was possessed by a *bhava*".' But Ma never says that. She generally says, "The body behaved very strangely."

I laughed and told Ma, "Ma, that has become our language." Ma said, "That kind of language does not come from me. If you call it 'being possessed by a *bhava*' then all the time some kind of *bhava* is prevalent in my body. Like when I speak to you all as if I were just like one of you — that is one kind of *bhava*. Whichever be the *bhava* you present before this body, this body responds by entering into the same *bhava* at that time. Be

it concerned with *bhakti yoga* (the *yoga* of devotion), *karma yoga* (the *yoga* of action), *jnana yoga* (the *yoga* of knowledge) or be it related to some worldly matter, this body cooperates with that *bhava*. The bodily posture and conversation that occur reflect the same *bhava*, therefore you will observe Ma has a different *bhava* at different times. Actually you only see this body assuming whichever *bhava* you put before it. Therefore all are possessed by *bhava*."

In another place the book reads — 'Ma says, "I myself did not know that".' Ma never says that either. Referring to the words "I did not know", Ma now explained, "Do you know why I say that ? Perhaps it was not appropriate to reveal something to you. Therefore I say, 'You people have not made me say it' or 'I cannot say it' meaning 'it cannot be stated or revealed'. Never has it been said, 'I did not know'. Whatever could not be uttered has just been pushed aside, that's all." Saying this Ma laughed very softly. Actually we have often received proof of what Ma just explained. Whenever something is not to be mentioned Ma says 'Enough' and drops the subject. Whatever interpretation we make in our language is not known even to Ma. Her character is very difficult to understand.

The history of *Kali puja* has been described in the book. While listening to it Ma said, "In reality I saw that just as a little child jumps into its mother's lap so did the figure of Kali jump into my lap. I also kissed it the way one fondles a child. Alright, tell me what is this all about? This is but a human body and what does it do? It takes the personification of *Brahman*, Kali, in its lap and consoles it." The ever smiling Ma then looked at me like a little child and continued, "See, I saw a moving figure of Kali but Shiva was not present. Do you know what that implies? She is the Primordial Power. I had asked many people as to the instances when Shiva is not present beneath Kali, but no one could answer. Do you know why I saw such a figure? I have already said — 'whichever *bhava* you people

present, this body responds to and speaks accordingly. It is as if those *bhavas* are fully illuminated within this body. During Diwali you people began praying to this body for the performance of *Kali puja*. Therefore the form of the Primordial Power appeared in the figure of Kali." There is no decision or indecision in Ma's mind. Therefore she says, "The *bhava* that you bring before this body is the one that sports within this body." Sometimes it has been observed that when a great person emerges from a state of *samadhi* the worldly thoughts that were strongest in his mind prior to entering *samadhi* surface and he speaks accordingly. But nothing of this kind can be observed in Ma.* The temperature rises to 107°, visibility decreases, hearing becomes weak, a veritable train engine thunders inside her head, but externally no *bhava* is stronger than the other. Because of this, although she may speak for a few moments about the present condition of her body, only while in that state, she does not otherwise say anything. No alteration in her *bhava* is perceptible.

April 26, Tuesday

Bholanath continues to be unwell today. Ma had declared yesterday, "Leave me alone in the room in the morning and shut the door. I shall get up when I feel like it." We did accordingly and at dawn the doors of Ma's room were closed.

Around nine a.m. Ma got up, had a wash and strolled for awhile. Gradually people collected around her. At ten a.m. Ma was offered *bhoga* and at twelve noon the doors of her room were shut again.

I continued to read Amulya Dada's book to Ma. She listened to the incident about the snake. She did not seem to pay attention all the time. Suddenly she interrupted, "What are

*When all kinds of *bhava* manifest within Ma then why not the *bhava* of illness? When such a *bhava* does appear it manifests itself in complete measure.

you reading out? I did not hear it at all." And she laughed. I was reading out the incident about Ma's encounter with a snake in the boat that she travelled in while returning from Vidyakut. In the narration Ma says, "Really; how wonderful it was ! Did you not see? The boat was sailing but the snake kept at exactly ten arms' length and swam; neither farther nor nearer, neither here nor there, but exactly ten arms' length away from me, it followed the boat. It kept its speed exactly equal to the fast moving boat. It had appeared before me just as sunset drew on." After that when Biren Dada repeatedly questioned, "Who was that snake Ma?" she had replied, "I could see, ten arms' length above me, a *sadhu* and his disciple."

While reading this out today I asked Ma, "Ma you often say — 'You people make me lie down to rest and you see that this body is lying down, but it is not so. Often departed souls come in their subtle bodies and just as I converse with you people, I converse in exactly the same way with them. There is not the slightest difference. That is why 'rest' as you people understand it does not exist in my case. Then again just like you all those people are also not restless all the time so then I lie down quietly." Ma, I want to ask you, what is the form of those people? Do they have limbs like us? Or is their arrival heralded like fragrance wafting in the breeze?" Ma said, "There are all kinds. There are some exactly like you with limbs, while some are like the fragrance in air as you just described. Again sometimes only their voices are heard, nothing more. Sometimes there may be no speech at all, their presence is just an experience — there are several such forms. You people may say that when we cannot perceive what is the use of your saying all this? Many people ask questions of this kind. The answer is that if you people could have perceived you would also have been at the same level. Being in the present level how can you see them? Just as there are so many creatures in water and in air that you cannot see with your eyes, but

doctors can see them with suitable instruments. Do you disbelieve their existence just because you cannot see them? Doctors have toiled for years to be able to see them and therefore they have knowledge about them. They know that those instruments with microscopic sight can spot these subtle creatures in water and air. Every thing becomes visible with practice (*sadhana*). How will visibility open up without practice?" Many such topics were discussed.

At five p.m. many people came for Ma's *darshan*. Ma was seated on her bedding in her room. At six thirty p.m. I said to Ma, "Ma, come out for a little walk." Ma rose and walked for some time. Bholanath has been retching continuously for the past two days. As Ma walked she entered his room and then walked outside. At ten p.m. the doors of her room were shut.

April 27, Wednesday

Ma's state of health continues to be the same. Bholanath has been vomiting often and pox has erupted all over his body. Ma got up at nine a.m. Sanjna Devi had come and had wanted to take Ma to Tapakeshwar. She had brought her car. She took Ma, Didi Ma and Manorama Didi and left. As Bholanath was ill I did not go. They all returned at ten thirty a.m. Then Ma was offered *bhoga*. Ma does not usually eat rice. She is offered vegetables and milk. Today she ate very little. After the meal she sat on her bedding and conversed with those who had come. At twelve noon the doors to her room were shut.

Ma immediately acquires the same *bhava* that we present before her. Referring to that Ma said, "Look, you people have obtained a great variety of handwritings from this hand. The reason for this is that at one time this body saw the handwriting of Kumudini Pishi (aunt) and I sat down to write with the desire of writing the same way and the tiny letters that got written were in her style. Then when the memory of Baba's handwriting arose as I wrote, the handwriting that appeared was exactly

like his. Then when the *kheyal* arose to fashion my handwriting like print, beautifully formed letters appeared. Anything short of that was not approved of. When I sat down alone as a child with no thought of correct and incorrect, there occurred such attempts at writing. Now at last I understand the cleverness about reading and writing!" So saying Ma began to laugh.

Once in Narundi, people who saw the daughter-in-law's handwriting thought she was very learned. The style of handwriting, in comparison to the level of Ma's literacy, was not natural. Every action that Ma performs is thus. I have heard from those who actually witnessed it, that when it came to smearing the house with cowdung or making a fire, there was no one to beat Ma. In every job that she performed there was a speciality. Though people did observe it then, they did not quite view it in the same manner as they do now. It seems as if Ma is like a doll of *bhava*. For depending on what we people desire, different actions manifest in her body ; and yet she is apparently beyond all this. All *bhava* seems to merge in one. This is the reason why when we say, "Ma, get rid of your illness" she laughs and replies, "When the *kheyal* arises it will definitely be removed, but you people are unable to make me get that *kheyal*."

Today the same topic came up for discussion. Ma and I were seated in conversation when she said, "Look, when it is said that I do nothing by my own desire, do you know what that desire is ? The worldly desires and inclinations that you experience never arise in this body. Everything happens by the influence of that Great Will. Therefore, in short it can be said, that everything can be done as soon as the desire arises, yet nothing is done by my own will — both these view points can be stated. In this *bhava* both are true." Saying this Ma laughed and continued, "The fact that I do nothing by my own will is again according to the dictates of the Great Will. This body has nothing called desire. You are all within the realm of desire and

no desire and therefore all your thoughts and actions are conditioned by desire and no desire. What can be said that will be right, that's all. By observing the actions that are executed do not think that some other power is making me do them. That day you people took it as being possessed by a *bhava* and said all sorts of things. Do not think this body is possessed by new kinds of *bhava*. Whatever you observe in this body is all its own nature (*svabhava*). Just as speaking, laughing and other actions are the natural functions of a human being, this is also exactly like that, what else? Again, there is nothing called '*bhava*' and 'the lack of *bhava*.' Saying this Ma laughed.

After lunch Ma began narrating incidents from her childhood, "Once a relative presented me with silver ornaments to be worn on the feet. When I went to the pond for a bath I took off the ornaments and kept them on the bank. I knew the girl who was standing nearby. I left the ornaments behind and returned to the house when my mother sent me back to fetch them. When I reached the pond I found the ornaments had disappeared so I went home and told my mother, 'Ma, someone has taken the ornaments to wear on her feet'. Hearing this my mother burst out laughing."

I said, "Your nature has been thus since childhood." Even now if anyone gives Ma some cloth she says, "I have taken my own cloth. Do you think you had given me a cloth?" Again when she gives someone her cloth she says, "The person whose cloth it was has taken it to wear it" and she laughs.

In connection with some other incident Ma said, "Well look, when someone has attained *samadhi* (*samadhista*), that is when somebody's state of *samadhi* is well established, why is it said about him, 'He has attained *samadhi*'?"

We try to write what Ma says in the best possible manner. Hearing this Ma laughs and says, "What will you gain by writing all this? So many *mahatmas* have written so much. God gives you lessons in so many ways. Is that not sufficient? This will

again be one more of the same kind. What new stuff will you write? Nothing is new. It is all old." Saying this she laughed like a child.

At four p.m., like on all other days, Ma walked in front of the *ashram*. People were standing all around. Nobody seemed satiated with looking at Ma. At dusk she sat on the verandah. Some people had come for her *darshan*. She sat on the verandah till nine p.m. The evening's *kirtan* was performed as usual in the room reserved for *japa*. I took Ma inside to offer her *bhoga*. I fed her with one *chapati* and boiled vegetables. While seated for the meal Ma narrated one or two other incidents about her childhood. Didi Ma, Bhupati Dada, a *brahmachari* (a disciple of Swami Nigamananda who has been staying with Ma for the past few days), Jyotish Babu and family and I were seated around Ma listening to her charming laughter and speech. Ma said, "When I visited my maternal grand parents' place as a child we went out walking every morning and evening. Your Sushila Mashima would also go along." She pointed to Mashima as she said this. Laughing she continued, "I'll tell you something listen ; I have the *kheyal*, so what can I do ? When I went walking every morning and evening it coincided with the times the cows were let out and herded back, though I had never noticed that. But the cows came towards me and some of them licked my body. A forest grew on one side, a pond lay on the other, the path was difficult and I could not move in any direction. Like other children I would shout, 'The cows have come, the cows have come!' but I would just keep standing where I was. This one" (indicating Sushila Mashi Mashima) "would stand at a distance and laugh. She was also very young then. No adult was visible close at hand. Such were the happenings, that's all!" She laughed merrily at this.

The wife of Dr. Jotish Babu of Jamshedpur asked, "Was it not all Krishna *leela*?" Hearing this Ma looked visibly upset and

said, "Such comments should not be made. It is not good to be frivolous regarding matters connected with gods." A unique smile played on Ma's countenance.

Before retiring for the night Ma went to see Bholanath. Bholanath said, "Look, during that severe illness that I had in Dhaka you had soaked beaten rice and fed it to me. If you feed me that again, perhaps the fever will come down a bit." He looked at Ma in great distress. Fever, pox and vomiting had caused him great debilitation in the past four or five days. Ma said, "Alright, that shall be done." Immediately beaten rice was soaked to be fed to him the next day.

April 28, Thursday

Ma got up around eight a.m. I washed Ma's face and hands and began feeding her breakfast. Just then Bhupati Dada arrived to announce that three Punjabi gentlemen had come for Ma's *darshan*. I placed Ma's *asana* on the verandah. As soon as Ma was seated there, they arrived and offered *pranama*. One of them was known to Ma. He said, "Ma, this gentleman who is with me had asked me, 'When nobody can do anything without God's will then why should I suffer or enjoy the consequences of sin or meritorious actions?' I had replied, 'Mataji will be able to analyse your problem' and therefore I have brought him to you." Ma laughed and said, "You have firm faith that nothing can happen without God's will, don't you?" He replied, "Yes, I do." Ma said, "Then there is no question of Baba's performing sinful or meritorious action. But when the question has arisen within you, I will say that you do not have the firm faith that nothing can happen without God's will." The gentleman agreed with Ma's statement. Then Ma said, "Faith is always blind. Has it become apparent? No? Just as I am seeing you and you are seeing me. First you start with blind faith and then enter the realm of experience. You must read, Baba. What is reading? I do not refer to the reading of books.

But just as books give us knowledge about external matters and help even an ignorant child turn into a learned scholar, so is there a book within each one of us. Try to read that book. On reading that you will be left with no doubts on any subject nor will any questions arise in your mind. And you will understand for yourself the matter about which you questioned me now."

Today Bholanath was given the beaten rice that was soaked yesterday and which had been churned into liquid consistency. While he was drinking it Ma went and stood in his room. As she walked about Ma would sometimes enter Bholanath's room and today she was present when he drank the concoction. After he drank it Ma said, "Let there not be too many people in this room." To the patient she said; "Now lie down quietly."

April 29, Friday

This morning I got everybody together and sat in the room reserved for meditating on the Name. We all sat steadily and silently, meditating on God, for half an hour. Those who wanted to could continue their meditation for a longer time. Even before we came out of the room Ma had gone into the verandah and was walking up and down. We came away when our time was up but some continued to sit there. When I learnt that Ma had got up I came out. The anxiety of going to wash Ma's face prevented me from sitting longer in the *japa* room. My nature is such that the kind of joy I derive from serving Ma even slightly, is not one that I get from meditation or the repetition of the Name. I do certainly understand that performing meditation and doing *japa* are the greatest service that one can render to Ma; these practices help her body to regain health. But every person is not capable of every job. Each person has his own *samskaras* (tendencies due to previous actions).

Bholanath's condition is very critical. His whole body and

face are swollen. The pain keeps him awake through the night. Everybody is feeling depressed. Ma goes to see him every now and then...

At four p.m. people arrived for Ma's *darshan*. Professor Phani Bhushan Chattopadhyaya, M.A., LL.B., L.T. comes at four p.m. everyday and converses with Ma on many topics. The mysterious Ma often jokes and laughs with him. And sometimes she is grave and steady. On such days people even fear to go before her and speak. At some other times she is so full of frolic that even people with serious disposition or those who have just got acquainted with Ma, feel no shyness in her presence. They all seem transformed before her. This time Vinaybhushan Sen and his wife had visited Ma in Haridwar during the Kumbha Mela. One night Ma was seated on her bedding and many others were present in her room. Vinay Dada's wife arrived with a plateful of sweets and fruits for Ma. The couple were fasting that day and would eat only after receiving *prasada*. Vinay Dada's wife placed the plate on a little stool near Ma's bedding and went out of the room to fetch water. Immediately Ma told Vinay Dada, "Just put a small piece of a sweetment into my mouth and then take the plate sway. Let us see what Ma says when she returns." Ma said this laughingly and so swiftly that Vinay Dada had no time to think any further. He rose instantly and placed a sweet in Ma's mouth and she said, "No more. Now remove the plate from here quickly. Ma will be here just now." She seemed so completely involved — like a little girl who had found an opportunity to play a prank. The plate was removed just as Vinay Dada's wife walked into the room and Ma spoke up, "It's finished. Now give me the water." Vinay Dada's wife was also totally confused and could barely think about what had happened. She took the glass to Ma's lips and just then Ma broke into her sweet, soft laugh, which so charmed Vinay Dada's wife that she embraced Ma with both her arms. With her back to the

rest of the people, she had her face close to Ma's when Ma placed the sweet from her mouth between the lips of Vinay Dada's wife and burst out laughing saying, "Look, look, there is a sweet between her lips. Did you eat a sweet?" Laughing, she turned Vinay Dada's wife towards the others and said, "See, she has a sweet in her mouth." Seeing that everybody burst out laughing. Ma keeps playing such pranks on her devotees ever so often.

Today Ma said, "When, as a child, I was at the house of my husband's elder brother, he told his son Ashutosh, 'Your aunt's handwriting is very beautiful. Go and learn how to write from her.'" Ma then began to teach Ashutosh how to write the alphabet. In connection with action performed by the power of desire Ma now explained, "I was teaching Ashutosh how to write. Once I had a *kheyal* and writing something I told him, 'write just like this.' His attention went towards the writing. Surprisingly the child wrote exactly as I had done. He had been showing his writing to his father everyday and he did so that day as well. Seeing it his father said, 'This seems to have been written by your aunt.' Ashu said, 'No Baba, I wrote it myself.' But his father could not believe it because the writing was identical to my handwriting. After that, however, he was unable ever again to write like that. Ashu's father sat down to make him write similarly but he could not do it. If the *kheyal* arises within me such actions also get down." So saying she laughed.

April 30, Saturday

This afternoon the discussion was about the Guru. Ma said, "People refer to '*Sadguru*'. Can a *guru* be *asât* (untrue)? All *Gurus* are *sadgurus* (true teachers). See, the *jagadguru* (teacher of the universe) is the *guru*. God Himself is the *guru*. The *kula guru* is the *guru* of the family — where the *koola* (shore) is found. There is no question of *akool* (without shore), for his *kula* (family) is his *kool* (shore), is it not? Nothing can

be thought of about him. Further, the one who is established in his own nature (*svabhava*) is the *sadguru* and he who is about to be established in his won nature is also the *sadguru*, just as students who study B.A. or M.A., teach those junior to them and help them pass B.A. and M.A. and can therefore be called *sadgurus*. Then again whatever true (*sat*) knowledge is obtained from anyone, for that knowledge he is the *sadguru*. Whoever helps in attaining one's own nature (*svarupa*) is in reality the *sadguru*."

After this many other topics were spoken about — 'Brahma is an ocean, the waves are the individual souls (*jiva*), with quality and form (*saguna, sakara*), without quality and form (*nirguna, nirakara*). I asked, "Ma, who created these waves?" Ma replied, "It is but his *svabhava*. Because *saguna* and *sakara* are but words, are they not? Then why is it called *nirguna, nirakara*? Because It is That, the form and qualities of which cannot be expressed in language. It is just like the inability to express perfectly through the medium of language, the beauty of a flower or the taste of *rasagulla* (a sweetmeat).

Only the one who has seen the one or tasted the other can actually understand either. Some part of the experience can be explained through language (whatever is conveyed through language that is the expression of the quality of *svabhava*) but the rest remains unmanifest and in no way can it be revealed. The wise realize that it cannot be expressed. Yet, one detail has still not been discussed — *nirakara* and *sakara* — these are again in the realm of language. Therefore one has to go beyond all this. Again concepts such as coming and going, seeing someone or showing someone do not hold. It is self-revealing, is it not? Because of that, whatever can be expressed lies illumined in the *svabhava*. On the other hand, the waves exist only on the periphery of the ocean. Within it is steady, tranquil stable. You people say there are currents inside the ocean. Be that as it may that does not cause a break

up. Therefore unbrokenness, stability and tranquility remain intact." Later she continued, "Look, the Reality can never be made clear regardless of the number of ways in which It is described."

The topic of the alleviation of the three fires, mentioned in Amulya Dada's book, came up for discussion. I asked, "Well Ma, what is the method for eliminating the three fires?" Ma replied, "When trying to attain God the 'heat' that has to be borne helps in assuaging the three worldly fires. Just as the heat of the sacrificial fire has to be borne while offering oblations into the fire. When you sit down to do *japa*, in a short while you lose the desire to continue. The effort to go on with the *sadhana* inspite of obstacles such as restlessness is *tapa sahana* (bearing the heat). Then when you decide to sing the Name from dawn to dusk or through the night and start the *Nama yajna*, do you know what happens? Useless worries and wasteful conversation are offered as oblations into the sacrificial fire (*yajna*) that is in the form of the repetition of the Name. Even when it becomes unbearable in order to uphold the decision, the *Nama yajna* is carried on, bearing all the 'heat'. How much joy does an ordinary man derive from the repetition of the Name? Therefore I say that the *tapa sahana* that has to be done in order to attain God is sufficient to eliminate the three fires. That is called *tapasya* (penance). And just as fire can evaporate water and just as water can cool, similarly if you can bear His Heat or His Power, then the three fires can be quenched. The restlessness of the mind and its impatience in attaining Him are what help in the attainment. What is the result of thinking of Him with a restless mind, of worshipping Him and of repeating His Name? Without becoming disturbed in His cause, peace cannot be obtained."

Ma continued, "That which is considered as agony (*tapa*) in this world is *tapasya* (penance). Just as students brave the sun and rain to attend school and college, pass examinations and

then go for jobs — all these are penances if the aim remains towards God." Again she said, "Whether the aim exists or not, in one sense all that is penance anyway, because creation, preservation and destruction go on all the time." Saying so much and laughing, she continued, "I speak in a haphazard fashion. The meaning of the word *tapasya* as explained in the *shastras* is known to you."

In the course of conversation Ma explained, "When worldly actions are performed with no desire, then new actions do not follow, because with the desireless action the accumulated actions (*sanchita karma*) are destroyed. It is desire (*vasana*) that creates *karma*. The desire to attain God is not the cause of bondage. Therefore the desire to realize God is useful. Just as people say that in order to see one's real nature, soap is necessary to remove the dirt from one's body. But the soap itself is also a form of dirt for it has to be washed off before the *svarupa* can be revealed. Yet again, note, that in this there are knowledge, action and devotion. Just as it is not enough to only apply soap — it has to be rubbed on and then washed off — only then will the *svarupa* be seen. Do you know with what it is washed off in that case? It is washed off with the Ganga of knowledge."

"See, everything lies within you. Many explanations are given concerning this. You desire happiness and peace — and if the happiness is impermanent you are not satisfied. Today some novel item gives you great joy, but the very next moment it ceases to be a source of happiness. In that way the mind of the seeker wants permanent joy. On the other hand you get a taste of permanent happiness and that causes a deep desire for it in your mind. Therefore I say that everything lies inside you. You are familiar with the concepts of 'inside' and 'outside' and therefore the word 'inside' is being used. It can also be stated that this body assumes the attitude of whatever it sees. Think about it, within everyone there is some illumination of

That. Just as a mother who feeds her child — every time she places a morsel in the child's mouth, her mouth also opens. When you see someone weeping your eyes also fill with tears. When someone laughs you also feel like laughing, and watching someone suffering from an illness you also begin to feel unwell. From this you can infer that, to some extent, you also get influenced by the attitude of That. Why shouldn't you ? As the spiritual seeker meditates on God he gets influenced by His *bhava*. This is why it is said — just try to understand yourself and you will be able to understand everything."

After dusk Ma was lying down. She had a touch of fever. I was seated beside her. Nobody else was present in the room. Ma said, "Look, in winter the head became cold, but now as the weather warms up, how does natural action take place? Nature seems to play in various forms within Herself. In the same manner diseases play within the body — it is just that. Whenever anything happens it must do so in its entirety." Saying so much Ma fell silent.

Bholanath's condition is so terrible that it is frightening to watch him. His eyes, his face and his entire body are swollen. All the time he is in agony because of the disease; we do not know what will happen ! Now and then I said to Ma, "Ma, now it is intolerable. What have you started off?" Ma would smile and say slowly, "Great ! If the disease has come will you not watch its form ? Whatever each one has to suffer will happen for sure." She said this most unaffectedly; we cannot even imagine her fortitude. As night drew on people left one by one to rest and only two or three of us women were left seated in Bholanath's room.

May 1, Sunday

Ma got up around ten a.m. Bholanath's condition is still bad. Abhay has gone to Raipur. Two disciples of Swami Nigamananda and Santdas Baba had been staying here.

Today, to facilitate their *sadhana* (spiritual practice), Ma sent them to Raipur. Vishu *brahmachari* is there. An *asana* has been placed for Ma in a room there and they perform *japa*, meditation and other practices there.

Ma said, "Bholanath is not suffering from chicken pox — you people had better observe carefully." Saying this she showed him to the doctors. Coming out of the room she said, "I tell you, all kinds of pox have appeared. His condition is not good." The doctors agreed with her saying, "all things cannot be spoken outright, Ma." Ma said, "The forms of the diseases are visible clearly. That is why when you people called it chicken pox it did not seem right to me. What will happen or not happen, everything appears as if someone called from outside and said it; or sometimes it is as if someone sits before me and says — it will happen thus." Saying this she laughed.

Professor Phani Babu had come into the room. Hearing Ma's statement he asked, "Well Ma, can't these diseases be stopped?" Ma replied, "Yes, that can happen. Do you know how? I shall give you an example related to Bholanath himself. Once I saw a big pond and it appeared as if Bholanath were drowning in it; he was nearly out of sight except for the hair on the top of his head. Do you know what *kheyal* occurred then? The moment the thought 'he must not be allowed to drown' entered my mind, my gaze was fixed on the hair on the top of his head. I knew that if my gaze wavered the top of his head would go under water, but my gaze did not waver even slightly. It remained fixed steadily on the top of his head. As I watched Bholanath emerged from the pond looking as if he had come after a bath. Soon after this he fell seriously ill but recovered gradually. While he was ill I left him here and went to Solan. The top of his hair that was within my gaze was later cut off. However it is true that whatever has to be prevented will be prevented, but again everything is possible if there is the *kheyal*." Saying this she fell silent.

In the afternoon Ma was lying down and I was seated beside her when she said, "*Shastra* is *sva-astra* (one's own weapon). Just as the actions performed to establish oneself in *svabhava* have only one target — meditation of the *atma*; that one pointed stream of weapon — like meditation releases the spiritual seeker, piece by piece, from his *samskara*. This is how I speak about *shastra* in my haphazard language — you people may interpret it any way you like."

Again in some other context she said, "Look, if one regards a stone as a stone the feeling that it is conscious (*shiva bhava*) does not arise and if the feeling that it is conscious has arisen, it can no longer be regarded as stone, similarly by regarding the Guru as an ordinary human being, no purpose will be served. Because to think of something or the other is human nature. The influence of the One within the *jiva* — how beautiful it is !"

On reading page 208 of Amulya Dada's book the question that arose was why Lakshmi and Saraswati *puja* are performed in every home. Ma explained, "Housewives perform Lakshmi *puja* with the purpose of acquiring worldly wealth and similarly boys desire wealth giving knowledge by performing Saraswati *puja*. But the wealth which makes one eternally wealthy and the knowledge that gives eternal release, are obtained by worshipping Maha Lakshmi and Maha Saraswati."

The topic of *Prakriti* (Nature) and *Purusha* (The Primordial Person) came up. Ma said, "Without the *Purusha* within whom will *Prakriti* sport ? Just as you and your nature are not differentiable (people say 'your nature or your *svabhava*, is like this) so is it not possible for *Prakriti* to exist without the *Purusha* and similarly without *Prakriti*, *Purusha* cannot exist. *Prakriti* is full of action and *Purusha* is constant, unchanging."

May 2, Monday

At four p.m. today reference was made to Srimati Kamala

Nehru. I heard that Kamala Nehru had stayed in Kashi Babu's house when she first came to Dehradun. Hearing about Sri Sri Ma, the wife of the late Pandit Motilal Nehru, Svarup Rani, had wanted to meet Ma. Ma was then at Anand Chowk. One day Kamala Nehru dropped her mother-in-law at the temple near Ma and went away without meeting Ma. Later Kamala Nehru accompanied her mother-in-law when she came to see Ma with fruits and flowers. As soon as Kamala went near Ma she gazed at her steadily and then lay down for her body was shaking so badly that she could not sit up. After this incident Kamala Nehru began to visit Ma everyday; she would often feed Ma with fruits and sweets. Whenever she saw Ma she would seem to enter into a state of inebriation. She had said that she had seen Ma in the form of Krishna. Later she would arrive at midnight with her blanket and torch, spread her blanket next to Ma's bedding and lie down; before anyone got up in the morning she would go away. Sometimes she spent the whole night in conversation with Ma. She had developed great devotion and regard for Ma. Sometimes when she went for Ma's *darshan* she experienced a state of numbness. If it rained and her clothes got drenched she was unaware of it and those around her had to pull her away in order to prevent her from getting wet. The description of the *yajna* that she performed with Ma in the Ambika temple has already been given. After that her illness worsened and she moved to Bhoulali. At that time when Ma was on her way to Almora, hearing that Kamala Nehru was eager to have her *darshan*, she visited her. Seeing Ma she burst into tears and her body trembled. Again when Ma was returning from Almora, Kamala Nehru prayed for Ma's *darshan* and Ma granted it. At that meeting she told Ma, "Ma, because my condition becomes such when I see you, my nurse would not allow me to meet you but I told her that if I did not meet you my health would deteriorate further. So she agreed." She was so keen to meet Ma that she had been waiting in the

verandah much before Ma's arrival. In Dehradun she often took Ma to lonely places in her car; sometimes they parked the car at some solitary spot and walked about together. At those times she would lie in an ecstatic condition near Ma, in the forest. She would tell Ma, "In this world you are most beloved to me." But when Ma asked her, "Who is your most loved one in the practical world?" She would answer, "In worldly transactions my husband is most beloved to me." As long as she lived she wrote to Ma, letters full of devotion, regard and love. It is regretful that her life came to an untimely end. She had once told Ma, "Ma, if you give me the order, I shall speak to Mahatmaji and tell him that I shall not be available to engage in any more work for the country." Ma replied, "No, do not say anything right now to Mahatmaji. Whatever is necessary for you will keep on happening."

At four p.m. today the wife of a judge of Faizabad arrived with Lakshmi Rani. She desires to stay with Ma for four or five days and had talked her husband into agreeing. Meanwhile, because Bholanath was suffering from small pox, the impropriety of allowing any body to stay in the *ashram* was being discussed. The wife of the judge conversed with Ma in solitude. Just then Seva (Sharda) arrived with a doctor from Lucknow who also wanted to have Ma's *darshan*. The moment I informed Ma about it she said, "Call him in; our conversation is finished." Everybody entered Ma's room. Seeing the doctor Ma said, "I saw this Baba in the afternoon today." And the gist of what she said after this was that a scene from the doctor's previous life had appeared vividly before Ma's eyes. He was a highly placed official wearing a coat and a hat who visited Ma and spoke to her in English; Ma responded in the same tongue. At that time his beard had greyed slightly and he was due for retirement. Just then he had died. Before he died a very pure *bhava* had arisen within him and therefore the scene of that moment had appeared before Ma's mind. He had asked Ma,

"What is the mind?" To which Ma had replied, "The mind is That and its restlessness is also That — just as food is Brahma; water is Brahma — nothing but That One." He had been very happy with that explanation.

Listening to Ma's words we were surprised for Ma never makes such revelations to anybody. Moreover this person was a newcomer and Ma had revealed all this of her own will without his asking. Ma said, "You people think, 'This person is a new comer and that person is an old acquaintance', but I observe everyone as old and new." Further she explained, "Some characteristics of his previous birth are observable in this life in his body. The moment I saw him I had the *kheyal*. You people had not told me that a visitor had come and yet the conversation that I was having with somebody else halted. Just then you "(indicating me)" informed me that a doctor had come to meet me. I knew that this Baba had come." So saying she laughed.

Lakshmi Devi had come. She began weeping before Ma. When she had calmed down to some extent she said, Ma, my mind refuses to stabilize. And when worldly jobs present obstacles I am just not able to do God's work at all." Ma said, "How will the mind stabilize? The improper diet that has been eaten will cause indigestion, will it not? Do you know what doctors do? They first give a laxative. When the stomach has been cleaned out they administer other medicines. You should also follow the same method. And just as it is not right to have too much medicine, in the same way doing intensive *nama-japa* on the same day results in fatigue and no repetition of the Name for some days; this is not the right thing to do. Everything should be built up gradually and methodically in order to yield good results. By overdoing spiritual practices on one day the consequences may simply be tiredness and atheism."

Bholanath has small pox; nobody had either realized it till recently or said so explicitly if they knew about it. Ma had

herself summoned the doctors, indicated Bholanath's body and said, "You people call it chicken pox but this is really small-pox." The doctors agreed and said, "What could we do Ma ? The patient would feel afraid therefore we did not say so. But we have been doing whatever had to be done." Ma said, "You people called it chicken pox but I saw the form of the disease clearly. This is not chicken pox. Therefore I called you to show you."

On another occasion we had observed that when a temple was being constructed in Dhaka the contractors agreed with Ma when she told them something regarding the construction. But they never had the idea to begin with. When Ma mentioned it they felt, "It is right — it would be well to do it that way." In this manner Ma's completeness stands revealed in every context.

Ma was lying down at night and I was seated beside her and rendering a service. A man was sitting in Bholanath's room and serving him. It was one a.m. and moonlight illumined Ma's bedding. Ma murmured, "So many come and go at this time." Ma was referring to subtle bodied creatures which come and go all the time. I asked, "Well Ma, even when you are surrounded by a big crowd do they come and go?" Ma replied, "Why shouldn't they? They come and go all the time, sometimes when I am surrounded by crowds, sometimes when I am in solitude. Conversation goes on with them. You people see a crowd but do you know how it is with them? Just as very tiny objects can only be seen with an instrument, similarly how can you present an obstacle in their activities? Again, some do get obstructed. There are all kinds of them. Some people may have lost near and dear ones and may be thinking of them. That causes the departed soul some pain, yet it cannot come. Therefore it is said that one should not express sorrow for those who have departed."

I asked, "Alright Ma, if the departed soul takes birth

elsewhere is it still pained by the sorrow of its near and dear ones?" Ma replied; "Yes, it will feel the pain but it will not be able to understand the cause of that pain. This is the influence of attachment to the previous birth." Ma continued, "There is nothing to be said about this. Just as it is most natural to meet you all, meeting them is identically so. Because you want to hear about this all this is being said.

Ma goes to Bholanath's room every now and then and says, "Every thing has a purpose; may be that is the reason why this has happened. Those who are serving him derive some strength from the presence of this body, else they would have tired out. Therefore this body keeps going there." Actually I have observed that if Ma does not go there something that the patient needs is not done, because no one has realized the need. As the need arises Ma goes and stands there. This has happened several times.

May 3, Tuesday

Ma continues to be in the same condition today also; she hardly slept last night and I also kept awake. In between Ma went to Bholanath's room and organised some arrangements. Watching Ma's behaviour I felt anxious about some imminent happening.

May 4, Wednesday

Today again Ma hardly ate anything. She has only been eating boiled vegetables since the last two days. Some times she does eat some *chapati* with milk. It has been thus for some time. May says, "When this body functioned according to its own *bhava*, no schedule of meals was adhered to; on some days it would sit down to eat and on other days it just refused to. There was no arrangements for regular meals and whatever was available at any given time was eaten. At that time the body kept well enough and yet now when you all try so hard to

make such regular arrangements this body is unwell." So be it — let the meals go on in this fashion, we will not try to cause any hindrance.

This afternoon I felt upset when I saw Ma's *bhava* and I asked, "What is the matter Ma?" Ma replied, "What will happen? The body was unwell. You people served it devotedly and made it well. Now you will do whatever is required by a healthy body." Then she said, "Call Sachi Dada's sister, Manu. I have to tell her something." Manu came and conversed with Ma behind closed doors. It was three p.m. Just then Lakshmi, Gola and two Kashmiri relatives arrived for Ma's *darshan*. At four p.m. the doors were opened.

Whenever Ma wants to be alone I usually sit outside her door in the verandah in the afternoon. Today when the doors were opened Lakshmi and others went in but I remained seated in the verandah. At five p.m. Ma called me in and the wan smile on her face caused me to start within. I felt that she would say something which foreboded dire consequences. Ma spoke inconsequentially for some time and then told me, "Look, there's one thing. Either you people leave today or I shall go somewhere for awhile." We all gaped — what a form Ma had assumed! She smiled, but we knew that none of us had the courage to go against this order.

Bholanath has been almost unconscious for the past two days. His condition is worsening day by day. At this juncture we felt there would be need for people to serve him but Ma just did not seem to be concerned about that. I asked, "Who will have to leave Ma? We shall leave, you do not go." Then Ma replied, "You, Baba (Akhandananda Swami), Manu and your Didi. Navataru had said he would go today. Make arrangements quickly. There is not much time for you have to leave by six p.m. I thought if Lakshmi arrived with her car the job would be done." Just then Lakshmi arrived.

Baba stood before Ma and said, "Ma, what kind of an order

is this? It is like a blow with a stick on the head! My body is trembling. Bholanath is in this condition, your own health is indifferent. And you want us to leave at such a time!" Ma replied, "You are a *sannyasin*, so how are you going to render any service? Service needs to be rendered to you. You just sit down and meditate on the *atma* — everything will be achieved through that." She told Didima, "You are old. How will you serve anybody? And do you like to see such a sight? Just sit and think auspicious thoughts — that will cause auspicious happenings." To me she said, "Look, I walk off suddenly like this and I tell only you people to go in this manner. I cannot say this to everybody, can I? I know that you people are capable of getting along in this fashion." Speaking in this vein she seemed to cast everybody aside and sit away from us all. I said, "Ma, there is nobody left to look after you, and Bholanath is in such a state." Ma said, "Everything will be done. Just do what I tell you. I say this for your welfare." I replied, "However difficult it may be, I shall surely obey your order." I wished to speak to Ma in private, so she made everybody else leave the room. I was weeping. Seeing this Ma said, "I know that if you stay here this body will be served. In other respects also it will be helpful. Yet it is not to be. Therefore I have had such a *kheyal*." When the rest returned to the room Ma said, "All of you keep close to your *prana* (life force), that is what gives me joy. Remember, doing that will be rendering service to me."

It is surprising that just when the presence of many people around her was of utmost importance, Ma was sending us all away. Concepts like 'something cannot be done without so and so' never hold water before Ma. She does everything according to her *kheyal* and does not accept anybody's remonstrances. She does not give an opportunity for organized and methodical work. Whenever any set up is well organized she breaks it up. Yet, she says that work has to be performed methodically in whatever time is available.

In due course, the train arrived and we were off in less than an hour. Ma sat in the verandah and saw us all off. It does not take her even a moment to break up everything in this manner. Making and breaking seem to be a joyful sport for Ma.

May 5, Thursday

By four p.m. today we reached Kashi. On the way from the railway station to the *dharmashala* I got off at Pandit Shri Gopinath Kaviraj's residence to inform him of our arrival. Swami Shankaranand and Nepal Dada were seated there. When I reached they got up flustered when they saw me, in anticipation of calamitous news. I gave them the news in detail. Swami Shankaranand decided to leave for Dehradun the very next day. He has had small pox once and has served many patients suffering from this and similar diseases. Hearing about the orders that we had received from Ma they were all stunned, but this is nothing new. Ma has asked us to go to Dhaka.

May 6, Friday

Today Swami Shankaranand and Navataru Dada went to offer prayers to Ma Sheetalā. Swamiji took the floral *prasada* of the worship to Dehradun. I had earlier written to Swami Shankaranand to offer worship at Ma Sheetalā's temple and send the floral *prasada*. We decided to spend a couple of days at Kashi before proceeding to Calcutta. Our minds are restless for Ma's behaviour was not at all indicative of Bholanath's recovery; on the contrary her *bhava* filled us with fear and apprehension. I had said, "Ma, Shiv Shankar Kaviraj will arrive tomorrow. Let us see what he says." Ma responded indifferently, "What will Kaviraj do? Do you not observe how his condition is deteriorating day by day?" On the night before our departure Ma had pointed to Bholanath and said, "See, Bholanath's body has developed ruptures here and there, I feel

that these are very nasty eruptions. You can observe his condition for yourself." While we were leaving, Ma had said, in reply to some query, "You have been seeing that his condition has been worsening day by day." This statement increased our apprehension. In the middle of the night Didi Ma screamed, "Bholanath! Bholanath!" in her sleep. Our days and nights were spent thus.

May 7, Saturday

In the afternoon today I felt extremely uneasy. My heart seemed to stall uttering, "Ma, Ma". Didi Ma, Mejdidi (Sachi Dada's sister), Akhandananda Swami and I are staying at Hari's Bengali *dharmashala*. I told Mejdidi about my uneasiness. With this turmoil within my mind I went to Bacchu's residence. In a little while Nepal Dada arrived with terrible news. He said, "I just received Bhupati Dada's telegram. Yesterday (that is on May 6, 1938 or 23 Vaishakh), Friday, Bholanath passed away." Hearing such news my heart received a big shock. Everything seemed to have gone upside down. Within the twinkling of the eye something beyond our imagination had come to pass. Now I fully realized why Ma had been speaking the way she did. Yet while Ma conversed with all those around her we never got a hint that such a calamity was so close at hand. There was not the slightest change visible in her simple, natural and straightforward behaviour. Ma had laughed and declared, "A calamity is imminent." In reply to that I had said, "You only speak of calamities." Ma had laughed and said, "What can I do? I am told. I was told, 'A calamity is advancing' in exactly the same way in which I told you." Ma knew everything before hand and revealed it all through hints, yet it caused no change in her *bhava*. Now we realized why Ma made Didima leave from her presence. Yet we also felt pained that Ma did not keep us near her during such a calamity.

Sometimes Ma's attitude towards people around her is

such that it seems as if she cannot manage even for a moment without them. Then within the blinking of an eye she breaks all bonds and becomes remote and distant. At that moment it appears as if nobody is of any use to her. Ma is always free. Nobody has the power to restrain her. Her's is a wonderful character—it takes not a moment to break or make. We, who lived near Ma, would always suffer the suspense of not knowing when some unexpected order would be issued. Yet, Ma's compassionate love that we have experienced and which we are still receiving is incomparable. Ma exists within everything; again she is not involved in anything. This sort of a unique facet is manifested in her character. On some occasions Ma behaves in such a manner and makes such statements that a newcomer would end up with some misunderstanding. Ma herself has commented laughingly at times, "You people have placed a handkerchief in my hand because of my cold, put shoes on my feet and made me wear a blouse. Seeing this some people say, I have been to see your Anandamayi Ma, She is very anglicised." Saying this she would double up with laughter. Later we heard that some people had, in fact, reacted in this manner after seeing Ma. Ma neither relinquishes objects nor does she enjoy them. But even to imagine such a situation is impossible for ordinary people like us. Two opposite emotions blossom simultaneously within Ma. Whatever little I understand leaves me astounded and then I get embroiled in the play of Ma's *leela* and forget everything. I commit ever so many mistakes, so many blunders. Every instance in Ma's life exemplifies the spirit of detachment explained in the Bhagavad Gita. Those who have come into contact with her will verify the truth of my statement.

We did not inform Didima about Bholanath's passing away. We have sent a telegram to Dehradun.

May 8, Sunday

There was no news today. My mind was filled with anxiety about what Ma was doing, where she would go, what she would do and many other such doubts.

We had to reach Dhaka before Ma's birthday; this was Ma's order. Therefore we could not tarry much longer here. The festivities had begun on May 2 and were supposed to go on for eighteen days. On the last day, after the worship is performed on the Krishna Chaturthi morning, the sanctum sanctorum of Sri Sri Kali Ma's temple is opened. The public is allowed to enter for *darshan*. After sunset the temple is closed to the public, cleaned and oblations and worship offered to the idol. This arrangement had been initiated by Ma. At three a.m., the hour of Ma's birth, worship commences. At the end of the *puja* a *yajna* (sacrificial fire) is performed at dawn. The *tithi puja* is also performed on the next day followed by *Kali puja* and then the sanctum sanctorum is closed—this has been the schedule.

This evening we received a letter from Yogesh Dada which he had written the day after we left. The letter said, "Didi, on the night after you left, Bholanath called for you. The next morning again he enquired about you and finally Ma told him, 'I have sent Khukuni to some place.' He then asked Ma for Didima, 'Where is your mother?' Ma replied, 'I have sent her also to some place. For your welfare.' That night when Bholanath asked for Navataru, Ma said, 'He received a letter from his home asking him to come. I have sent him away. Did I not do well?' In reply Bholanath said, 'You did well'."

In the letter he also wrote, "Now Bholanath calls out to Ma as 'Ma, Ma!' all the time. As soon as Ma went and lay down in his room he said, 'Where is Ma? I am calling Her again and again, but Ma has not come.' When Ma stood before him he called out, 'Ma, Ma!'. Ma responded and seeing her one would feel there was no illness at all."

This evening the news of Bholanath's death was broken to Didima. We consoled her as best as we could. In spite of the unbearable grief in my own heart I am consoling her. I keep thinking of the enormous blow that has been dealt to Didima in her old age. There is no solution. The decree of destiny has to be endured with bowed heads.

May 9, Monday

This morning we received a reply to our telegram. Ma is well. She has shown no change in her behaviour. We have to go on as per Ma's orders. We are leaving for Calcutta today by the six p.m. train.

May 10, Tuesday

We reached Calcutta at eight a.m. today. We first went to Shachi Dada's house to drop his sister. We got delayed due to our telling them about Ma and Bholanath. We then took Didima to her house. It is *ekadashi* (the eleventh day of the lunar calendar) today. After partaking of some refreshments at Didima's house we set out at one thirty p.m., visited a couple of houses and then reached Birla's Shiva temple. After sunset Ramratan Babu, Gopinath Babu, Shachi Babu, Jotish Babu and family came to meet us. We conversed till eleven p.m. Shachi Babu told us that Naresh Babu had written from Dehradun to say that after Bholanath's death, his body had been taken to Haridwar and given '*salil samadhi*.' Ma is keeping well and shows no change in her behaviour. There were no further details about Ma.

Jotish Dada narrated an incident. A few days ago his youngest daughter Batu had a dream in which she saw herself in a Kali temple. To the right of the deity she saw Sri Sri Anandamayi kneeling. The priest gave Butu flowers for Kali *puja*. When she recited the *mantra* and offered the flowers at the feet of the deity she observed that the flowers went and fell

at the feet of Anandamayi Ma. This roused a doubt in Batu's mind. She thought to herself, "I offer flowers at Kali Ma's feet but they fall at Anandamayi's feet. How is this happening?" Then she recited the *mantra* carefully again, and devoutly offered the flowers at Kali Ma's feet, praying that she should certainly accept the offering this time. But she saw that once more the floral offering fell at Anandamayi Ma's feet. Her doubts were now cleared. Immediately after this she woke up.

Shachi Babu came at night and said, "Naresh has written from Dehradun to his brother Bhupesh. The letter gives the information that Bholanath's body was taken to Haridwar and given *salil samadhi*. There is no change in Ma's behaviour." There was no other news.

I remembered that in Haridwar, during *Kumbha Mela*, around midnight, when everyone was asleep, I was seated near Ma when she suddenly said, "Call Bholanath." I called him and stood outside the room as Ma talked to him. But from the very next day Bholanath started telling us all, "You will not have me here much longer. Just see what I shall do on the coming *sankranti* day." I guessed that Ma had said something to this effect, the night before Shankarananda Swami told Ma, "Baba (Bholanath) is saying all sorts of things." Ma replied, "He hardly does so with his own will. Last night we had a conversation on these lines." Whatever Bholanath may have said, he was certainly unable to do anything.

Later, during Bholanath's illness, Ma was seated in her room in the Dehradun *ashram*. Phani Babu, Bhupati Dada and we were all seated near her. When the conversation turned towards Bholanath Ma said, "When it is said that without the appearance of such and such there will occur a bad event as you people call it, sometimes Bholanath does not pay attention to it; he ignores what is said and behaves as he feels like doing. Just see, during the Kumbha in Haridwar he was called at midnight and told to do something. He only replied, 'Let us

see.' But he did nothing. When I gave him the instruction I knew that he would not follow it, yet the instruction was given. For I observe that though an instruction cannot be followed, an internal *kriya* occurs within the body. It is like stamping an impression, what else? And do you know how it is? When the *kheyal* occurs it has to be said. Just as when saliva fills the mouth, it has to be spitted out, it is just that, what else? The *kriya* of that will surely be something."

Later, may be Bholanath remembered this instruction. One night I remember that when Bholanath was suffering intensely from the disease, he called Ma. As soon as she reached his room he said, "Forgive me." Another day Ma said to me when we were alone, "Just look, Bholanath does not have a sacred thread around his neck."

I remember yet another event that took place. Ma had narrated the following incident to me when we were alone. The incident had occurred on our way to Kailash. "Parvati had already decided to take *diksha* from Bholanath. Bholanath stood in the Manasarovar and gave the *mantra* to her. This body was also made to stand there for some time. At that time *mantras* started emanating from the lips of this body and a *kheyal* arose which prompted Bholanath to be told, 'Look, *mantras* are emanating from the lips— will you listen? You have already donned the saffron robes.' Bholanath replied, 'When we were in Uttar Kashi I came across many more *mantras*.' Hearing this statement, this body fell silent. A little later this body moved away and *mantras* continued to emanate from its lips. The next moment Bholanath cried, 'Speak out, speak out, these are *sannyasa mantras*!' and he began to listen to the *mantras* with great joy and concentration. This had occurred with that feeling in that place and therefore a name that carried the essence of 'Brahma is One, there is no second' was given. Even now Bholanath bears that *sannyasa* name. Later, during *purna Kumbha* in Haridwar in that conversation

with this body at midnight, this subject was mentioned and he was told to complete his *sannyasa kriya*. He then accomplished all the rituals and on returning he said, 'I have completed the *sannyasa kriya*.' He had also been told, 'If possible, it would be well to try to remain outside, going here and there.' But this did not happen."

Remembering all this I realized why Bholanath had been given *salil samadhi*. Ma had also mentioned that Bholanath had wanted to take *sannyasa* in the 'Tirtha' sect. He had, therefore, been sent once to Dehradun to make an attempt to join the *Tirtha* sect but he was unsuccessful.

May 11, Wednesday

Two detailed letters from Bhupati Dada arrived today—one addressed to Shachi Dada and one to me. To me he had written — 'Whatever had to happen has happened. What will happen in the future cannot be predicted. But if you all have any inkling, I know nothing of it. Five days before Baba's death Ma began going to his room every hour to supervise his nursing care.' (We had ourselves observed this for two or three days before we left). The letter continued, 'Even at the time of his death, Ma was seated near his bed and performed a *kriya* touching Baba's body from his *brahmarandhra** to his forehead. She did this till he breathed his last. There was not the slightest change in Ma's *bhava*; she also did not seem to be disturbed in the least. After Bholanath's death Ma told us about his having taken *sannyasa* on the way to Kailash and revealed to us his *sannyasi* name. Ma told us that she had already narrated this to you.'

In the letter to Shachi Dada, Bhupati Dada had written — 'Bholanath had received the *sannyasa mantra* from Ma in Manasarovar. Ma had given him the name of Tibbatananda

*spot at the top middle of the head.

Tirtha. Baba's death occurred at nine fifteen p.m. on May 6th 1937 (he left his body at the age of fifty six or fifty seven). The same night Hariram, Jogesh Dada, Sadananda, Shanthi Baba and I went to Haridwar with the body, gave it *jala samadhi* and returned. There is no change in Ma's *bhava*. There is also no change so far as the bangles she wears or her *sindhur* is concerned. The smile on her face, her conversation, her eating habits, all go on as before. That is, there is no change in any aspect of her behaviour. Her *bhava* is changeless, immovable, steadfast. Ma says, "When was I a *sadhva* (married woman with living husband) and when did I become a *vidhava* (woman without husband)? But I am ready for any costume that you would wish to drape on this body. I know that I exist in only one *bhava*." Do not worry about Ma at all. As is done for *sannyasins*, on the sixteenth day after the death, that is on 21st May 1937, a *bhandara* (feast) will be given in Haridwar and here.'

At night Shachi Dada brought a post card written by Jogesh Dada to Kesto Babu. It contained a description of the events on the day of Bholanath's death — 'On the morning of his last day Baba wished to eat rice. Ma herself supervised the preparation of soft rice to be served with the juice of green gram. Baba asked, "Has Ma eaten?" I replied, "No", to which Baba said, "First feed Ma". When I told Ma about this, she went to Baba's room and said, "Feed me a little bit." When Ma was given a morsel Baba requested her, "Now you feed me some of it." Ma did so and Baba's countenance brightened. It appeared as if he would then recover. Baba, meanwhile, has been calling out to Ma only as "Ma". Ma has been responding with, "This is Ma, is she not?" and going near him. That evening Ma sat at the head of Baba's bed. At nine p.m. she asked for *kirtan* to be sung. We began to sing *kirtan*. Baba then gave up his body. At three a.m. we took Baba's body by motor bus to the Nildhara in Haridwar where we gave it *jala samadhi* (consigned the body to water).'

May 13, Friday

Today we received a letter from Jogesh Dada which read — 'Two or three hours before his death, when the opportunity arose, Ma asked Bholanath, "You remember the *sannyasa mantra* don't you?" Baba replied, "I do." 'Jogesh Dada's letter also carried the following injunctions from Ma : "Let this event not cause any bodily harm to the duties awaiting you. *Puja, japa, yajna* and other practices must go on according to your schedule." Ma's orders are as unviolable as God's. Her attention is focussed on this matter all the time. She says, "Keep on doing whatever has to be done. Do not look this way and that way." Birth and death are alike to her. Therefore there should arise no hindrance to any work due to birth or death which are after all every day occurrences in creation. I observe with astonishment that Ma is harder than diamond and yet, at the same time, softer than a flower. Repeatedly she says, "This body responds to whatever you people need, otherwise there is no necessity for its being this way." The truth of this sweet utterance causes everybody to fall at her feet.

May 14, Saturday

Today we left Calcutta. As per Ma's orders we are to reach Dhaka before the festival. Ma's birthday will be celebrated according to the Hindu Calendar on the night of Tuesday, the third day of the Jyeshtha month.
