

## DF-003C: THE EARLY DAYS WITH BABA

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Mandali Hall, Meherazad, India

June 3, 1976

45:36

**ERUCH:** Well whatever it is. But it so happened that in the examination very shortly I stood first. Got the highest marks. Over and above the Catholics. "Oh," He says. This he. They thought that I was a potential Catholic now [pilgrims laughing]. So they favoured me, they tried to win me over and all sorts of things and I became a favourite of the teachers you see. Well that was good. Now well that was very heartening no doubt but then it so happened that now Baba is coming here by the way. To our home you see as I told you. And I am just trying to avoid Him and I am in my class and I am playing. Good at games and good at studies and everything is beautiful at my home everything is. There is loving atmosphere. Nothing is wanting. Everything is in plenty. Beautiful setup, heavenly home and abode, family, society, everything perfect. Nothing wanting.

Now years again pass by you see and there is a question now. I would like to know the meaning of this particular parable on something. The father is very happy to explain to me. So he explains and I feel satisfied I sit down. Again after some days there's another question that comes up. "Sit down it's a mystery it cannot be told to you. You'll know later on." "Okay." After another time it's another mystery. "Sit down." Then very curtly he would say he would just say, "Sit down, sit down it's a mystery you won't know." [General laughter]. It went on repeating like that

you see all the time it was mysteries and mystery after mystery. So then I started wondering, "He says here in this New Testament He says He has promised us that He would come again. When would He come?" [pilgrim laughs.] Isn't it time now that you should come? How beautiful it would be to follow Him. Then there won't be any mysteries left. There would be just wonderful to follow Him to be with Him all the time. Nothing to ask and nothing mysterious about it.

So first longing started to follow Him. Here He's fulfilling the longing there. By coming there and waiting for me to be with me and I didn't know. So what if He is Zoroaster? Nobody said that Zoroaster and Jesus and all. My love and my adoration is now for Jesus you see. Automatically. Although I'm born Zoroastrian somehow or other I was brought up in the atmosphere of the Catholics, so all throughout my career you see it was affiliated to Jesus' life. So I adored and loved Jesus. And I longed for Him to return as the Christ. So that's how I am pining there, "When would He come again?" He is at home [pilgrims laughing].

But I am here in classroom. It's a mystery and so on two, three occasions I even shed tears in the classroom longing for Him. When would He? And actually He was there. In answer to my longing but little did I know what was it all about. I didn't know anything about it. Nothing to do

with spirituality at all. Nothing. No longing for God or anything of the sort but it was a bit nice to follow Him that's all. There would be no mysteries then. That was the only thing.

So years passed by again. Nothing. He would come and He would go, He would come and He would go quite often. Well then as you asked me when I joined. So one day in the month of May 1938 there comes a telegram and says. For the first time directly to me from Baba. Says, "Come and see me immediately at Panchgani." Far away that means near Pune here. So my mother says, "What's". My father was on tour. "So what is it?" So I said, "Telegram from Baba." "Baba," My mother was very. She was head over heels in love with Baba you know. So said, "What? Go. Go immediately." I said, "But immediately doesn't mean that I must just take the next step out of the door and go there. Next day is enough. It is immediately."

You know how it is when we are young and all that. Next day is also immediate. She says, "No but you don't understand what Baba says is go and see Him immediately means you. The first thing you have to do is to go and see Him." I said, "Yes but it's alright. There's still time for the train. The next day is alright." Because I was very busy you know summer months in Nagpur it's 121 degrees. And we had rare type of plants and rare type of roses. Many things you see. And grafted roses. On one rose plant there would be different colors of roses. So all these things needed great care and attention and my hobby was gardening. And my father would be always on the tour. He would supply me all the things that I would want and wonderful things were there. So I was

taking great care of the plants and I was in the midst of all this and a telegram comes. And I thought that, "Well it is alright I'll just get all the plants under shade and all that and that would be enough. And the next day would be enough." So he says, "No. Go immediately." But I didn't listen to my mother. I know that she was very displeased that day. For the time being.

Then within an hour comes another telegram. Same subject, same text but from a different station. Railway station. So I saw it. So same thing but from a different station that means He's travelling somewhere. He must be travelling from south He was coming going up there. And He says, "Come and see me immediately." "Oh". So now my mother comes out again, "What's the matter?" "Another telegram," I said. "So what is it?" "Same thing." "See I told you. Listen. Go." I said, "Alright." I was feeling much upset because I upset my mother so well this time I had some reason you know. It's good now. So I said, "Alright I'll go immediately." So I got the car was there. Sat in the car, went to the station, caught the train went there. Kept the car there with some of the constables there at the railway station.

Well I went there and saw Baba. Then Baba simply said this, "Very happy to see you." He made me sit down. I had grown up now.

**PILGRIM 1:** How old were you?

**ERUCH:** Twenty. Twenty one or twenty. Twenty one. Twenty one. 1938. Twenty one. So He says, "I'm very happy to see you. Sit down." I sat down. Those were the days when we never said anything. Jai Baba was introduced only after you people

came and introduced Jai Baba so to say you know. There was no such thing as Jai Baba or anything [pilgrims laughing]. After Baba dropped the body. Formerly we used to just. Baba. Just that nothing more than that. No nothing no expression. The only other thing at the time when I met Him at the time was that we would bend down and put our forehead on His feet. That was the greeting. Anybody would come would just. He would be walking and we would fall on our knees and He would just come and. He would be. He would stand there. So we just bend down and put our head there. That's all. He would be there. We'd be just. That is the form of greeting in India. To the God Man. So we continued with that but that also He stopped later on.

Within a year after we came to Baba He stopped that. So at that time I still remember I bowed down. So He made me sit down. Sit down. Then He says, "Will it be possible for you to leave everything and follow me?" [general laughter]. So I said, "By your grace anything is possible." "That's good," He tapped me on my back and He says, "I'm happy. So on 1st of August 1938 I want you to leave everything and come to me." "Alright." That was the interview. Finished. Didn't take two minutes.

Then I was about to get up so Baba says, "Sit down." Then He says, "Will it be possible for your parents and your sisters and this brother," who is sitting tiny kid there at the time. My brother Meherwan. So He says, "Is it possible for you all to leave everything and come?" So I said, "By your grace everything is possible." I don't know till this day. Even now I don't know why I say that or said that. But that was the thing that I still remember. They are echoing in my mind here. So Baba was

very happy. Tapped me on the back. He says, "Go. All of you should come on 1st August 1938." So that's how we came on 1st August 1938. Is it enough or you want to hear more?

**PILGRIM 1:** Let's hear Meherwan's side.

**MEHERWAN:** After lunch now continue [crosstalk].

**ERUCH:** [Laughing] So that's what I say otherwise it will go on and on and on [pilgrims laughing].

**PILGRIM 2:** Thank you.

**PILGRIM 1:** [Inaudible] Meherwan could tell about his. How he felt about Baba in those days.

**ERUCH:** Tell. Ask him. Why don't you ask him. Why do you want a brother to put pressure on brother?

**PILGRIM 1:** You're so good at it.

**ERUCH:** When do you'll have your lunch? [crosstalk]. Good.

You had your lunch? What's your name you said?

Don't like to have lunch. Because we wasted 3 hours in the morning which you know.

**MEHERWAN:** Some of them want lunch.

**ERUCH:** No but I don't stop them from sitting. Going for lunch. And whenever I ask them they say. You had your lunch Martin? You had Jenna? You Alma? You Julie? You Joe?

**JOE:** Yup.

**ERUCH:** Yup he says. And you Ron? And you David?

**DAVID:** I don't really have lunch.

**ERUCH:** You don't want to have lunch?

**DAVID:** He had his lunch [inaudible].

**ERUCH:** Alright. You Lisa? And you? And Elizabeth you go. And Gurdev Ji?

**GURDEV:** Haan ji [foreign] I had lunch.

**ERUCH:** You had. And you? He doesn't need lunch as I don't [general laughter]. Don't you think so Allen? We better abstain. [Eruch and pilgrims laughing]. And what about you Harry?

**HARRY:** Yes I've eaten.

**ERUCH:** What about Carol? Did she get good seat?

**HARRY:** Oh they had a wonderful compartment.

**ERUCH:** Oh good. That's good. And Meherwan you had your lunch?

**MEHERWAN:** Yes.

**ERUCH:** Then see now what can I do? There's nobody there. Come on what is it? Why did you call him?

**DAVID:** Meherwan was going to tell about those early years with Baba and continue right on.

**MEHERWAN:** Let Eruch continue then.

**DAVID:** No he continued that will it be possible for his family to come? Yes by

your grace. And Meherwan was a little kid. And then what was it like from your side?

**ERUCH:** Ask him.

**DAVID:** I mean what do you remember as a little kid? Eruch came home that day and then your whole life?

**MEHERWAN:** I don't remember all that. Only thing I knew was that we had to sell off everything and join Baba. I was too small to comprehend the whole thing.

**PILGRIM 3:** How old were you then?

**MEHERWAN:** About 8 years I think. My first recollections of Baba were about a year before that when Baba had come to give a public darshan. It was in 1937. Baba had stayed in our house for about 3 days and He gave a public darshan there in Nagpur. And that is I think my first recollection that I had. And then of course this call came and the whole family sold off everything and we joined Baba in Meherabad. Of course being something new I was all very expectant to be with Baba you know. Little realising what is in store for us all. Because from the day we reached Meherabad that was the first time I was separated from my mother you know. My mother had to stay with the ladies. With the women mandali and I was with Eruch and the other men mandali down. So I didn't like that much. I was much attached to my mother. But of course Baba was there to compensate for that you know. I would look to Baba for companionship and He provided ample opportunity.

Then of course the family left with Baba for the Blue Bus trip. And Baba kept me behind in Akbar Press to be entered in a

school in Ahmednagar. But that didn't happen because very soon thereafter Baba sent for me again. That was in Jabalpur. So Baba was in Jabalpur and something happened I don't know what and some incidents occurred with my mother and then Baba said that I should be called. And that was the first time that I was reunited as it were with mother you know. With the women mandali. The first male person to enter the women's stronghold you know. And then of course Baba was in Jabalpur for some time and then soon after He proceeded further on the journeys and He left me and the family behind to pursue studies there in school in Jabalpur.

So I was entered in a school there and Baba went on and then when Baba came to Bangalore we were then again called over to Bangalore. And then Baba stayed in Bangalore for quite some time you know. That was the time when Baba said that now He has finally selected Bangalore as His Universal Spiritual Centre. And every activity would be centered around Bangalore. A new centre was to be opened there. At Byramangala which was about some 20 miles from Bangalore. Big property was purchased there and then Baba gave instructions to all to get all the baggage from Meherabad.

There were Norina and Elizabeth and all these people. So they were all instructed to get everything to Bangalore because they were to settle down there. And they were all very happy too because Bangalore had a very good climate also. And then when everything was brought over Baba suddenly decided to leave Bangalore [general laughter]. So here everybody was on the move again. Bag and baggage everything was to be disposed of at very short notice. And so then we moved on

and I think we came to Meherabad then. After a long journey via Goa and all these places you know. And then Eruch was told to get another house in Bangalore where we were sent back again after sometime. And.

**ERUCH:** Baba Himself found one. He would go around to find one.

**MEHERWAN:** In Bangalore.

**ERUCH:** So He selected that.

**MEHERWAN:** It was a nice little cottage in Bangalore. And we were all very happily settled there and [bell rings] I was sent to school again [Eruch laughs]. And then it was full war time you know. The war years. And there was a big scare that India would be invaded by the Japanese you know. And my father was with Baba at the time. And Baba had proceeded on to Dehradun. So from Dehradun my father kept worrying about us. What would happen? Bangalore would come under fire from the Japanese. So one day he quietly sent a telegram to us that we should come over to Dehradun. I think without Baba's permission. I don't know to this day what happened actually.

**ERUCH:** You want to know what happened?

**MEHERWAN:** What was it?

**ERUCH:** Well I came to know after many years. After New Life I came to know what had happened was that in Bangalore while we were there. Means when Baba found that cottage for you all to live there and have your education there. So He also wanted Adi to be in Bangalore and an office was established there. Because now Bangalore would be the Spiritual Centre.

So an office was established in Bangalore for Adi to conduct the office. And if you'll remember right and if you'll have gone through the old magazines you'll find that 7A Plain Street was the official address given there. Was it Meher Baba Journal that was being printed there or something like that.

**MEHERWAN:** Meher Baba Journal.

**ERUCH:** Journal. So it was being printed over there and published from there. Now what had happened was that Adi's office. With Adi was Dr. Ghani and Adi's family. They had their special other cottage there to live. There was the office there and they. Bindra house family had a separate cottage to live and they lived there. We were all the time travelling and touring and all that. So it so happened as he says that the war was waging and fear of Japanese invasion was imminent. Because they had even sighted the submarines on the coast. Indian coast. Near about the Indian coast. And there was bombardment of a certain place in India. So Adi sent a telegram to Baba saying that, "It is imminent that we should shift from here. Either to Ahmednagar or wherever you want us to be."

**MEHERWAN:** I remember we were all in readiness.

**ERUCH:** Yeah.

**MEHERWAN:** All packed.

**ERUCH:** So Adi had told you all to keep yourself packed because not only these people almost all the population of Bangalore was to evacuate. Because of Bangalore's strategic importance you see. So they were all ready to evacuate now.

Now they're waiting for the telegram to come. So he as a kid did not know this you see. Still he didn't know till today. So what happened was that Adi sent an SOS to Baba and then Baba after consulting my father and asking my father what is to be done so they. Then father sent a telegram that came immediately.

**MEHERWAN:** But with Baba's permission?

**ERUCH:** Yeah. With Baba's permission.

**MEHERWAN:** I see.

**ERUCH:** It is not. Impossible otherwise.

**MEHERWAN:** Because I thought it was on the quiet or something.

**ERUCH:** No, no, no. How can that be possible?

**MEHERWAN:** Papa did that.

**ERUCH:** No, no.

**PILGRIM 3:** What year was that?

**MEHERWAN:** 1942. So then Eruch was with us I think.

**ERUCH:** He had sent me to help you'll pack and all that. The most difficult part with me was to find accommodation in the train for them. But I was quite an adept by that time you know. For the luggage and all that. So then I was deputed to take them. Adi stayed behind for some time.

**MEHERWAN:** So then we travelled on to Dehradun and the first reception that we got from Baba was of complete surprise you know. "How is it that you people have

come here? I never called you." That's what I recollect at least.

**ERUCH:** Yeah that's right what He said. Because He had never called us. It was Adi who had sent an SOS there then Baba agreed to what Adi said.

**MEHERWAN:** So Baba just made us stand there for quite some time. He wasn't at all happy to see us there as it were. So then we just stood there and He said. He almost looked as if He would send us back you know. He was so annoyed as it were. Any case then He allowed us to come in after sometime. And there we were absolutely without any baggage you know. Because all our baggage got lost on.

**ERUCH:** Yeah the whole bag.

**MEHERWAN:** On the train journey from Bangalore to Dehradun. It got misplaced somewhere. So we were just with the clothes on our bodies you know. Nothing extra. So Baba said, "That would serve you right now. You would be the first refugees in the country." That's what I remember. And then of course the women lent us some clothes and we pulled on for quite some time.

**ERUCH:** So you put on frocks and all that?

**MEHERWAN:** Yes I remember [general laughter].

**DAVID:** Was your mother upset?

**MEHERWAN:** No, no. She wasn't upset.

**DAVID:** She was happy to be with Baba.

**MEHERWAN:** Yes. Who wouldn't be happy to be with Baba even after getting some

scolding you know? Of course it wasn't our fault anyway. So then we were with Baba for some time and then after some time Baba left Dehradun and we came over to Meherabad [clock chimes]. At Meherabad we were there for some few months and then Baba said that He had some important work for us in Pune. So He would want the family to go to Pune for just a few days. Most probably 20 days or so He said. So we all packed up and were sent to Pune. A house was located for us by Baba's brothers and that was Bindra house. And we went and stayed there. And as Baba had said that it would be only a very short stay we didn't even unpack you know. So we kept ourselves in a state of readiness because whenever Baba would give the call one had to be very quick to respond. So there wouldn't be much time left. So we thought it best that we should keep ourselves in readiness. So days passed and then months passed and we were still awaiting His call you know. But.

**ERUCH:** Now let me interject one minute. I don't know whether you know this. What had happened was that by this time having shifted from place to place and having left our home from Nagpur naturally my father was telling Baba he says, "But why is it that they have been just like refugees going from one place to another place, another place, another place?" He would like to. If Baba wants them to settle at some place it will be nice. So Baba says, "What place you want?" So he says, "Pune is a nice place." "That's good", Baba said. That's all. That was just forgotten. Then in the mean time when we came back from Dehradun to Meherabad it so happened that Baba's mother developed great friendship with my mother. So to such a degree that Baba's mother wouldn't want to be separated from my mother for even a short while.

And now a time came when Baba's mother had to go to Pune. Baba asked her to now leave. "The tour is over, now you go back." So it was a very sad parting. So Baba's mother implored Baba to somehow or other send mother to Pune. And Baba says, "How can that be?" He said, "But don't you know that I want her there by my side and all that." Well Baba said, "Alright." He would arrange. Now He didn't want. He didn't want some members or the family to know that they were sent there to Pune for the sake of Baba's mother. He wanted my father to know that because my father liked Pune that there the family is being sent to Pune. He didn't want to disappoint my mother and us all by saying that, "Well you are being shunted now to Pune." So what He did. See the great strategist. He says. Well He tells my father that, "Well now you like Pune so here you are. Now Behram has found a nice house. Now you people feel settled there. Now you get yourself settled there."

My father was very happy. Baba's mother was informed, "Well you wanted mother?" That means Gaimai. "Alright she's being sent there." She was very happy. Superficially nothing seemed to go wrong anywhere. It was so good for everybody. Here my mother is informed and Meherwan and my sisters are informed, "Look here. You know father wants you to be in Pune so just to satisfy him, appease him I am sending you there for 20 days only. Don't unpack but take all the luggage with you. So that he must know that you are going there for all the time." Did you know this?

**MEHERWAN:** No I didn't know all these details.

**ERUCH:** So then that's why all the luggage was taken there. But with a clear definite understanding that it was only for 20 days. Then what happened?

**MEHERWAN:** Then we just carried on. When Baba would visit us in Bindra House my sister Meheru was there. She was a little outspoken you know and quite free with Baba. So she would remind Baba of His promise you know. "Baba 20 days are over and we're expecting your call back now." So Baba says, "A few more days. Just a few more days." And that's how we would just go on and on. And then years rolled by you see.

**ERUCH:** No in the meantime what happened mother died.

**MEHERWAN:** Haan Baba's mother died. I think that was about.

**ERUCH:** That was the reason why it was there. Within 20 days mother died. All of a sudden you see.

**MEHERWAN:** A month and a half. On Baba's birthday she died.

**ERUCH:** Yeah. When did you'll go there?

**MEHERWAN:** We joined in January we went. Early January. 1st January.

**ERUCH:** 1st January you went? So that means a month and a quarter. Because at that time 6th February was His birthday.

**MEHERWAN:** I see.

**ERUCH:** According to Gujarati calendar.

**MEHERWAN:** According to Gujarati calendar.

**ERUCH:** So what happened was that in the meantime mother who was so friendly with my mother naturally mother had to go every day and be with her and all that. Little did my mother know or little did Baba's mother know that within a short time they were to part permanently you know. So very short time. I have in my memory that it was just 20 days stay there and she passed away. We were in Mahabaleshwar I still remember the message came in the night so I. Baba and some of us in the night we travelled all that distance by taxi and came to Baba's house there. My mother was there. So Baba says, "Good that you were there for the last moments of my mother. It's wonderful. It's good. Now you realise why I sent you here?"

So my mother was very happy and satisfied there like that. Here naturally the 20 days Baba is saying that now such a thing has happened you can't go immediately so you continue to stay here. So that's how He pacifies my father and the rest of the family. So they continue to stay. Then when Baba visited again from Mahabaleshwar after some days my sister says, "By the way 20 days have passed? When are we expected to return?" So Baba says, "Continue your stay." In the meantime there was another funeral you see. What do you call? Father's friend somebody died there in Pune. And he wanted some dress.

**MEHERWAN:** Ah yes.

**ERUCH:** Yeah.

**MEHERWAN:** So we couldn't unpack you know and he had to go and attend a funeral without the ceremonial dress. Parsis are very orthodox for these formal

occasions we have special dresses you know. And if those dresses are not worn then the people would look down upon us. So father had a very embarrassing time attending that funeral. Then soon after that he wrote to Baba and said, "This is all ridiculous that these people are not unpacking. I don't know what's gone in their head." [Pilgrims laughing]. Because my father wasn't aware that Baba had said only 20 days [Eruch laughs]. So then Baba sent word that we should unpack so that father wouldn't feel annoyed about it. And so then gradually we settled down there.

**ERUCH:** And since then it hasn't been packed yet [general laughter].

**DAVID:** Eruch when your mother was with Baba's mother was that the time that she saw little fairies coming out of Baba's mother's nostrils or something? [Inaudible] When Baba's mother died Mani tells a story. Was that the time that your mother saw this?

**ERUCH:** I don't know because I was not with my mother at the time. So you'll have to ask my mother about it or somebody like as I am reminding Meherwan you see. So we are all disconnected like that you see. I don't know when.

**MEHERWAN:** Baba's mother would be very fond of good food you know. So one day she told my mother that she should write to her sister who was coming from Bombay to get some good fish prepared you know. And to bring it along when she was to come to visit Baba. So at that time Baba was very strict you know. It was all completely vegetarian food. There would be no oil, no spices. Everything very plain you know. So my mother was a bit scared you know. So Baba's mother said, "I tell

you now you do it. You have nothing to worry. Hasn't Baba told you that you must just listen to whatever I tell you?" So my mother wrote to her sister that's Banu masi to bring good fried fish you know. And it was in Bangalore I think.

**ERUCH:** No, Lonavala.

**MEHERWAN:** Lonavala. So when Banu masi came she. Of course at that time anything brought would have to be placed before Baba you know. So Baba's mother quickly sent my mother and said, "As soon as she comes get that parcel in," [general laughter]. Smuggle it in. So my mother went there and first thing she asked, "Have you brought the fish parcel?" "Yeah," She said, "I've brought it." So she quickly took it inside you know. And so Baba's mother was very happy. Then she got ready to have a good feast you know after many days of very plain food you know. So as soon as she unpacked the box and tried to take out the fish you know suddenly two cats appeared from nowhere. And Baba's mother had a great aversion for cats you know. So one cat pounced on one shoulder and another on the other just as she was about to eat the fish and Baba's mother was so scared she threw away the whole thing. The cats pounced on the fish and there was Baba witnessing the whole scene [general laughter]. And Baba said, "Fish? How did this come into the ashram? Who brought it in?" And there was a court of inquiry you know. And there was Banu masi.

**MANI:** [Speaking in Gujarati]

**MEHERWAN:** I don't know that.

**MANI:** [continues in Gujarati.]

**ERUCH:** Tell in English to them.

**MEHERWAN:** Let them know it.

**MANI:** Baba knew about the fish. After it arrived. Baba knew about the fish after it had arrived. So Baba was [inaudible], "What is in this basket? Where is this basket come from?" Baba had to know everything. We had to inform Baba everything that happened. So Gaimai, that's Eruch's mother, then said, "Baba this is fish pomfret. Fried." "Oh. How's that?" "Well mother wanted it." "But without informing me? How?" She said, "But Baba you told us that if mother wants something and if she tells us to do something we must do it." Baba didn't like it one bit. She was making quite an issue out of it. Mother got into the picture then. She said, "But Merog you always do that to me. The moment I like something that I like you say no or you take it away or you do something. Why can't I have this fish? I told them it's not their fault. But you never. Whenever I like something you never let it happen." So Baba said, "Alright, alright have the fish. I won't say no." And then this is what happened. He didn't say no directly [pilgrims laughing].

One cat ran away with one nice pomfret and the other cat ran away with the other. And where they came from? We didn't know there were cats. They just came, jumped took them and mother threw [inaudible]. And then mother somehow knew. She said, "Merog I knew you wouldn't let it happen. You just wouldn't let me enjoy that fish." [Mani and pilgrims laugh].

**MEHERWAN:** Then at another time my sister was asked by Baba's mother to prepare some good hot food you know

with spices. Because she was rather tired of eating that spice less food you know. So my sister Manu prepared some good tasty meal for her. And she brought in the food in Baba's mother's room. There enters Baba and He says, "Let me see what you have prepared for my mother." And Baba's mother says, "There you are Merog. Again you come and interfere with what I want to be done. Now let me have my food." So Baba just ignores her and looks at what Manu has prepared. And He becomes very angry. He shows great anger and He tells Manu, "Aren't you ashamed to prepare such food? My mother is not well. Doctor has asked her to be on diet. You want to kill my mother preparing such food? Bring it here." And then He gave my sister a push on the wall you know. And Baba's mother was also frightened to see Baba so angry. And then here's Baba quickly eating away [general laughter] all the food. And then mother says, "Is that so? If you wanted the type of food why didn't you tell her to prepare for you also? [pilgrims laughing]. Why must you come and snatch away my food?" Baba just ignored her you know. And He said, "It's not good for you." And that's why He had to eat it up [general laughter].

And then there would be that snakes incident. You tell what happened.

**ERUCH:** You tell whatever you'll have [crosstalk]

**MEHERWAN:** When you first. Mother had first come you know to Lonavala.

**ERUCH:** Yeah. You know what happened is that mother would come under some pretext or so to Baba very frequently. And Baba didn't like the idea of her travelling all the time and coming to Him. So Baba

had told her that she should come only when she was called or anything of the sort. So mother thought that, "Well Baba is trying to avoid her. Baba is trying to avoid her, Baba is not taking her on tours where the other women are going out for nice sight-seeing and all that and His own mother is being avoided like that," So she insisted on being present every time.

**DAVID:** No wait it's Baba's mother used to come on pretexts or your mother?

**ERUCH:** No, my mother was with Baba. This is prior to those 20 days we are sent away to Pune. These are different episodes. This is in Lonavala. So near Bombay.

**MEHERWAN:** That was a halt from Dehradun to Meherabad. We had halted at Lonavala for some time.

**ERUCH:** So and for long time Baba was there also you know between Bombay and Pune there is that ghat [foreign] that comes all that. Hairpin curves and all. So that is the place. That is Khandala and Lonavala. So we were there and naturally mother would come so I had to go to receive her every time. So whenever I would go to receive her at the station, Lonavala station, and her train would come in the morning. So she would ask, "Well who have come from different parts of India to be with Baba?" And all that. So I would tell who had come and all that. She wanted all the information so I used to give her all the information. And then she would come and then tell Baba you know just complain. Pour out complaints. She says, "All the people from all parts of India come to you and you have room for them, you permit them to come and you have no room for me. And you do not like my company at all now." And all that. So Baba

said, "But it's not good for you to travel like that. Why do you want to do that? Don't you know that it is for your own good that I want you." "No but I know. I would like to travel." She would like to travel a lot. I don't know why but she liked it. I still remember that at some places she wouldn't be able to walk. She would want to go and visit the forts and all that so we had to carry her on our arms you see like that. We were very strong people so we'd just make her sit like this and carry her all over yeah. But she would want to see the places. She would want to be at every place where Baba is there you see all the time. So that's how.

So then one day you know Baba says, "Well this is going too far now mother should be told something." So when I went to the station so in the night Baba tells me that, "When you go to the station to receive her remember tell her you see that this place is infested with snakes you know and scorpions and all that. Big snakes and all." And it was a fact. There is no doubt about it. Means we have such snakes they're called. What do you call those things that fly from one tree to another?

**MEHERWAN:** Dhaman [foreign].

**ERUCH:** Dhaman [crosstalk].

**PILGRIM 1:** Flying snakes.

**ERUCH:** Yeah we have flying snakes that is the place where you have it. Huge long snakes. They just roll themselves you know in rings and they give a jerk and fly from one tree to another tree you see. That is the place there.

**PILGRIM 2:** What are they called?

**ERUCH:** Dhaman. We call them dhaman. Dhaman is the place. I don't know the English name for it. So Baba said that, "Just fill her ears with all that so she may not come here frequently." I said, "Alright." So when she came on the station as usual I went to visit her. Receive her. So I received her, embraced her and all that. Then we both sat in the buggy. That was the days when there was no car. So buggy was there. And both we are going travelling. So mother says, "Well what's the news Eruch?" So I told the news. I said, "But then you see. You know mother now it has started raining and it is the whole place seems to be infested with snakes you know and the worst type are the flying snakes you know." And I made. But I was so crude in my acting I'm telling you. So my mother just. Baba's mother looked at me and just she was. She was very shrewd and very intelligent. She just looked and nodded and nodded [pilgrims laughing]. So and I went on telling you know [general laughter]. So at the end you know then I had no more words and no more thoughts.

So the she says, "Well what else did Merog tell you to tell me?" [general laughter]. And I burst out laughing. And that was the time when I gave Baba up you know. For the first time and Baba says, "You couldn't even act properly," He says [pilgrims laughing].

**MEHERWAN:** But to keep it up Baba had instructed the watchman. Daily about 2 or 3 snakes would be killed in the compound. So those snakes were not to be thrown away but brought and kept near the door every morning [Eruch and pilgrims laughing]. So that His mother would be convinced that there were snakes [general laughter]. And we all had

to come and see the killed snakes you know. It was a routine every day.

**ERUCH:** Some snack, something to eat?

**PILGRIM 3:** How did you finally convince your mother [inaudible]? How did Baba convince?

**ERUCH:** Who? Convince what mother? About what?

**PILGRIM 3:** About not coming.

**ERUCH:** Oh no, no, no. Not convinced at all. She would come. There was no question. Nobody dominated you see. Nobody could convince mother. When once she has made up her mind, finished.

**MEHERWAN:** You know there was an exhibition. There was a museum in Bangalore. A public museum which was very well known. And it was so popular that it would always be crowded with people. So Baba wanted to visit the museum with the women and He wanted one day when no public would be allowed. So Norina was sent to the Prime minister?

**ERUCH:** Diwan [foreign].

**MEHERWAN:** Diwan.

**ERUCH:** The Prime Minister.

**MEHERWAN:** The Prime Minister of the state, Mysore state. With a request that a day should be reserved only for Baba and the mandali to go and visit the place. So Norina went there and the Diwan very graciously accepted her proposition and he. And Baba had given a date so he agreed to that. MSO then it was all announced in the papers that this day would be closed for all the public and nobody would be allowed in the museum. Of course the reason was not given so that it wouldn't let anybody who is inquisitive to come there and see. But it was just made known that that day it would be closed for the public. And then Norina returned very happily and proudly announced to Baba that she was able to convince the Diwan you know. And then just a day before the date was fixed Baba said, "I want to go today." So Norina was.