



MOTH & THE FLAME
HELPER OF THE HELPLESS

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May 16th, 1967; the Passing of Mangat Ram: I am moved by the great love that exists between the disciples of Hazur and the living Master—their elder spiritual brother. I had grown fond of one of these, an elderly man with noble bearing. Mangat Ram was tall, straight-backed, elegantly dressed in dark Nehru coat, white churidar pyjamas and white turban, Punjabi-Hindu-style. Whenever we met, we always greeted each other with a *namaste* bow, or a hug. Mangat Ram just left this world. I had the good fortune to spent most of the night massaging his body and sponging his fevered face.

In the early morning I retreated for meditation to a nearby room. Unbeknownst to me, Master had physically come to Mangat Ram, just as his soul was withdrawing via the third eye. Tai Ji called into his ear, ‘Mangat Ram! Has Maharaj Ji appeared inside yet?’ He whispered ‘Hanji...yes. I am going and not returning. Hazur and Maharaj Ji are here calling me to come Home.’ The outer Master laid a gentle hand on Mangat Ram’s forehead, and all restlessness in his body ceased. His spirit was never to be troubled by limitations again.

At this moment, I was sitting in bhajan in a nearby room. A message came from within: *the bird is released from its cage*. Roused by sounds of lamentation nearby, I shuffled with benumbed legs in the direction from where all this noise was coming. In a different room I found the Master, standing behind a bed upon which laid a still form draped in a white sheet. Quite jolly, he asked, ‘You want to see the dead body?’ I nodded. When he withdrew the sheet covering Mangat Ram’s head he said, ‘See how peaceful he is? Just as if he were asleep.’ It was the first time I had ever seen death up close. Mangat Ram looked peaceful, if not beautiful—a slight radiance on his brow.

Accompanying the funeral procession to the cremation grounds, I saw a tiny bundled form of an infant lying on an unlit pyre, next to that of old Mangat Ram, reminding me that just such a graphic sight of life’s temporal nature inspired Prince Siddhartha to renounce the pleasures of royalty and seek enlightenment.

After the pyre was ablaze, we sat near the Master under the shade of a banyan tree. Many of the deceased's friends and relatives were weeping, although his devoted wife was calm, knowing that her life-companion was released from mortality.

Mangat Ram led a virtuous life, rarely lost his temper and spoke little. Every morning, as he walked several miles from the ashram to his silk shop, he would take a great stack of chapatis



Mangat Ram's pyre. (A)



At the cremation grounds. (l. to r.: Darshan, Tai Ji, Master & Mangat Ram's widow. (A)

and distribute them to all the homeless cats and dogs in the neighborhood.

While I write, the pyre burns and relatives wail. Master poignantly remarks,

'Even the dogs and cats will be weeping for Mangat Ram.'

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May 18, 1967: A new visitor arrives from San Francisco seeking spiritual consolation. In her sharing, Sandra Foth allows me to record her words:

The first time I met Master was in San Francisco on his 1963 world tour. Although my mother expressed doubts whether she could maintain the vegetarian diet due to her illness, Master initiated both of us the next morning anyway. Although I never ate meat again, Mother did and abandoned meditation. She was very sick and in pain for the next eighteen months. One day, out of the blue, Master appeared to Mother and told her, 'In three weeks you will leave the world, and I will take you back to your True Home.' He also told her to be loving—boy, was she ever difficult to get along with! And he also told her to discontinue eating meat, and to put in maximum time for meditation.

I was amazed at the change. From then on, Mother became wise and loving. When she spoke, it was as if Master was speaking through her. She meditated a great deal, and threw out all the meat and alcohol in the house, and her pain vanished. As she grew weaker, I called in our Catholic priest to administer last rites, but Mother told him, 'I don't need any Last Rites! My Master has come to take me back to God, and there is nothing to hold me here now.' The presence of peace and radiance surrounding her made such a deep impression on the priest that he wrote to the Great Master asking for initiation.

The Major and the Frenchman: A physical education instructor has just arrived from France, seeking initiation. While he had read translations of the Master's works, he understands only a few words of English, and the Master speaks no French! There are some hilarious attempts at sign-language, and eventually an interpreter is located in Delhi. Normally, initiations are given on the first Monday of each month, but Master decides to make an exception. An Indian army major also wants to be initiated, and both are invited up to the tree-shaded flat rooftop of his bungalow. The translator, myself and Brij Mohan are also present. While seated on a cot, the Master conveys the sacred mantra of five names, asks for closing of eyes and gives out instructions for meditation. I peek at my watch; exactly 11 AM. Master lies down and immediately begins snoring. I have difficulty suppressing the giggles, a childish reaction soon overwhelmed by intense spiritual grace gathering within the arena of the third eye.

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About an hour passes in this manner, while the Master softly snores *the entire time*. When I glance to my watch, the second hand moves to 12 noon exactly. At that very moment, the Master gives a little snort, and quickly sits up, swinging his feet to the ground. ‘Leave off, please. Alright, what did you get?’ The Major and the Frenchman, if not everyone present, has had the similar experience of seeing the huge Red Rising Sun of Trikuti—the Causal region. Master’s methods are inscrutable, powerful and mysterious.

Two days later, the Frenchman becomes very unhappy because since initiation he hasn’t been able to see any inner Light again. He interrupts the Master in the middle of an important meeting with Muni Shushil Kumar, a renowned Jain sadhu, along with several other prominent religious leaders. I happen to be present off to the side, a silent witness. When his insistence gets the Master’s attention, he complains miserably, ‘Maitre, no light see. *Noir!* Nothing!’ Master reminds him of his experience at initiation, but the new initiate is adamant. Master sits him down on the floor in front and bids him to close his eyes, then places his forefinger between the man’s eyebrows, holding it there for the next 15 to 20 minutes. Otherwise ignoring him, the Master carries on normal conversation with the dignitaries in the room. A couple of humorous and lively exchanges ensue with the Master waving his other hand around. For the entire period, he never removes his finger from the man’s forehead. During a brief lull, Master looks at the fellow sitting before him as if for the first time, and pulls away his finger. Suddenly, the Frenchman leaps up in the air, crying, ‘Oh! Oh! Very much lumiere! Brilliance! Extraordinaire! Oh! Oh! Merci mon Maitre!’

God helps those who help themselves, but He also helps those who *don’t, won’t or can’t*. The sun shines on everyone, and grace is without limits.