

Br. Sherman - Sunday Inspirational Service at Encinitas Temple – March 2003

Brother Premamoy, who worked with the postulants in training in the ashram for many years, told Br. Sherman this story in 1988: He began his story by saying, "It all began exactly 44 years ago." Before Brother came to America he lived in Slovenia (now part of Yugoslavia) and was very active in the resistance movement there during the war. On one occasion in 1944, after working ten days and nights with almost no sleep, some friends came to invite him to dinner. He knew there was no way he could stay awake and so he quickly declined the invitation, but his friends insisted that he come with them.

Finally he gave in to them, but at the restaurant he was falling asleep at the table and had to drink some very strong Turkish coffee (which has the grounds in it) in order to stay awake. While at the restaurant they met a gypsy who insisted that she read Brother's fortune using the coffee grounds in the coffee he was drinking.

The gypsy made several predictions: she said that he was someone that others will listen to, that he will travel up and down the country many times, that he will travel to America someday, (Brother replied to this prediction, "No way! I hate American movies!"), and that though he was an aristocrat, he would lose everything. Then she told him, "A woman will take care of you....no maybe it's a man...no it's a woman." She went on to describe this "woman" as having a dark complexion with an aquiline nose and long dark hair and that she was 51 years old. Later he casually related the gypsy's prophecies to a friend of his, Mrs. G., who lived in Italy. Then time passed and he forgot all about the incident.

Several years later Brother went to Venice and he met a business man who was looking for someone to transport his glassware to Milan. Brother volunteered for the job even though he was an aristocrat and did not need to work. He drove a truck delivering the glassware and made nineteen trips back and forth across the bomb-pitted roads between Venice and Milan, thus fulfilling the gypsy's prophecy that he would "travel up and down the country many times."

Years later he did travel to America on a boat. One day he gave a party for his fellow passengers on the ship to cheer them up, as they were traveling through bad weather and rough seas. His friend in Italy, Mrs. G., had given him a farewell gift. Believing it to be a box of chocolates, he brought the box with him to the party, thinking he would share the candy with the other passengers. But when he opened the box he was surprised to see that the gift was a book, and he quickly put it aside. The book was 'Autobiography of a Yogi'.

Later in America Mrs. G. wrote him a letter, inquiring if he had read the book. "Well," he thought, "I guess now I'll have to read it." He found the book and opened to the first page, but then quickly closed it with the thought, "I don't want to get involved with this!"

Several months later another letter arrived from Mrs. G. and again she asked if he had read the book. "I don't care whether or not you liked the book," she wrote, "I just want to know your reaction to it." Now he felt obligated to read it, if only to appease Mrs. G. Then once he began to read he could not put the book down and he finished it from cover to cover in one night. That night happened to be March 7th, 1952.

The next day he wrote a letter to Paramahansa Yogananda, not knowing that the guru had just left his body the prior evening.

After he had joined the order as a monk, Mrs. G. wrote to him again to tell him that she was very happy that the "woman" was taking good care of him.

The moral of the story: If we look back on our lives to events and things that have happened to us we will see subtle indications that Master has had his finger on our lives all along. Brahmachari Sherman said, "Do you know why the disciples such as Daya Ma, Mrinalini Ma, Ananda Ma, were able to spend so much time in Master's presence? It is because they had trained their minds to control their thoughts." Master would not allow disciples to be around him if they were in a 'mood'.

Daya Ma tells the story of when she was feeling down one day because the weather was so gloomy and cloudy, and how when she came into Master's presence she tried to hide her mood from him by putting on a happy face. But Master knew right away what was in her mind and he quickly said to her, "Out of my presence!"

Do you think he doesn't do this as well with us??

The monks perhaps had more contact with Gurujī than did the nuns, because the elevator at Mother Center was across from the monk's dining room, and when Master came down, if the monks were there he would stop and talk with them informally.

The disciples around Gurujī knew well, from experience, that he could read their every thought, and he trained them on that level. Brother Anandamoy told a story of one time when Master was talking thus to a group of monks in the dining room when suddenly he turned to one monk and said, "What are you thinking about?" The monk held his head down and replied, "I'm sorry Sir, I shouldn't have been thinking that." Another time, the same thing happened with another monk. Master turned to him abruptly and asked, "What are you thinking about?" But this particular monk became defensive, saying, "...But I wasn't thinking anything bad, Sir!" (He wanted to save himself from being embarrassed in front of the others). Master fired, "Don't tell me that! I know exactly what you were thinking!" Later this monk confided to Brother Anandamoy, "When Master said that to me I got really scared." He had experienced a little bit of Master's power.