



LET ME HEAR YOUR SONG

MEHER BABA

Oh, my dear nightingales, don't be disappointed with the old age of spring but keep on singing, and while singing become so thirsty that you drown in My Ocean of Silence. Then you will find My eternally new Song. When you sing this Song you will find that spring has become young once again....

Your Baba is Baba, and He has come down on earth to give you the cup of immortality. Your Baba is always with you; even if you wanted to leave Him you cannot do so.

Therefore, My dear nightingales, let Me hear your song. Your Baba wants to hear it. Will you not make Him pleased?

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Dear Reader

This month we are glad to offer readers a long story by Barry Beckett of his memorable visit to Poona and Meherabad in 1969 for the Great Darshan. Barry hosted last month a very successful meeting that reunited some of the original Sahavasees, and as a consequence he began writing. Barry's piece is quite long and entertaining, so the Introduction will be short. We also have a review of Raine's CD, Grin Gulp ghazals, by Greg Dunn.

Important Notice:

On May 28, 2009, our dear friend in Baba, Katie Irani, passed away into Baba's eternal care. She was a good friend to all of us, and a very accessible lover of her Beloved Lord, Meher Baba. She visited the U.S. twice to attend both the Los Angeles Sahavas and the Meherana Sahavas. She entertained us with stories of meeting Baba in Quetta, Pakistan, when she was a child, of traveling around India during the days of the Blue Bus tours, of working for the Japanese consulate in Bombay from 1950 to 1968, and of training in the vocal arts and singing for Baba (as well as for us).

Next month we plan to feature some remembrances of Katie. We invite you to offer this newsletter your special memories and photos. Please send them to the editors via MeherBabaCenter@gmail.com. It would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like to view footage of Katie, she is available, so to speak, on the Internet. Her image is captured on video tape at YouTube.com, where

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Dear Reader (cont.)

two videos of Katie are offered, one called Katie Irani's "Declaration of Independence," and the other where she hilariously describes her attempt at riding a horse:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=voQMYxwiaL4=1>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=paqp5bsoE1E>

A third video is found at JaiBaba.com where she is reminiscing on Meherabad's porch, relating the stories of entertaining Baba with plays and skits. See JaiBaba.com.

Photos of Katie are viewable thanks to Etzion Becker at <http://avatarmeherbaba-israel.com/>

The web page JaiBaba.com also compiled this short biography of Katie Irani:

Katie was born in 1920 in Ahmednagar into a Baba family and has been under Baba's vigilance since she met Meher Baba in 1923 when she was 3 years old. Baba took great interest in her family, in all the children and always enquired who was studying where and what. She joined Meher Baba's Blue Bus Tours in India on the 9th Dec 1938 when she was 18 years old, and has travelled with Baba all over India. The Blue Bus Tours were specifically for doing His Mast work from 1938 into Dec 1941. During the tours, whenever Baba settled for short periods of time in Meherabad, Baba assigned Katie to cook in the kitchen for all the mandali beginning in 1939. After living with Him continuously for 11 years, Baba then announced His plans for the New Life. Baba took only a few women companions for the New Life, closing the women's ashram on the Hill on 15th October 1949. Katie was sent by Meher Baba to work in Bombay (Mumbai) where she became the personal secretary to the Japanese Consul General and served for 27 years. Meher Baba permitted Katie to spend all her leave holidays with Him and the Mandali in Guruprasad or Meherabad. After Katie retired from the Japanese Consulate General in Jan 1978 she came to live at Meherabad according to Baba's instructions. Katie worked with her sister Dr. Goher in the Meher Free Dispensary which Goher had opened for the poor and had served them until she passed away in 2004. Goher was Beloved Baba's personal physician and she took care of many of His medical needs. After Naja passed away Katie took over all of Naja's duties in Baba's Kitchen in Meherabad, which included cooking for all of His Mandali for many years, which she continues to do now, at the age of 89, working in the kitchen 7 days a week, and greeting pilgrims on Mehera's verandah several times per week.

In other news, Peter Booth sends news of a new documentary on the life of Baba. Meherabad Films has recently completed a new introductory film of Meher Baba entitled, "Meher Baba—Highlights of His Life, Work and Message". The first third of this film has been posted on youtube at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8hfYK3nB6U>

Ben Leet and Lisa Greenstein, Editors
Cherri Nelson, PDF conversion



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Grin and Gulp Ghazals
reviewed by **Greg Dunn**

By **Raindust**



“Raindust” is a pen name of Raine Eastman-Gannett, a.k.a. Rani Didi. Raine’s just too creative and diverse to be content with one name, and I quite like this latest one. But what I like even more is her Grin and Gulp Ghazals, a set of 26 original ghazals written and recited by Raine against backdrops of nature sounds and Raine’s particular and unique genre of New Age music. I use that term loosely, and probably even improperly, but what to call it? Her music is, as she says on her web site; <http://www.nadaom.com>, a quite unique blend of “western, classical, folk, jazz, rock, gospel, chanting, mantra, and Indian classical and devotional music.”

But it is the spoken ghazals that take front and center on this CD. They are thematically united by their focus on “sustaining our beautiful birds, plants, animals, rivers, brooks, and pure water”; that is, they have a topical focus, but still manage to work beautifully as spiritual meditations. They are wonderfully crafted pieces: but it is Raine’s remarkable performances of them that really makes this CD. Those many of you who have heard her sing know that she has an exceptionally sweet and melodious singing voice; but on this CD you will discover that her performance speaking voice is practically magical.

I love all the ghazals on this CD, but my favorite is “Naughty Avatar”, in which the narrator sweetly, artfully, and lovingly coaxes the Avatar to regurgitate the sun, which He has impishly swallowed, taking its light and warmth with it.

Tickling you...snuggling you...I slap Your back, ka-whop!
Glorious, golden, out it pops with a great loud “Om” sound.

The ghazal is at once warm, whimsical, and heart-melting in its maternal gentleness. You can easily imagine mother Shireen interacting with the toddler Merwan - Lord of the Universe who plays to perfection the part of the mischievous child.

On the edgier side are ghazals such as “Money is Motrin”, in which the narrator recites the various stratagems of those who have, seemingly, the upper hand in the omnipresent pursuit of material security:

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They collect their moneys from the poor and imprisoned
They sell their advertisements to add to their millions.

But these are juxtaposed with a repeated injunction from Kabir to “throw it out with both hands”, referring to that very wealth. Near the end of the ghazal we hear the complete quote:

“If the boat is full of water - if the house is full of wealth -- throw it out with both hands! Beware: this advice from the Perfect Master Kabir, so effectively delivered in Raine’s ghazal, stays in your head!

There are many more great ones, but let me leave you now to hear the original. I love mixing these ghazals in with music playlists on my iPod, setting the pod in shuffle mode, and letting them surprise me as I rumble down the I-580. It’s a world apart: and a good one.

Grin and Gulp Ghazals is available on <http://www.nadaom.com>

My Impression at the Last Darshsan
(written 40 years later, April 2009)

by **Barry Beckett**



For a few months in 1968 and ‘69 I thought I was going to see and speak with Meher Baba ... that I would have an actual gross world outer connection with God Almighty in human form. We were all brand new baby Baba-lovers, and for about a year we had been listening to our elders tell their stories of outer connection with Him ... stories of enormous divine acceptance and charm (and instructive too). I very much wanted a story like that of my own, and perhaps some details from the

Highest Authority on how to proceed with my young life. Murshida had admonished us to not ask for anything truly the best aspirant etiquette ... and yet, what if He were in the mood to ask and grant whatever I wanted? I’d be a fool to go unprepared. Those who had gone before me received fabulous gifts of grace, exact direction for their lives and lavish displays of His love in their long standing outer connections.

I tried to imagine how this would happen for me....me and 200+ other white middle-class spoiled brat college kids were about to descend on Him all at once, each one trying to be special ...not my best milieu. My most ghastly image was of filing by Him like in some of the films, and He dotes on the two on either side of me and ignores me. It could happen. There were risks in an outer connection.

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My Impression at the Last Darshsan (cont.)
(written 40 years later, April 2009)

by Barry Beckett

Then the morning came and that phone call, “Meher Baba is dead and the Sufis are having a meeting about it right now.” We rushed over to the Sufi Center where the audience was in some consternation, some in tears and some even resentful. “What happened to the Word?” We young newbies expected Baba to speak His Word and usher in the New Humanity any day, before we had to spend any more time in this rotten world as it is. Baba did mention some apocalyptic features of near future history, which we regarded as inconvenient drama leading up to our fabulous new age. I remember conversations, “Will Baba speak the Word before or after He gives darshan?” Murshida and Lud were unperturbed and didn’t miss the Word at all, and they were going as invited. We were welcome to join them, or we could have our \$400. back. We got a few days to think about it.

That night I went for a long walk on the streets of Berkeley. So! no outer connection for me at all (of course I wouldn’t have phrased it that way back then) ... it was crazy for me to go to India during the first 2 weeks of a 10 week quarter at UC Berkeley ... I’d ruin my education and could lose my student deferment and end up in Viet Nam ... \$400 could buy a decent car in 1969. I could be safe and rich ... just be reasonable.

Then something extraordinary happened. I believe now that Baba came to be with me on my walk in all His other sheaths, which he had not yet dropped (etheric, astral, subtle and mental bodies). Rapt in His love and joyous presence, without visions or audible words, somehow He gave me to know in my heart that I REALLY wanted to go. I would tell myself that I loved the story of His life, and I just had to see where that story took place ... in truth I had no idea why I got back home in such happiness and never had a moment’s doubt about my decision to go. Baba was teaching me the inner connection.....” to feel with the mind and think with the heart” giving reason the backseat when need be. The Last Darshan was about the inner connection. Baba was starting us out in the way we would finish, by opening and deepening that connection ... we would live our lives inside the inner connection.

The inner connection (IC) is tricky to live and maybe trickier to talk about. First of all, you can sound like a nut case. Second, talking about your intense subjective experience can be a crashing bore, like talking about your dreams or LSD trips. Others can hardly relate to what you can hardly articulate. Third, talking about the IC can damage it. Wherever two or more are gathered together ego is prone to flare, comparisons are made, feelings get hurt, fragile memories alter ... what a rat’s nest! Fourth, the IC happens in silence in our deepest most highly valued space(when we can manage to get there) ... to talk and share about the IC like any other subject in life would cheapen it. Fifth, the IC is (mostly) a nonverbal phenomenon that words can fade and distort. Sixth and trickiest of all, talking about the IC has an element of “kiss and tell” (what an irritating betrayal!) and won’t Baba be offended? Wouldn’t you? The IC is private and intimate by its nature. Somewhere Baba has said to keep the love and yearning and bliss of inner contact with Him deep inside. Don’t let a word about it escape the lips. Keep the “mouth shut so that smoke comes out

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(written 40 years later, April 2009)

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the ears". Talking about the IC and getting the slightest ego thrill can take the most precious thing I have and trash it, cheap as dirt. Talking about the IC while having an IC would seem to be impossible ... yet it can be done.

Darwin Shaw and Filis Frederick are two that come to mind who were absolutely adept at sharing their inner lives with those of us younger in that effort. How did they solve the "kiss and tell" quandary and avoid the ego pitfalls? With love of course, love is always the answer. They could be utterly generous in laying themselves bare and offering brilliant insight into the motions of heart and mind. All the while I had the impression it was costing them, but they would spare no effort in serving Baba by ensuring our progress with their example. Lots of lovely outer connection (OC) stories too, then always bringing the focus back to the IC ... supremely valuable. After all, the IC is where the real action is. The IC is our continuous experience consciously and unconsciously, in this world and the next. How many times did Baba say, "I am not this body. You must strive to see me as I really am." However that is done, it is certainly done on the level of IC (the IC is where "I see"). Even Mehera who had the best OC of anyone ... even Mehera was thrown back on the IC for 20 years.

Filis says Baba is creating the New Humanity by creating the IC universally ... we will KNOW in our hearts what's true and what to do. Instinct is a fine way of knowing bees have extremely complex communication and behavior by instinct with no real brain at all and no education ... sort of a cellular knowing. Humans (by and large) have moved up to intellect. We can apply logic to stored data in scads of memory banks and come up with results that are measurable and repeatable ... a brain can be very handy ... you can walk on the moon this way. The third way of knowing is to just know in our hearts a massive upgrade in knowing for Who is there in the hearts of everyone prompting this knowledge? Baba said that very soon at some pivotal moment that He has prepared by His universal work (though it seems to be happening incrementally too), He will move animals from instinct to intellect, and humans from intellect to intuition.

Filis says this intuition is knowing by heart. Not the kind of ESP knowing that she enjoyed.....audible voices and astral sight plus vision of the past, future and far distances,(and who knows what else?) Perhaps the few people who have heart knowing now will move up to that level of ESP. For the rest of us, heart knowing will be our main and most trusted source of knowing. Heart knowing changes everything from medical techniques (discovered and applied) to politics and government.....lies will be known to be liesmotivation will be transparent. Our oneness and common destiny will be obvious..... our actions based on that.

This heart knowing creates the IC ... the heart knows the connection is there, the heart gives and receives communication, and the heart trusts the process is valid ... when the mind has no way to get a grasp. Did I mention that living the IC is tricky? I make no claim to be good at it. In fact I am SO uncomfortable feeling myself forward

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(written 40 years later, April 2009)

by Barry Beckett

through the unknown by trusting my heart ... I want to run to the refuge of the intellect ... I usually insist on reasonable confirmation of anything my heart comes up with, which makes me late or miss out altogether. (I also get a sense that Baba finds it tiresome giving me information and ideas which I don't readily accept.)

There is another more insidious obstacle to the IC. Being human like you I live by fantasy, denial, pretense, and hypocrisy. ("Did you ever try to go an hour without a rationalization?" - Jeff Goldblum in *The Big Chill*) The subtle and sublime motions of my IC whither against my own dishonestly. I remember many Cheech and Chong conversations around the time of Darshan, "Yeah, man, atoms aren't real. They are all space with nothing solid. Einstein said it all, its all Maya like Baba says." I suppose atoms may or may not be real ... they will do for now. But atoms will never be the reason I am trapped in Maya. I live in illusion because of the monumental tissue of lies that I tell myself (and sometimes you). The Reality that lives in my heart, and the Reality that Reality would introduce me to, get obscured by my house of lies, even subconsciously, even consciously. I believe what I want to believe ... reality can take a hike. Did I mention its tricky? What a rat's nest! In this context of the IC I can recount some of my experiences of the Last Darshan.

Baba was the perfect host right from the beginning. I could feel His love and care and happiness at my happiness. Needless to say the trip went smoothly. There was one bad moment while flying over Viet Nam at night ... I could see the series of burning bomb craters happening 10 miles below. The stewardess assured me that the B-52s were flying far below us, and the NVA SAM's couldn't reach us. Still, I got a jolt .. I've got to get back under cover of my student deferment ... I've got to study HARD and catch up! These boys are down there in that steamy jungle with bugs and snakes, killing each other wholesale, and they want my help! My Host would only let that line of thought go so far before He gave me an infusion of "don't worry, be happy" ... the thought was overwhelming, "Don't you trust Me, Barry? I'll take care of everything." (and He did. How can I be grateful enough?) I wasn't grateful at the time, and I was taking these episodes of happiness for granted.

The first time I tried to smoke a cigarette in India, it was like my first cigarette ... foul taste and unbearable stink, like I didn't have a single smoking sanskara. I threw it away. I had loaded up on duty free cigarettes in Japan ... now they were useless to me. Something extraordinary was going on, but I was still thick as a brick ... I just wasn't getting it. I thought I was merely on the Sufi tour of Baba places. Even after the first morning at Guruprasad, I thought "Baba has such natural people around". When bowing to Baba's empty chair and my hair stood on end, I thought, "That's odd? How nice." Back in Berkeley I had felt extreme well-being at Baba meetings ... this trip was like a Baba meeting that didn't end, that's all.

Then at lunch I overheard some Sufis who got it from Murshida (nearly all my information came that way), that Baba had told Mehera, that Ivy will bring a group

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that will cheer Mehera up, and that “some in the group (pointing to his ring finger) will be gems”. That means most were not gems, but I’d settle for “gems to be” with my record. What shocked me was Baba had really intended for us to be there! This inviting us then dying must have been some sort of test ... whatever ... the point was this darshan thing was on ... I was really attending a darshan of Meher Baba!! (Weeks later back home, the information trickled down to me through Murshida, that Filis with her subtle sight had seen Baba in his young adult perfection walking among us. Where He stopped to lay a hand or whisper in an ear, someone broke into tears or smiles. When we bowed to His chair, He was in it.) I thought I had come to check out the story of Baba’s life ... now here I was, IN the story! I had a part in the story of Meher Baba’s life not a very big part, but an actual part! I was immensely gratified by that and still am. I was sitting there at lunch in the warm glow of this new knowledge, when the rumbles from my GI tract became insistent.

Soon after first arriving at my hotel, I had gone outside and run into an ice cream vendor plying his poison. Inner alarm bells went off, but I didn’t “know” the reason. In fact I struggled with myself and reasoned that if freezing would kill me, then tiny insignificant things like germs don’t have a chance. The ice cream came on a stick in a wrapper, chocolate covered, just like home ... how safe can you get? Baba even sent a dear soul, perhaps one of His agents, to tell me, “DON’T EAT IT!” This alarmist has no science ... besides, if I can’t have a cigarette, then I want this ice cream. Did I mention “spoiled brat”? Well surprise, surprise, ... freezing has no adverse effect on microbes at all. In fact, I think freezing gives them a well-earned rest so they revive stronger than ever. I was doomed.

One day in India and I have some sort of dysentery, and I’m sinking fast. I’m empty, but that doesn’t matter. I’m passing dark awful water with pain and fever, and I can’t stray far from a toilet. I can manage the short bus ride to the programs at Guruprasad, where they have another toilet ... Oddly, I’m joyously weak and miserable, and I’m not missing much. After 3 days Eruch announces a day trip out to Meherabad/azad ... that’s Baba’s tomb, the Prem Ashram, and I heard they had a mast out there ... I REALLY want to go.....A day trip on busses. We had taken busses from Bombay to Poona ... school busses designed for 6th graders, all metal interior with no suspension to speak of I have 18 hours to get well again and prepare for the bus from hell.

No such luck ... its another rough night on the throne, where I’ve taken up residence. The sun is up, and there I sit in my lonely plight, desolate, all is lost. Then my roommate returns from his breakfast, “Barry, they have a bus for the sick and elderly, and it has a bathroom. Hurry. We are leaving.” Quick as I could, I cleaned up and got down the 2 flights of stairs, and right outside there it was --- a Straticruiser as good as Greyhound, knee room, plush seats, tinted windows, air conditioning, and the essential bathroom! gigantic luxury right here, I could hardly believe it, like I was

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(written 40 years later, April 2009)

by Barry Beckett

seeing a flying saucer in my backyard. I step right up and step right on ... the chatter inside is deafening ... I can barely hear the prominent Sufi in my face telling me, "Not on this bus." I had seen him on TV before I was a Baba lover, and I had such high regard for him. Now he is looking at me like I'm riff-raff, "a seat stealer on the good bus". Three giggling bouncing girls want to get past me to reclaim their seats. The driver wants to shut the door. Can't they see how sick I am? I just don't have the maturity or strength, physical strength or ego strength. If it happened today, I would throw a zoo ... shout for Murshida and throw myself on her mercy ... but I had never met her and didn't know anyone important. I backed off the bus from heaven ... I was overwhelmed in a daze ... my body was probably going into shock ... and the sun was already bright and hot on top of fever. I start back to my dark room by walking along the Straticruiser and hear the muffled sounds of excitement ... the "sick and elderly" are having a party in there, and I am in ruin.

Behind the Straticruiser is the school bus. He reopens his door thinking I'm the last straggler. Then Baba did it again in a BIG way, you know how Baba is for the lowest of the low. In our group that was me that day, "Barry, we are going. Now. Let's go." And by we, He REALLY meant Him and me. I notice I am walking to the last empty seat in the back, I feel exhilarated, I'm following him and my feet don't touch the floor. "Hopeless and helpless" has turned into safe and secure, and I don't want to be anywhere else. The IC is such a supreme pleasure, when He does all the work and forcefully, so there is no room for doubt (and there was so little left of me to put up resistance).

All this sounds absolutely preposterous, I know ... that the One without a second, Lord of All, would take a close personal interest in me ... how unlikely! But I promise you I believe it was so. As Baba lovers we often hear people say, "This happened because Baba wanted this. That happened because Baba wanted that." And I suppose after the fact that's accurate, since everything happens by His will. But what a cheap and easy out. That line of thought can cover any pretense, any laziness and bad judgment. Actually, Baba may indeed want you to experience your folly ... who knows? I just know that kind of talk makes me cringe, and I'm very slow to talk that way myself ... this time I do ... the One with infinite power used those resources on my behalf.

The driver pulls out, and I'm sitting in the very back holding on to the seat in front, and Baba is right beside me. My mind returns and I think, "Its not too late, I can stop the driver and manage to walk back." And Baba quiets my mind, "Don't you trust me, Barry?" Yes, I do, and we are already past the point of no return, and I'm feeling unaccountably well. Then we hit the first of a thousand (maybe 2 thousand) bumps and pot-holes on the 75 mile trip. The rear of this school bus was cantilevered out past the rear wheels, "lever" being the operative word. If the driver goes fast enough and hits the pot-hole just right, he has the leverage to throw the rear seat passenger up against the ceiling that curves down behind him then on the way down, smash

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his knees against the seat in front. I'm alarmed again ... What have I done?!! ... for the last 2 days my gut couldn't bear any sudden move. I had told myself that I could always ask the driver to stop, and I could go behind a bush. The truth is I had been passing a most foul water that can't be held. If I crap that on myself in this close space at 117 degrees, it will be unbearable to everyone, me included. They'll tie me to the hood. My position was untenable, except Baba had taken me into His comfort and care.

He was healing me. No food, no water, short sleep, no medical attention, poor habits for 3 days, fever and 117 degrees heat of the day. I was worried about being mortified by crapping on myself in front of all those lovely Sufi young women.

I should have been worried about being mortified, dead as a doornail. Dysentery kills by dehydration frequently ... I believe I was very close to that fate ... failure to sweat and heat stroke kill too. I didn't know about these things then at 21 ... I just knew I had felt terrible, and now I am feeling wonderful, weak but strangely uplifted ... I am in a miracle on my own behalf. There is no engine of the immune system that the subconscious mind can turn on that will suddenly turn off billions of raging bacteria. Baba did that. I just sat there getting thrashed by the bus and sinking into His loving presence ... like sitting on the deck and watching the sun go down with a good friend or lover with whom silences are not embarrassing. I close my eyes to conserve energy and just hang on.

Since I set down in India, when I closed my eyes, I saw circular patterns like Persian rugs moving toward me and washing over me ... and out of the center of the previous circle grows another circle of equal intricate design and exquisite color ... in the same slow motion it washes over me and spawns another unique circle ad infinitum. Once in a while I open my eyes and get a sense of the India I am passing through ... mostly I watch the Persian rug light show in my mind and be with Baba.

After a couple hours we get to magical Meherabad Hill and all its wonders including the tomb, which everyone rushed for and stood in line. I wander around and soak up the blessed atmosphere and wonder, if any of the tracks in the dust were His. I look at the pebbles all over the ground and know that at some time every one of them had been disturbed by His feet. I am one of the first to notice and get into the food ... a squished flat peanut butter and jelly sandwich and hot shook up Coke (must have come in the school bus). The sandwich is ambrosia, and the little bit of hot coke left over (after an explosive opening) is nectar. Life is returning to my limbs. The crowd at the tomb thinned out, and I get a chance to spend some time in there twice ... it gave off a sense of vast unseen force at work, a kinesthetic sensation like at a substation of a power company. I liked it.

Baba wasn't attending to me all the time anymore. I am back in good shape, and He has a lot of fish to fry. This is His day ... a grand confluence of decades of His



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by Barry Beckett

universal work to bring us all together at this time and this place. He was BEAMING ... He was here, He was there, He was everywhere ... His Love manifesting just the way He likes. I am in a trance taking joy as my way of being ... I remember the joy and the trance and feeling disassociated from my body ... and I don't remember many large blocks of time (the brain doesn't work well without water. Students that drink before exams do much better.) ... I think I stayed out of the way and just hung out ... I am utterly relaxed yet there is a sense of urgency ... this is all so precious, and its going by so fast Baba's door, Baba's window, Baba's view, Baba's friends, Baba's lifetime, Baba then, Baba NOW. A host of divine forces, He calls them, attend to Baba and serve His will, and I believe one of these agents was assigned to me and directed me somehow I get separated, and I'm somewhere else at a well with Sarosh who tells me Baba dug the well and hands me a dipper and a bucket of water ... the best water I ever tasted, and I NEED it. I get a long time to drink before the other 200 thirsty pilgrims start showing up.

I wander off and see a small group in a semicircle outside Mohammed the Mast's place. They are giving him things like bananas and pens. A small girl gives him her father's credit card....the father is rather frantic to get it back ... that's okay with Mohammed. He is moving slow and looking surprised and curious (and bent over and looking up, he is as old as the hills). At one point with his hands full, he stops and passes his gaze from one end of the semicircle to the other ... when he gets to me, right in the eyes, I feel startled and blessed. I don't remember what else I did around there (except I went back for more water) ... I just remember I wanted more time to do whatever I was doing ... I was never just standing there wishing to go on to the next thing ... I did go on but in a gently guided way. The IC was so easy ... go here, go there, look at that, consider this, Love is all around.

The water is doing its job, restoring consciousness and stamina ... I'm feeling fine ... and I sit more forward in the bus, and we move on to Meherazad in an ever deepening day of IC. I don't know enough Baba history to know much of what I'm looking at. I can see Seclusion Hill out back and lots of places I'd like to explore, if I had time, but I don't ... and I'm feeling an inner imperative to be where Baba died. Others must have felt this too. There is quite a crowd in and around Baba's room. I find a place on the floor and settle in ...then I notice what's bothering me ...the atmosphere in that room is heavy ... heavy laden with Baba's suffering. I'm not prepared for this heaviness ...this is very confusing and unfamiliar. I had always thought of Baba as soaking up and extinguishing the sanskaras of the world (especially the unpleasant ones), like when he sticks His hand in the Ganges every time He comes ... He purifies the world.

When Baba gives prasad, He said He passes His liberation sanskaras into the receiving person (if the prasad hits the ground, the sanskaras are weakened). So Baba sometimes does a sanskara thing like we do. Well, in His room at Meherazad,



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My Impression at the Last Darshsan (cont.)
(written 40 years later, April 2009)

by Barry Beckett

He did it BIG time. I notice some of the other folks in the room aren't too comfortable either ... some tears ... mostly a sort of shock. Even the dullest most insensitive person couldn't escape the vibes in there.

How unnerving! Baba's suffering is not what attracted me to Him. Whenever mentioned, I'd manage to avoid or skim over it. Did I mention how good I am at denial? Now this could not be denied. Baba had intentionally left behind this colossal and palpable testament to His universal work in the form of this atmosphere of His suffering. Well of course, why wouldn't He? Today I realize His work was His main thing, even ahead of His best friends.....they just seemed to live to support Him in suffering through His work. His suffering was very familiar to them ... when they went to Baba's room, His suffering vibes would immediately restore intimate contact with Him just like the old days. His room would be their portal for being with Him.

All this was over my head at that moment I left the room with relief and dismay ... couldn't this suffering thing be handled a different way? Couldn't infinite power accomplish the work without any suffering in half the time?? When I tap into my IC, I get, that applying power to get the same result is mechanical and forced ... there is nothing mechanical or forced in the nature of love, and He is Love itself ... He won't do it that way. Staggering ... a Love that has no limits, that created the game, protects the game and performs the game at all cost.

I wander around outdoors in a trance open to all impressions, I'm feeling good, it's getting hotter. I come across the world's smallest school bus under a cover. This has to be the Blue Bus I read about, and the door's open. I help myself right in there and sit down. Here is a whole new set of impressions for my imagination to take off on ... Baba and His friends had piled in here on top of each other with belongings and windows shut to avoid drafts on Baba. Wow, this makes my bus from hell look like paradise ... suffering vibes here too but not like Baba's room. Baba's room has "Baba's suffering" --- deep, heavy, profound, intentional ... love's intense display. This tiny bus has human endurance suffering and much more adventure, surrender and supreme satisfaction of being with Him. I had just heard Eruch say that God-Realization can take care of itself ... he just wanted to be born again and be with Baba and repeat what he had been doing. Eruch of all people had spent time with saints, and masts, and majzoobs, and sadgurus ... he must have a very good sense of elevated states of consciousness, and they have no appeal for him. All that pales compared to the joy of being with Him. The collateral hardship was just incidental ... the only real satisfaction is Him. The Blue Bus is filled with the joy of being with Him, and I am having an IC dose of my own.... He is with me and that's as good as it gets.

We head back to Poona and stop in Ahmednagar for a program with the local Baba lovers. They dance and sing for us, and we sing the American Arti for the 5th or 6th time. I remember a few moments in Adi K. Irani's office with him. Some middle-aged



My Impression at the Last Darshsan (cont.)
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by Barry Beckett

guy is trying to press a good sum of money on Adi. Adi keeps declining. I wish we had gone back to Meherabad. Time to go.

The trip back is faster and smoother, because I'm feeling GOOD. This time I take in the countryside, such as it is ... the miles of dried, cracked-up mudflats and long stretches of rocky barren land in the horrific heat. Baba must have chosen this area for privacy. When I close my eyes the Persian rugs are still there. Its very quiet, most folks are dragging. I'm in a world of my own, I'm actually feeling powerful. The sun is setting as we get back to town and pass Guruprasad. There in yellow incandescent light are Baba's friends raising their arms and saluting, "Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai," and we answer back. The hotel is just in sight, and then it happens ... Baba says good-bye. Have you ever noticed that in the IC you can get down-loaded? ... like a lot of communication at once. I was shown how I had been sitting there admiring the young women ... all of them ... each one perfect in her beauty and femininity every one worth a lifetime to explore and adore. I was the one who had left His company ... I had said goodbye without knowing it ...the awakening urge to merge had run back to old habits ...(I remember Don Stevens saying, when coming out of meditation, beware of ego rebound --- surges in lust or anger.) I was going back to normal, Baba was going over to Guruprasad to celebrate a triumphant day.

In the OC His great love for us compels Him to indulge our feelings. When we are so bare and vulnerable, and He is so obviously God ...we are too easily damaged. Also, you can see in the films that Baba seems to see what it took for the soul to arrive before Him, and it seems to please Him to call a time out and be over-generous.

In the IC Baba leans toward playing hard-ball ... He is more free in the IC. It was hard ball time. Not as judgment and punishment ...more like, "Barry, go be 21, but don't forget Me ... its been a good day for you, and I liked it too now return to how you are, so there is no doubt in your mind that it was ME, today and all your life I am the One who brings you up and brings you along."

All of that in a "whoosh". No way to compensate or talk my way out of it, and delivered with such Love. The hotel is right there, and the pangs are starting to shoot through my abdomen ... I am well experienced in what's next. I can't get off the bus fast enough ... I get up the stairs as fast as I can without "spilling" and hit the toilet without a second to spare. There I was back on the throne, where I had left 13 hours before, after one of the best days of my life.

I'm sick again, fever and all ... over the next few days I get better. Someone sent a doctor, and someone shared her over-the-counter products. By departure time I can travel. I catch all the programs and see all the Baba sights.

Babajan's tomb is a weird mix of the sacred and profane ... someone is riding a bike in a circle for days (he almost has the Guinness world record), dozens of beggars (we are told not to give, because children are deformed to make better beggars, the cycle

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by Barry Beckett

must be broken), Babajan's "devotees" just seem to be another begging scam in a carnival atmosphere. I get a few moments by Her body, and it still feels like contact with "Greatness" ... but what a relief to get away from there.

One afternoon the Poona Baba Center invites us to a program. I arrive late to a big hall, people on the floor, with an aisle up the middle. Not many people on the right side, so I move up there where I can see. These people are looking at me with daggers and all huffy and disgusted ... a guy walks through like he's stepping on hot coals, "This is the women's side". I'm surrounded by females, and I hadn't noticed ... I must still be very sick.

When we left Berkeley, there had been a wide prediction/false rumor that California would fall in the ocean April 10th, while we were gone. Instead, we wake up in Poona on a cloudy morning, and an earthquake has knocked out the power in the night. That doesn't stop the program in Guruprasad, and the power company restores power, while we are singing the American Arti the lights flicker in time with the music for minutes ... uncanny, and a lovely, wondrous feeling pervades the room, like Baba is approving by playing the lights while we sing.

Another afternoon I went over to Baba's childhood home, where His two brothers still live, Behram, the shy photographer who doesn't seem to know English, and Jal, very gregarious who knows English very well. Jal told some stories of work for lepers with Baba, and a story of Baba placing a hot coal in his hand as a test ... after these episodes Jal was convinced of Baba's divinity. He showed me the horrible scar in his palm. The main attraction at Baba's parents' house is Baba's little room, where He lived in a mast-like state after Babajan's kiss and sometimes beat His head against a sharp protruding cobble stone in the middle of the floor to regain gross world consciousness. That stone was the only one with cement all around it, fresh cement. A couple of young westerners had recently stolen it, thinking that as Avatar relics go, this is better than the Holy Grail. It brought them massive bad luck, and they were very anxious to return it. That stone room must be near capacity stuffed with Baba sanskaras ... a very good place to catch the scent of His Absolute Godness, and love compelled suffering.

Jal is a charming and jolly host. He told a funny story: Jal's neighbor had rented out the nearby house one year ago to a tenant who never paid rent. The tenant always had a story of temporary hardship and good fortune just ahead, always some excuse and a plea for a short postponement. After a year of postponements the landlord gave up hope of getting full payment, and thought he had a clever way to shame the tenant into some payment. He went to the tenant and said, "As God's children we are all brothers and deserve each other's help. Your misfortunes make it my duty to forget all about half of the back-rent." The tenant said, "How wise and how true! What can I do in the face of your noble example? If you can do that, then I am willing to forget the other half."

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by Barry Beckett

I don't remember much else ... lots of pleasant conversation, the spice and incense aroma in most places, learning to love tonic water and lime juice (homemade 7-Up). When the time comes, I'm ready to go home. Baba had been more than generous. Life had always gone along in its continuous ups and downs ... Darshan had been a sudden lift off the scale toward His world of love and happiness. I could tell by the atmosphere in the plane that folks were still in their IC and taking much home with them. The Persian rug circles came home with me. After a few days they weren't there, but I could call them back.....after a few more days they were gone for good ... I was back in my life.

I signed up right away for the Sufi Candidates Classes and that made me eligible for a 10 week "God Speaks" class, so I was blessed with a sound spiritual training into the fall of 1969. Also, many fabulous Baba meetings on Monday nights in the chapel at the top of the Student Union in Berkeley (often with Sufi speakers). It was at a Sufi meeting on Sutter in San Francisco, that I first saw auras. Murshida had been saying, "If you have spiritual experiences, don't tell anyone (and enflame the ego), just come and see me." I wasn't a Sufi, and I didn't have her number, and I still had never met her, and auras weren't a problem, so I never told anyone for years and years. I thought seeing auras would be a bigger deal. It was simply nice to see something for myself and not have to rely on faith for everything. Once I saw auras, it felt natural and normal to do so. Most folks just have plain light around them anyway (with occasional flash of color), not white light, more like simple incandescent light, maybe with a hint of gray blue. Murshida had a beautiful dark royal blue ... I remember a really nice gold and a turquoise with a couple of the preceptors ... who knows what it means? None of my subtle sight experiences have come with a manual, and they come and go. I just take them to mean Baba is very near, and He is encouraging me to meet life's challenges.

I didn't become a Sufi, because I couldn't meet either of the two conditions Baba had given: 1) TRY TO BE HONEST ... I planned to use any means to avoid Viet Nam, like self-inflicted high blood pressure which worked. 2) DO NO LUSTFUL ACTIONS OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE ... which I took to mean masturbation too ... I wasn't married ... I couldn't see this working for me. I was a main beneficiary of the work that Murshida and Lud and Sufism did for Baba, and I never met either one of them. They had practically saved my life and given me my life, I owe them a lot ... may God bless them wherever they are ... but Sufism wasn't in the cards for me.

I have tried to light up the nature of the inner connection and stir yours by revealing some of mine. We later-day Baba lovers must find meaningful and satisfying ways to relate with each other. The days of listening to those who had an outer connection must soon come to a close. Even if they weren't coming to a close, most days I would rather listen to someone wise and articulate share the IC ... so rare to find someone with the talent and willingness to share. It costs them to do it in many vulnerabilities



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My Impression at the Last Darshsan (cont.)
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by Barry Beckett

and painful awareness, and who needs the inevitable criticism over matters dear at heart. We must find a way and welcome their leadership, or we could wind up like the Christians: with sometimes inspired music followed by endless preachy sermons. Oh please, Baba, save us from that!

40 years later and I learned something monumental at the reunion program in El Cerrito that I had the privilege to host. One of the darshan alumnae mentioned that Baba had the mandali read out loud to Him all the names of those who had signed up to go to darshan (including those who wanted their money back after He died) ... SO! for brief moments the syllables of my name vibrated in His ears, and He considered me, while He was in a physical body! So I had an OUTER CONNECTION with the Avatar and didn't know it! Not a very big one, but how big does it have to be? No wonder I have been so fortunate in my life.

I had heard that Baba once paused a long time outside the Log Cabin at the Myrtle Beach center, and Eruch asked Him the equivalent of "a penny for your thoughts". Baba said He was doing some work for every single person who was destined to stay in that cabin. I have stayed in the Log Cabin 3 times, so I felt sort of an OC about that. But this saying my name out loud was so certain and personal!

One of the hidden pleasures in staying at the Myrtle Beach center is obeying Baba's direct orders ... simple safety and conduct orders, but orders none the less ... as long as I'm wearing shoes and using a flash light, I really am obeying His orders, and that's a bit of OC and big stuff. Even when I'm asleep at the center, I'm obeying Baba's orders, because I'm not fishing in the lake. I used to content myself with that and still will, but this is great --- Baba heard my name!!

If you have information for me or would just like to chat:
bkbeckett@yahoo.com or 916-484-6090.



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Announcements

Center Library Note:

Would you like to be a “patron”? We have a library for your reading pleasure and convenience. Our library is housed upstairs in a book case at the MBCNC Center on Stockton Street. We have had 14 borrowers over the past year. You may access a list of the holdings at the web page meherbabameherbaba.org; look for library, and open the book or video pdf files. When you visit the Center remember to check out the library books. We would also like donations. For a list of books we need, see the section at the end of the library holdings. Contact the Newsletter about donations.

The Trust

All who wish to share in the commitment laid down by Meher Baba through the Trust should contact Jack Mormon, ambkj@aol.com

Meher Baba Information

For introductory information about Avatar Meher Baba, e-mail info@MeherBabaInformation.org or write to:

P.O. Box 1101,
Berkeley, CA 94701.

<http://MeherBabaInformation.org>

Meher Baba Center of Northern California
6923 Stockton Avenue
El Cerrito, California 94530
(510) 525-4779

Meher Baba Center of Northern CA website

Meeting schedules can be downloaded in pdf form from website (above).
The center is open for drop-in and book store most Saturdays 1 p.m.–4 p.m.
(check [website](#) for details)

Directions to our Center:

From Highway 80, Interstate 5, going north or south, in El Cerrito, take the Central Avenue exit. Exit east, toward the hills.

Cross San Pablo Avenue.

Go under the BART train tracks, and less than a block after the tracks, turn left on Richmond Avenue.

Head north on Richmond Avenue until Stockton Avenue (the first stop light), turn right on Stockton.

About two blocks onward, the Center is located on the left side of the street.

Address on previous page.

More Local Meetings (Continued on next page)



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Announcements (cont.)

More Local Meetings

Lafayette – Sunday Afternoons

Monthly meeting at the home of Kirk and Marlene Allen.

Please call to confirm. (925) 284-4066

Sacramento – Several Gatherings Each Month

Times and locations vary.

Contact Marilyn Buehler (916) 812-9496 info@premsay.com

Los Gatos – Sunday Evenings

At the home of Clint Snyder

Call (408) 395-6865

See more information on the [website](#).

Contact for messages to newsletterwalla: meherbabacenter@gmail.com

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