

Jai Baba!

April 21st is the anniversary of Meheru Rustom Irani's passing, so below is something that I wrote in her remembrance.

There are so many stories and so many wonderful moments, it is impossible to know where to begin or what to choose that might be meaningful for those who met and knew Meheru, as well as those who did not. But I will say that I have always thought that perhaps Meheru must have been one of Mohammad's close disciple warriors when He came as the Avatar. Why? Because she had those qualities of a brave warrior — I mean in the real sense of what is needed to win the true battle of so many lifetimes and Baba obviously gave them to her from the start, so that she would be able to serve Him till the end.

I remember Meheru telling me one quiet afternoon that before Baba headed off into the New Life, He had had a special meeting in Meherabad where He had called His close women mandali to attend — both from Meherabad and, of course, Meherazad. Baba sat on Mehera's bed in the East room and told them that He would be setting off on this new phase of His work called the New Life. Only a few women would be chosen to accompany Him, but most important for His work was that each of them would promise to obey Him — no matter what.

To emphasize this point, He began asking each of the women a question — starting with Mehera.

Baba said, "If I asked you to wash men's clothes would you do it?"

Mehera replied, "Yes, Baba."

Next was Mani, "Will you obey Me 100%?"

"Yes, Baba,"

Baba went round the room this way, Meheru told me, remarking to one of the women, "If I tell you to marry a sweeper, will you obey Me?"

Meheru said that the atmosphere was extremely tense. Mind you, Meheru was very young, the youngest there at the time. She said to herself, "Don't think, don't question, whatever He asks, just say yes!"

I have always remembered her answer. For in order to stay with the Lord of Lords, we have to put aside logic; put aside our personal wants and desires; be willing to put our head on the sword's edge of His wish for us. That indeed is being a warrior of the highest order. And Meheru was that.

She was also lots of fun, very competent at whatever she did, a natural athlete — perhaps some of you might have fond memories of playing badminton with her, as Mehera watched from the porch, or as a child marveled at her ability to spin a top right in the palm of her hand. She was a handyman supreme, had a wonderful wit and was a talented writer, especially for poetry, in spite of the fact that she never studied past the Junior Cambridge exam which is about our 9th grade. She was absolutely fearless,

which sometimes gave all of us a fright, especially as she aged, and loved a good adventure. She was very soft-hearted when it came to animals — Baba's pets, of course, but also the strays who would end up Meherazad dogs because once an animal found its way to Meherazad, Meheru would feed it, and eventually the stray would be adopted.

Skipping ahead many years, one evening Meheru was just finishing washing up and was sitting on the stone parapet that runs the length of the outside verandah behind Baba's dining room. I went up to her and remembering it was the first day of the New Life, I happened to ask her, "Meheru, what did you like best about the New Life?"

She paused and looked at me directly, no glimmer of a smile on her lips, but a spirited single-mindedness that reflected what unspoken memories were going through her mind.

"The best part of the New Life was when it was over!"

I shall never forget that evening because her answer was also a glimpse of her absolute surrender to Him. There were untold hardships in the New Life; it wasn't easy for her, but the determination to be with Him, wherever He went, and do whatever was required, was her heart's desire. Saying, "Yes," had made it all possible.