

## GURURAJ TELLS HIS LIFE STORY

Today (no sound? I can't hear myself) while you are waiting for lunch to be ready, I want to tell you a little story, which is the story of my life. My father, my so called father, was the harness maker, and you know with the Indian pageants you have the elephants and all the trimmings and all that goes with it. I'm sure you might have seen movies and things. So my father worked for the king of [Bansdar?] My mother was a very pretty woman. Next time when I come in November, Vidya... where has she disappeared to? Oh. Next time when I come here I'll bring a picture of my mother. A very, very, beautiful woman.

Now something very strange happened, and perhaps our Dr. Padminiji might try to give some explanation of it. Because in the village of Valod, [mic troubles] (shit!) which was named after me, therefore, I was born with the name of Valodia.

And this name is very easily remembered, because it rhymes with hellodia.

Valodia.

So my mother...something is happening here and I'm just not hearing my own voice.

VOICE: [inaudible]

GURURAJ: Ya, I know, but I like to hear my own voice. Do you mind?

ROOPA: I like to hear it too.

GURURAJ: I love you. So my mother worked in the king's palace. Now the king loved his women and he loved his scotch and that is how a relationship (Vidya, don't sit too far away, come near here) [coughs] They had the fan on and I developed a bit of a chest. Well, nevertheless, our doctor is here to look after my chest and oh whatever. So, my mother developed a relationship with the king. [to mic] That's better. Creative intelligence. Learn that. So in that relationship I was born, and I'm none else but a bastard. Coming from the son, the mother which belongs to the caste family. And as you would know and have read of Indian and Eastern systems, one caste goes on and on, so if your great, great grandfather was a carpenter, the grandfather becomes a carpenter, and his son becomes a carpenter, and until the stage is reached when he becomes a bullshitter. Good.

That is how I was born. I grew up in the palace of the king and I had everything that you could ever imagine. And then, because of the political strife in India, as a youthful university rebel, I was instrumental with the group of uprooting railway lines and burning police stations (Vidya, will you see to this damn thing here).

VIDYA: We can hear you. They're still getting the PA fixed.

GURURAJ: So I had the best of the best. But my mother had a bloomin affair to produce this bastard. But it was something great that was meant. For the greatest philosophers of the East have been Janaka, the father of Sita, Rama Sita, you know those names, huh, was a king. The greatest philosophers like [Bertruhari?]. I'll tell you in a moment about [Bertruhari?]. [Vassa ?] was a great philosopher produced so much great knowledge and so were all the other Rishis that came down in the clan of Kurukshetra, which means the clan of the kings. And it is true, as you will know yourselves, that it is only the busy man that could achieve the greatest. Otherwise you are lazy bums. So the greatest knowledge in the world in the Rig Veda, [Ansa veda? Sham Veda?], you know that all was given forth by the greatest kings who are so busy running their kingdom, and yet created the greatest wisdom for the world. And yet my fathers and grandfathers were multi millionaires. And I would prefer to remain poor like our lord, Jesus. Take Lao tse. Take the teachings of Shintoism. Take the Chinese Confucionism. He was slightly confused, by the way. Slightly. Take the religions of Japan, the ancestor worship. What does that really mean? It means that you that are gone away from this world, I, in worshipping you find my spirit together with thee. For though you have left this planet earth, you have never ever left me. That's the basis of Shintoism. And I could go on and on and on repeating to you of various theologies and religions. But do you know one thing that my beloveds are involved in? It's a great theology. Shitism. Try and appreciate my humor and see the depths of its meaning. For aren't we all just but shit asses. If we did not have the asses we would not be able to shit. Logic. Total logic. Now let me get to the story of my life again apart from the diversions.

And yet in spite of the glamor and glory of my father's palace, I ran away from home at the age of about four. I wanted to know why I existed and wherefore. Where have I come from, where am I going to? What is this life blood pulsating within my heart? Where am I, where am I? Am I on this earth, or am I in the clouds? Where am I, Lord, answer me this. So I ran away from home. Visiting temple to temple to temple to temple, and after some months, four or five months, my [saddle ?] father and mother found me roaming ragged and bare in a village of India, huh. They took me home. I went through high school, you call it here, and after that of course I don't know how the system goes here. But after you finish your matric, as we call it in English, you enter university. And then it happened that I could not find fees to pay for

my education. So I went to a restaurant. What a kindly person that man was, and what I said to him was, "Sir, I need a job. I'm lost in this big city of Bombay. I come from a small little village. I have no where to rest my head. I have no food. Give me a job. Don't give me any wages at all. Just give a plate of food, even that which is left over from people who come and eat in your restaurant will be good enough for me. It will sustain me." Thank God at that time there were no AIDS.

So during the day I worked. And after cleaning up the restaurant I used to sleep on the wooden tables. Tables? Yea, but then the municipality found out that how can a person live in a place where food is sold. It's unhygienic. So this beloved man, Panduram, wonderful man, said "Son, I will have to let you go. I'm sorry, but these are the laws of the land." So on Chopati Beach I spent three nights sleeping in the sand. Hungry, not a penny in my pocket, nothing at all. And as I was sitting there, crying away, "Lord, I try to find you, but what the fuckin hell are you doing to me?" And then as I was sitting there crying my heart away, there was a gentle tap on the shoulder. It was a lady, so beautiful. Danusha reminds me so much of her. ["Didi"] I called her. It means "sister." So I looked around and saw her and she said to me, "Brother, why are you crying?"

So in between the sobs I tried to explain her that I'm so lost. I want to have my education, I want to do this, I want to do that. She comforted me. She took the end of her sari, and I still remember it so well, a beautiful yellow sari, and she wiped my eyes. And she said, "Brother, come home with me." And therefore I call her Didi, which means sister. So I went home with her. She looked after me. She fed me. She got my university entrance. I studied accountancy and commerce, because philosophy is never to be studied. It is the divinity within you that has to be realized. So I studied commerce and accountancy and Didi was paying my fees. And those racketeers in India will not, as my sister, Dr. Padmini, will bear me out, allow you entrance if you don't give 50,000 rupees just to gain a seat and you could be the most brilliant student. And I think I was brilliant. (Don't go away, there's one. Bring that here. You just watch it and the musical instrument will forever remain the same. Remember that in your life.) Thank you, beloved. And so later on I found out that she was a society prostitute. But she loved me so much. Yes. She had men friends visiting her and giving her gifts in an envelope or whatever. But Didi, she was a goddess. She came from the background during the strife and turmoil of India. She came from Pakistan. And she saw her sisters being killed. She saw those Moslems, I don't hate them though, but just to describe them to you. They actually picked up her mother's nipples and slashed it with a knife. She hid away in the house or else I'm sure she would also have been raped. Then she, as a refugee, came to India and settled in the city of Bombay. When I think of her life story, I just burst out into tears. That was my Didi.

So for a while I accepted the help of Didi. She paid my fees through university and all that, but I thought no, no, no, how can I accept all this? So I went to work in film studios. And India produces the largest amount of films in this world. Every three quarters of a day a film is produced counting it in totality. Ok, you understand that. And so I worked in the studios, starting as a sweeper and then becoming an assistant to the script writer, the scenario writer, the background man, and directors, producers, and I did act in quite a number of films; minor roles, but it was a good experience. And I was very popular. All the directors and producers just loved me to pieces. Then all the girls, knowing that I'm a friend of the director and the producer and all that, my phone would not stop ringing. And that's how I paid my way through education.

Vidya is reminding me it's late. I was going into the story of [Barspri?]. I was going to do some chanting for you and things. But time is running out. We'll do it later.

VOICE: Lunch has been out for fifteen minutes.

GURURAJ: Sorry, sorry, sorry. Those of you that could record this well, perhaps one of you, God willing, will be my biographer. Remember that.

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