

London. 25<sup>th</sup> May 1951

My dear Raza, My dear Akbar,

Yesterday at about 10 in the morning, Maria delivered a little girl. She weighs 7 lbs. I was allowed to see her only during visiting hours at 7.30 in the evening.

When the nurse took me in, where all the little baby cots are, I at once noticed the little creature among the dozen odd babies, not by my paternal instincts, but mine was the only dark baby among the others, the only Indian baby among European ones.

I thought she would be asleep, like all the rest, who were all in the seventh heaven, dreaming of angles. But my baby was wide awake looking around at the world though she can't see anything just yet. She gave a pretty hard time to Maria. She was to arrive on the 23<sup>rd</sup> in fact, but the little thing thought she will not budge. "Miserable world. I shant get out from here where its nice and warm and comfortable".

Poor Maria went through it all quite splendidly. I thought of Anaïs Nin, when she describes her labour with her still-born child..... "I had parted my legs for pleasure, and now I part them for pain...."

Maria was given a first class treatment & care, would have cost us a fortune in Bombay, but here its all free.



She is quite well now though she had a terrible time with the child.

The kid started yelling the moment its head peeped out into this world. And the Doctor, the head obstetrician, said: "You have got a very cheeky little baby Mr Souza!"

Anyway its quite a terrific experience to be a father, I think more of an experience than for the mother her self. Therefore, I sympathise with the certain African tribesmen, who the moment their wives have conceived, take to ~~the~~ bed themselves for nine months, instead of the expectant mother.

Well its all over now and I am quite happy. Have a cigar.... lets have a drink and celebrate... wher's Akbar, come on, lets' celebrate.

Raza, thank you very much for your magnificent letter. Apart from its content, there was sheer joy in reading it for its own sake; ~~you~~ you write beautifully well, Raze.

Well, I am not much worried now about the fate of my exhibition. My pictures were all bad, and not worth exhibiting, I gather from Bakre. So I don't deserve any sale. And perhaps that



is true, that my pictures were rubbish.

All through Bakre's <sup>unfavourable</sup> description of my exhibition, I had pulled a long face, (quite naturally), but suddenly my face lit up when he told me that people had sent letters of protest to the Bombay Art Society that such an exhibition should never <sup>have</sup> been held.

Thank you very much for the £10. you have sent with Mogul for my use. I have terrible scruples about it, but I must lay them aside if I have to survive.

That perfect ass of a Mogul never even told us he was going to Paris. I learnt that he had gone, when Bakre went to see him at India House.

Maria was quite grieved, she wanted to send you both ~~quitter~~ a few things, like fried dall, pickles, butter, masalla etc.

When he rang me last Sunday, I was so annoyed I tell you, I nearly burst the telephone. He said: "I went flying to Paris." I said: "I've never in my life seen an ass with wings!"

Pai writes to Bakre that the best picture in the International Exhibition in the "Salon de Mai" was Picasso's, (which is the truth, as I gather from your letter too), but I wondered how this cold blooded fish could understand Picasso, when he can't understand



Husain. Perhaps his response to ~~the~~ the appreciation of Picasso is <sup>now</sup> conditioned psychologically. Picasso is the greatest living artist. In an International Exhibition in which Picasso is represented, ~~undoubtedly~~ he must be the best. The majority of human beings are like Pavlov's dogs.

I hear that Sira and Pamela are getting married on the same day or something. Dito dito. Give them our best wishes.

Bakre has found a job. He works in a hospital, the National Temperance Hospital. He wears a peak cap, and a navy blue suit with ~~many~~ <sup>many</sup> shining buttons. He is the assistant porter, or somebody. He has to push a load of <sup>medicines</sup> on a trolley, and attend to the telephone. Pay £5 - sh 14 per week. One thing that's good there, is that, there are plenty of handsome nurses, and lots of rare diseases.

I will be in Paris in August instead of September. ~~as usual~~ I can come earlier due to Maria's good condition soon after her confinement.

I have sent the £10 to your wife. But you rascal, you never sent me her name and address.



Instead you send me her uncle's or someone's name!  
Marie <sup>and I</sup> ~~we~~ laughed a lot at your interpretation of my post  
card: Please send me the address of your wife, as mine  
has gone to confinement, and what not.

You say my long letters are better than my short  
letters. ~~That's~~ That's because, I have no time for  
short ones.

Talking of letters, I am going to quote in part Henri  
Rousseau's <sup>conductor</sup> letter to Andre Dupont, art critic. (note the date)

Paris, April 1<sup>st</sup> 1910.

" I am answering your kind letter immediately in  
order to explain to you the reason why the sofa in  
question is included in my picture The Dream. The  
woman sleeping on the sofa dreams that she is trans-  
ported into the forest, hearing the music of the snake  
charmer's instrument. This explains why the sofa  
is in the picture. I thank you for your kind  
appreciation; if I have kept my naivete, it is  
because M. Gerome, who was professor at the École des  
Beaux-Arts, and M. Clément, director of the École  
des Beaux Arts at Lyon, always told me to keep  
it. So in the future you will no longer find



it astonishing. And I was also told that I did  
on belong to this century. I end this note by  
thanking you in advance for the article you will  
write about me. Please except my best wishes ....  
etc". He wrote this letter six months before he died.

Oh Rousseau! Rousseau! What a simple soul.  
He really deserved that memorable banquet Picasso gave  
in his honour, at which ~~the~~ all the food arrived the  
next day. He says to Picasso: "We two are the  
greatest living painters, you in the Egyptian style,  
I in the Modern style!"

Bakre also is wonderful at writing letters. I sent  
you his original because it is impossible to quote  
him.

Have you heard from Husain? I haven't  
yet. Do you know who opened his exhibition?  
Of all persons, that old gypsy <sup>woman</sup> Mrs Langhammer!  
After Ara asked Mrs Leyden to open his exhibition, I  
can well understand Katy's feelings. "O! Walter  
I too must open somebody's exhibition"

It was alright if she had opened some  
Desai's or Kulkarni's show. But I was amazed.



beyond measure that Husain ~~has~~ has fallen for this kind of feeble sophistication. I had written him that I thought the only artist who had ~~that~~ a conscience, in Bombay, was he. But now I hardly think so.

This whole "art" business has become so detestable, ~~that~~ that I <sup>don't</sup> ~~hardly~~ think I will ever go back to India.

Padamsee, thanks a lot for the £21, the £10, and the bottle of brandy. The baby is going to swig from now only. It seems brandy is rubbed to babies after bath.

I am longing to see your paintings. That Ramchandra Rao who is writing a book on Modern Indian Paintings wrote to me again asking for some other details of my career. That gave me a chance. I sent him the photographs of your paintings with a note on you. I hope he will use them.

So you have found her, have you? I could not ~~from~~ follow from Roza's letter, it it was that Venus one or some other. Write to me in detail, all, including the colour of her pubic hair.

I am enclosing a news paper cutting from the Free Press ~~Bulletin~~ Bulletin on my exhibition.



8- because there is some <sup>one of</sup> Reference to Raza's paintings. Its the daftest thing I have ever read coming from any imbecile journalist, "We, poor innocent souls, who know nothing about art...." they mourn.

Well I hope to see you both in August this year.

With love,

Your affectionate friend  
Newton.

Maria + Bala Souza sends greetings too!

Remember me to Anil and St. Vigor.