

Chapter 22

Reenkindling an Extinguished Diva

During this period, Chunibhai Nathabhai Patel of Mombasa had come to India for Swamishri's darshan. He was so addicted to cigarettes that everyone called him a chain smoker. One day, he accompanied Swamishri to a devotees' house for a meal. As his car overtook Swamishri's car on the road, he lit up a cigarette. When everyone returned to Kapolvadi after lunch, Swamishri asked him, "While traveling to the devotee's house, were you engaged in discussing satsang topics?"

He replied, "Bapa, since I have a cigarette habit, I was actually smoking."

"Well, that's something!" said Swamishri, noting his forthright confession. Then, laughing, Swamishri said, "Since we are *satsangis*, we can't smoke cigarettes."

“Bapa, I have tried very hard to quit, but I just can’t,” he said.

Swamishri became grave and quietly said, “Since you smoke cigarettes, I feel a burning pain in my heart!”

Chunibhai humbly expressed his surprise, “Bapa, you really felt a burning pain in your heart?”

“It is because we have such love for you that our heart burns!” Swamishri’s countenance had the innocence of a child, while his eyes bore the pain of seeing one of his beloved own ensnared in such a fruitless, harmful addiction. Swamishri looked upon the impotence of the *jiva* with compassion.

Chunibhai felt, “I am committing a grave offense against Swamishri.” Instantly, he folded his hands and said, “Bapa! Give me strength. From today, I am resolving never to smoke another cigarette again. I am an extinguished *diva*. Please refill me with lamp oil and reenkindle my light.”

“Go! Maharaj will be with you.” Swamishri clapped his back and said, “Here, take this strength.”

Chunibhai said, “Now that I have forsaken the refuge of my addiction and accepted your refuge, please be compassionate upon me.”

Upon his resolution of taking refuge, Swamishri was pleased and, clapping his back again, said, “Go! From today your addiction has been cast into Mumbai’s ocean!”

To everyone’s astonishment, Chunibhai was utterly freed of his addiction. Truly, this was the touch of the philosopher’s stone turning base metal into pure gold!