

The wondrous life of our Master

An account of the life of Ustad Saheb Behramshah Nowroji Shroff and a history of the advent of the Zarathushtrian mystic revelation of Ilm-e-Khshnoom

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[Continued from Vol. 1 Issue 3]

The primary education of Behramshah

The effects of the pristine environment of Firdaus, and the cleansing effect of the Nahns soon began to influence Behramshah in a positive manner. His own personal habits were changed by monitoring the daily observances of the general population, in particular the great emphasis they laid on the 'Tarikats' or spiritual disciplines of the Zarathushtrian faith. After these preliminaries, the Sraoshavarez asked Behramshah what he would like to learn in particular, to which Behramshah disclosed a preference for studying Avesta. He was then placed under the tutelage of Banu Tanaz, a lady Abed, who started teaching Behramshah the script and primary grammar in a most loving and perfect manner. However, due to his inadequate schooling and slow grasping power, Behramshah's progress was most mediocre. The Sraoshavarez knew that Behramshah's time in Firdaus was limited, yet he was to be entrusted with a lot of knowledge to help him in his later mission. A specific day was chosen by the Sraoshavarez to perform a special *Afringan*, in which Behramshah was also made to sit and recite some Manthras. After the ceremony was over, the consecrated Sherbet of the Afringan was given to Behramshah to drink. As soon as he drank the Sherbet, Behramshah realised that his stammer had been almost totally cured, and his ability to absorb and remember things increased manifold. His physical as well as mental faculties were energised and their limitations diminished. The great Iranian trait of always speaking the truth was now deeply ingrained in Behramshah's consciousness.

In order to maintain and further increase this heightened consciousness, the Sraoshavarez prescribed several 'Amal' or spiritual disciplines for Behramshah. In one such exercise described by the Master in later years, three Abeds got together and began making small 'Taaveez' or amulets containing an Avesta word of three

characters. One Abed would take a piece of paper and inscribe the sacred word on the paper a certain number of times, whilst reciting some special Avesta Manthras. Then the second Abed would take the paper, and whilst reciting some Manthras, begin cutting the paper in such a way that each letter of every word would be separated. The third Abed would then roll up each of these bits of paper into a tiny amulet accompanied by the recitation of Avesta Manthras. These amulets were then handed over to Behramshah, who was instructed to go to a specific place in Firdaus where a stream flowed. Standing at a chosen place, over several days, Behramshah would recite certain Manthras and accompanied by some other undisclosed practices, would drop each of those amulets in the flowing water. These and many other spiritual kinetics performed by the Abeds, under the supervision of the Sraoshavarez, resulted in enlightening the spiritual faculties of Behramshah to a great extent.

The special education of Behramshah

The Abed Sahebs of Demavand have a beautifully structured education system, through which a student passes stage by stage, over several years. However, because of Behramshah's limited time in Firdaus, the Sraoshavarez directed other senior Abeds such as Rashid Saheb, Khudamurad Saheb, Shaharyar Saheb and Asfandiar Saheb to transfer their own deep knowledge to Behramshah via a special process called 'Sezda' or instruction-through-trance. Whenever it is not possible, for certain reasons, to impart education by the traditional method, known as '*Dalil-e-Akli*', the special procedure, known as '*Dalil-e-Saraish*' is used. Both master and student would first prepare themselves physically. Then sitting in a particular pose (with knees bent and folded on the right side) on a carpet, and keeping a '*paiwand*' or connection with each other through a piece of muslin cloth, and to the accompaniment of specific prayers, the master would lead the student into a trance-like state, where the physical mind is completely at ease and focussed on the process. Gently opening the spiritual faculties of the student, the master would then stream his knowledge over to the student '*Sina-dar-Sina*' – heart to heart. This transfer of knowledge would be accompanied by specific blessings of the master, so that the knowledge would never be forgotten by the student. Apart from spiritual knowledge, it is also possible to visit any point of time in history through this method, so that the student could see a replay in his mind's eye of a specific event of great importance. In this manner, Behramshah was given the rarest of rare treat of glimpsing the Prophet Zarathushtra himself, as

well as several heroes of ancient Iran such as the paladins of the family of Sam. Moreover, through this amazing medium, Behramshah was taken on a virtual tour of the Mundane Cosmos, or Nisti, including the various regions of Chinvat.

In this manner, the real education of Behramshah progressed on a fast track. Leaving aside the basic grammar, the Master was taught the divine science of '*Staota Yasna*', which enabled him to translate any word in any language, as well as to understand the spiritual construct of the Avesta Manthras, the specific 'weights' attached to every word in a sentence, and every character in a word. He was taught the difficult topic of '*Jame Jehanuma*' – the art of constructing the most complicated tables to forecast the most minute details of a person's future. In a short span of three and a half years, Behramshah was taught the most intimate knowledge of the Zarathushtrian faith, which would take a normal person several lives to accumulate. From an *aznabih* or stranger in their midst, Behramshah became the authorised disciple of the Sraoshavarez, who gave him the love and affection of the father he never had. As a special visitor to Demavand, as per Iranian culture and traditions, Behramshah was accorded the greatest respect and love by all members of Demavand.

The Atash Behram of Demavand

In his three and a half year stay at Demavand, the Abed Sahebs took Behramshah to various expeditions in the regions of Firdaus. Within the *Kash*, or spiritual boundary of Demavand there exist various regions protected by their own separate *Kash*, which remain out of bounds even for the residents of Firdaus. One such area situated in a remote and very high region of Firdaus is home to the Atash Behram of Demavand. The Padshah Saheb enthroned in this Atash Behram is of very old lineage, and has both a visible Fire as well as a hidden core. The Atash Behram, along with its accompanying Atash Adaran, Atash Dadgah, the Urvisgah (consecrated area for performance of Pav Mahel ceremonies) the Bareshnum Gah (where the nine-night long Bareshnum Nahn is administered) and other support areas are all part of a separate *Kash* within Demavand. The entrance to the Kebla of the Padshah Saheb is very low, making one bow before entering. There are strict rules for visiting and viewing the Padshah Saheb and only very advanced *Yaodzathregars* (qualified priests) are allowed to tend the Holy Fire. The entire complex is situated in a hilly region and the Atash Behram structure itself is hewn out of a single hill of black rock.

The structure is very high, with the Kebla of the Padshah Saheb itself being approximately five storeys tall. There is a separate science which gives detailed measurements for calculating the height of such structures. As is well known, the Padshah is made up of 16 different fires taken from various professions. However, behind this material process there exists a deeper spiritual rationale. There exist 16 different Fire Energies within the entire Cosmos of Hasti and Nisti. The stature of the Atash Behram is determined by the presence of a spiritual connection between each of these 16 Fire Energies, which work at different places and planes of the Cosmos and the Atash Padshah. The height of the Kebla of the Padshah is determined by accounting for the Paiwand which exists between the Padshah and the 16 Fire Energies. The spiritual entities known as Ram Yazata and Govad Yazata – normally associated with the functioning of the atmosphere, are entrusted with the task of maintaining this Paiwand between the Atash energies of the Cosmos and the Padshah Saheb. Such an enlightened and fully conscious Padshah is an important ally in the workings of Nature. The *Aipi* – or enlightened aura of the Padshah engulfs its Kebla and maintains its hold through the rough, yet beautiful walls of the Kebla. It is for this reason that the walls of the Kebla of any Atash Behram, Adaran or Dadgah should not be of smooth finished stone but roughly hewn, yet of an artistic nature.

The Atash Behram of Demavand is of the highest spiritual stature, and is the spiritual successor of the original Atash consecrated by Shah Jamshid thousands of years ago. The fires which were consecrated by King Jamshid are however different from the fires consecrated by the Prophet Zarathushtra, who was the first to introduce the Atash Behram level of Fire. The Fires consecrated by King Jamshid were also talismanic, working with the Yazatas Ram and Govad. However, the Fires consecrated by the Prophet Zarathushtra created the connection with the Pav Mahel within Nisti and the 16 Fire Energies, hence are called *Atash-e-Varaharan*. These consecrated fires of the most superior level are living entities having their own persona and environment. It is therefore also true that each such Padshah would have a specific life span. The time from when the 16 different physical fires are gathered, purified, consecrated, merged and the Padshah enshrined within its Kebla marks its birth. This is the time from when the Paiwand or spiritual connection between the Padshah and the 16 Fire Energies of Hasti and Nisti is established. The “life span” of the Padshah refers to that time when

this Paiwand is properly maintained and active – which can extend over hundreds of years. When the Paiwand breaks, for whatever reason, the Padshah’s life span is over, the Padshah “dies”, or to put it in correct technical terms, the Padshah enters the state of ‘*Samandar*’, where the divine connection is lost, but the enlightened Aipi of the Padshah maintains its grandeur. In this state, Fireflies are visible around the Padshah. Even in this state however, the Padshah is able to perform its functions in a limited manner for a period of nearly two to three hundred years. After the Aipi or Khoreh of the Padshah also disintegrates, the Fire is said to be in complete Samandar. It is only at this time that the Padshah can be lifted from its *Khuan* – or seat and moved out of its Kebla. After this ‘demise’, certain ceremonies are performed on the Padshah, to create a new descendant. These intricate ceremonies, the details of which are known to only very few of the Sahebs result in the birth of the new Padshah who carries forward the work of the old Padshah. The current Atash Behram at Demavand is thus the spiritual successor of the thousands of years old Padshah created by King Jamshid, and then further consecrated by Prophet Zarathushtra.

This powerful Padshah consists of the visible Fire placed on the tray of the Fire Vase, as well as its spiritual counterpart or ‘*Chaki*’ kept under the tray of the Fire Vase. The Boi ceremony is performed on this Padshah by very highly advanced *Yaozdathregars* using fragrant wood from trees which grow within its vicinity. The Padshah gives off an amazing radiance which adequately lights up the Kebla as well as the hall where devotees gather to pray. The Khuan or throne of the Padshah is made of black stone and has a direct connection with Spenta Armaiti. The Fire Vase (*Afarganyu*) is made of pure gold, specially alchemised for this purpose. In the outer areas of the complex, light is radiated by the presence of specially crafted lamps. Specially pressed mineral oils are poured into small niches carved in the stone walls of the complex. These are then lit using a specific type of flint stones. The lamps however, require no wick and burn on their own, giving out a soft white light. At particular places within the complex, the lamps are made from cow’s ghee, whereas in other places specific mineral or vegetable oils are used.

Across the direction of the Padshah Saheb is situated the Atash Adaran. Between the Atash Behram and the Atash Adaran is situated the Atash Dadgah and the Urvisgah where the Pav Mahel ceremonies are performed. Thus the powerful Aipi of the

Varaharan on one side and the Aipi of the Adaran Saheb on the other properly control the environment of the Urvisgah, maintaining its connection with the Pav Mahel and Gaas of Prophet Zarathushtra. Thus the powerful Manthras recited by the spiritually evolved Yaozdathregars in such a charged environment face no difficulty in reaching the soul of the deceased in whose honour the ceremonies are performed. Behramshah was fortunate to not only witness these ceremonies, but was also taken into the Sezda stage to see the final effect of the Manthras as they reached the soul of the deceased.

The Treasures of Demavand

In addition to being the spiritual sanctuary of the Zarathushtrian faith, the secluded dimension of Demavand also serves another very important function – that of being the repository of knowledge, arts, crafts, culture, literature of the Iranian civilization from earliest times till today. Thus every topic which will arise and vanish within the 81,000 year cycle of Zravane Daregho Khadata, all the art and culture, crafts and knowledge of this entire time period is stored in a specially earmarked area of Demavand called the *Talesam of Tangistan*. The Tangistan area is situated in a very large part of the Demavand Kash and is called Talesam to indicate its locked and secret nature. It is not accessible to any but the most chosen few senior members of the settlement. The senior Abed Sahebs of Demavand including the deputy Sraoshavarez Rashidji, and Shaharyar Saheb under the direction of the Sraoshavarez took Behramshah for a visit to this amazing place. The route to the Tangistan area is long and arduous but provides fantastic scenery and a beautiful environment. Despite this natural beauty and clean air, the long walk began to tell on Behramshah's stamina. As his thoughts began to wander, Rashidji Saheb immediately sensed Behramshah's discomfort, and in turn, focussed his thoughts on how nice it would be should Abed Shaharyar, who was known in Demavand as '*neem-Rustam*', i.e. Rustam Junior because of his incredible build, height and strength would lift both of them. The wise Abed promptly caught his senior's thoughts and laughing, picked up Behramshah under one arm and Rashidji under the other, and proceeded to carry both of them the rest of the way, talking and laughing all the way!

As they reached the entrance of the Talesam, the Abeds busied themselves in the complicated task of opening the Talesam. One of the Abeds walked to the top of a hill on which was a stone shaped as a cover. A specific word was written on the stone by

the Abed Saheb and it moved to indicate a door to the secret area. As they entered through the door, their attention was drawn to a small lamp burning in one corner. Behramshah was told that this lamp was burning since the time of Jamshid and would continue to burn till the end of this Zravane Daregho Khadata cycle. The Abed Saheb handled the lamp in a particular way, causing another door to emerge in front of them, passing through which landed them in the museum of Tangistan. In the 14,000 years that have passed of the current Zravane Daregho Khadata, the glory of the Iranian civilization is displayed in this amazing storehouse of artefacts and treasures. From the special buildings housing the original 21 Nasks of the Zarathushtrian faith, known as the *Mantra Spenta*, to the thousands of exegetical manuscripts known as the *Nikeez* – the inner exposition of these sacred Manthras, written by advanced theologians and wise Dasturs; from the sword of Rustam, which extended to 30 feet, yet was capable of being housed in a very small scabbard, his mace and other weapons; to the incredible collection of precious gems and jewellery, perpetual clocks which keep the time of the Zravane Daregho Khadata cycle; literary masterpieces such as the original manuscript of Firdausi's Shah Nameh, and hundreds of other items whose description is now but a faint memory of our beloved Master – all these and more were shown to him.

In addition to the Tangistan Talesam, Behramshah made special mention of another, even more secret and fascinating area, called the *Kuh-e-Kaf* Talesam. This area has its own resident Abed Sahebs, whose main work is related to the making of a special *Aksir* – or special liquid – which would alchemise base metals to gold. The entrance to this Talesam is so strongly guarded that only the Sraoshavarez can open it and access its treasures. Our beloved Master explained that at the time of the advent of the Promised One – Shah Behram Varzavand into the visible world, a large part of his mission to resurrect the Zarathushtrian faith and re-establish Iran as the centre of the global civilization will call for the use of real gold. The small community of Abeds who reside within this secret Talesam, are the custodians of its gold and gold making *Aksir*. Their progress is different from any other Zarathushtrian soul because their only spiritual discipline is to speak the Truth. They do not have any prayers, ceremonies, Fire Temples or other Alats.

The working and history of the Talesam is forever linked with the fifth head of Demavand, called Sraoshavarez Saarvaar Saheb. Behramshah revealed that many centuries ago, at the time of the leadership of Sraoshavarez Khodadad – the fourth Sraoshavarez of Demavand, there started an intense debate among the Abed Sahebs. This debate was led by the then deputy Sraoshavarez Saarvaar Saheb, who was an immense man of formidable physical as well as spiritual prowess – which can be easily believed by the fact that his forehead itself was nine inches high! He was the rarest of rare individuals – he was born outside the Kash of Demavand, in visible Iran where his parents used to reside. However, his birth and ultimate glorious destiny was immediately known by his predecessor and teacher, the fourth Sraoshavarez Khodadad Saheb. At a tender age, he was brought to the Demavand area and his training imparted to him. When Saarvaar Saheb reached the post of Deputy Sraoshavarez, he initiated an intense debate, which was to last for many years with amazing arguments both for and against. It was Saarvaar Saheb's contention that the amount of gold and gold-making Aksir stored in the Kuh-e-Kaf Talesam was not enough to meet the needs of Shah Behram Varzavand when he would appear in the 21st century, and hence the stock should be augmented so as to not pose any difficulty to the Saviour. Sraoshavarez Khodadad maintained that the stock of gold and Aksir was sufficient for this purpose and hence need not be augmented. As per the rules of Iranian protocol, Saarvaar Saheb deferred to the wishes of his senior. However, after Saarvaar Saheb became the Sraoshavarez he fulfilled his wish. Using his formidable spiritual power, Saarvaar Saheb succeeded in not only opening the extremely complicated Talesam, he also displayed amazing prowess and increased the amount of gold and Aksir in the Talesam to twice the amount that would be needed.

Three years in Firdaus: Behramshah to Ustad Saheb

As time passed, Behramshah's life was totally integrated with the citizens of Demavand. As the chosen disciple of the Sraoshavarez, he was accorded great respect and admiration, and his innocent ways and temperament made him highly popular with all. A farmer within the community called Shaharyar began to like Behramshah so much that he offered his daughter's hand in marriage and approached the Sraoshavarez for his permission. However, the Sraoshavarez, mindful of Behramshah's life and mission in the outside world refused permission. In order to prepare Behramshah for his life outside Demavand, the Abed Saheb's took many

steps to improve his general health by making him pass through various Nahns and giving specific health related prayers or *Nirangs*. In addition, Behramshah was made to partake of a most prized and rarest-of-rare delicacy from the Sraoshavarez's personal treasury – a *Murraba* – or a specially made conserve of pure gold. It is well known that traditional medicinal systems such as *Ayurveda*, *Unani* and Homoeopathy use extracts from precious metals such as gold, silver or copper. However, these extracts are made from the ash of the precious metal or oils infused with the precious metals are used. In some traditional preparations like '*Chyavanprash*', very finely beaten sheets of gold or silver are further shredded into hair like consistency and added to the health tonic. However, the method of cooking gold into a preserve is not known in the outer world, but this knowledge is available with the Abed Sahebs who make these precious delicacies which are much valued for their amazing health improving qualities.

The education of Behramshah continued at an intensive level, given his short stay. According to the Zarathushtrian mystic revelation, the all-encompassing knowledge or *Ilm*, can be grouped under four main categories: *Ilm-e-Simia*, *Ilm-e-Kimia*, *Ilm-e-Rimia* and *Ilm-e-Limia*. All knowledge, whether discovered in this current Zravane Daregho Khadata or not, falls under any one of these four categories. A brief description of each of these four categories is given below.

Ilm-e-Simia is that category of knowledge which is not in public domain. It is erroneously believed that the scriptures of all major religions contain merely moralistic teachings. However, the concept of morality is ingrained within the human consciousness and is the major differentiator between man and animals. Religious scriptures contain that wisdom and knowledge which causes the morality ingrained with the human consciousness to sprout forth in full splendour. There exist vast treasures in the outer world, which man can righteously use for the benefit of the entire society. The knowledge of how to use these resources in an 'environmentally friendly' manner, with each person getting only what he deserves, without any selfish motive or profit making feeling is contained within *Ilm-e-Simia*. Thus the prosperity giving Manthras of the Zarathushtrian faith, known as 'Manthra Spenta', the various Tarikats or spiritual disciplines enabling us to use these Manthras all fall under this category. Moreover, all philosophies, commentaries, Nikeez, Tavail, occult sciences

and other exegetical discourses which enable man to find the right path fall in this category. Even the knowledge of Khshnoom, revealed by our Master is part of this Ilm. In short, this category contains the extra-ordinary knowledge, which can be used only by extra-ordinary individuals, in extra-ordinary times.

The second category, known as Ilm-e-Kimia, encompasses all branches of Chemistry and Pharmacy. The various streams of medical science are included in this category. In short, we may say that any knowledge which aims to make the physical life of man better, without causing harm to some other creation is encompassed in Il-e-Kimia.

Ilm-e-Limia is the third category and encompasses all knowledge relating to engineering. This relates not only to human engineering knowledge, but also the divine engineering we see all around, which lets birds construct complicated nests, animals construct their dwellings, the marvel of engineering which is the human body – the precise structure of the skeletal system, the wonder of the spine protecting the ultra delicate nervous system running through it, the cranial arrangement protecting the brain and many more which still fascinate modern man. The difference between human and divine engineering is that one creates waste and inefficiency in the environment, whereas the other makes optimal use of resources without degrading any other creation.

The fourth category, known as Ilm-e-Rimia, includes all knowledge which allows one to make copies of original creations. For example, the science of synthesising natural perfumes such as rose or musk from a combination of chemical compounds, or duplicating the properties of a natural growing substance in a laboratory, creating pharmaceutical drugs which mimic the effect of natural herbs or even making synthetic diamonds and pearls. Thus the knowledge of going down to the level of the basic elements of any matter and then reorganising the same for a purpose would constitute this category.

It is important to distinguish Ilm-e-Simia from the three others. The scope and extent of Ilm-e-Simia is immense since its includes all the divine sciences. The other three categories put together would still constitute not even 12% of Ilm-e-Simia. It was our Master's great destiny to learn, in the short span of three and a half years a great deal

of these sciences, particularly many branches of *Ilm-e-Simia*. The brilliance he displayed in his public life was a result of this intensive training. Even before his public appearance, Behramshah became well known in Surat for his knowledge of astrology (*Ilm-e-Najum*), which was a unique amalgam of western (*Sayana*) system as well the Indian system (*Nirayana*). He was a master at unravelling any horoscope and an expert in using both the western Ephemeris as well as traditional Indian charts. A particular case has been noted by Jehangir Chiniwalla in his history of Khshnoom series in the *Parsi Avaz*, which was recounted to him by his mother. The husband of a very close friend of his mother fell seriously ill with the doctors giving him a few hours to live. They immediately took the horoscope of the sick man to show the Master. Behramshah reassured them that the person had many more years to live. Indeed, the person recovered and lived for several more years. After his death, the horoscope was again shown to the Master. After glancing at it, Behramshah disclosed that this person is already dead and passed away on such and such date and time!

The Master was given the knowledge of constructing very detailed and intricate calculations of the phases of planets governing his life. He maintained these charts with utmost care and took great pains to avoid stepping out of his house on certain days or meeting with people on other days. Yet, as was forecast to him by the *Abed Sahebs*, he lost these invaluable calculations due to the reckless behaviour of a relative, and had to put up with much trouble and hardship in his later years because of this absence.

In addition to this, Behramshah was a master of the very esoteric discipline called *Ilm-e-Rammal* – or divination using dice of a particular type and then interpreting the numbers ‘thrown’ by the dice. Perhaps the Master’s most useful tool in his public life was the knowledge of *Ilm-e-Kyafa*, or face reading. By merely glancing at a person’s face and observing his ears, ears, mouth, neck, nose and other facial characteristics, the Master could immediately glean the most intimate details of the person’s character, learning, faith, his ability to imbibe spiritual knowledge and bent of mind. On several occasions, the Master would tell his closes disciples that having this knowledge was also a burden, since he could immediately make out a person’s character, but for several past obligations, he would have to bear the burden of the person’s foolishness with a smiling face.

There is a specific purpose behind writing the above. The master's public behaviour was more mysterious than all the knowledge he disclosed. Many times, he would simply refuse to talk at all or answer any queries put forth by several 'learned' scholars or even priests. At other times he would give vague or purposely wrong answers to put off some persons. Many times he would behave in a totally childish manner or give such outrageous answers that even his closest disciples would not understand why he was not taking the questions of some person who had come from far in a more serious fashion. When his senior disciples would question his behaviour, the Master would reply that he would give the Ilm only to those who he deemed were fit to receive and understand it. For some, he used to say, I will even spend my own money, go to their house and teach them, but others I will simply ignore.

But perhaps the greatest science Behramshah learnt from the Abeds was *Ilm-e-Staota Yasna* and the *Ilm-e-Zafar*. *Staota Yasna* is that science on which the entire 21 Nasks of the Zarathushtrian faith were written. The particular composition of the Manthras, the science behind repeating certain prayers 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 21, 101 or 200 times, the deep knowledge of applying certain parts of the Avesta to cure specific illnesses or removing the malefic influence of certain planets in a person's horoscope was known to the Master and he used it to treat a great number of people. He had a deep grasp of the application of Avesta Manthras and rituals in everyday life. In addition, he possessed the knowledge of *Ilm-e-Sezda*, using which he could go into a trance like state and communicate with the Abed Saheb of Demavand after his return to India. The Master also used the ancient system of *ABJAD*, whereby weights are ascribed to particular characters of the alphabet and words or phrases used to arrive at a particular number which would be beneficial to the user. Using this system, he could reveal the hidden code behind many mystic writings in Persian, Pahlavi as well as Avesta.

Engrossed in his studies, protected in the pristine environment of Firdaus, enveloped in the affection of its 2000 residents, and bestowed with the most potent divine blessings, tender love and feelings of his Master the Sraoshavarez Marzban Saheb, Behramshah spent three and a half years in that Valley of Paradise. In this time he evolved from a barely educated, stammering boy of 18 to a mature, wise and immensely talented Master. Behramshah had now become the Ustad Behramshah.

To be continued...