

SATYAM TALES

Homage to a Rishi

A little disciple's poetic tribute to her guru



Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India



Satyam Tales

Commenced on the occasion of World Yoga Convention & BSY Golden Jubilee, 2013

Homage to a Rishi is the thirty-first in the series of *Satyam Tales* depicting the life and teachings of our guru, Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati. Through the medium of these simple narratives, we hear the voice of Sri Swamiji inspiring all, irrespective of age.

A young girl's devotion towards her guru brings her to the guru's ashram at a young age and she becomes an integral part of the children's movement. The contact with the guru and the ashram environment provides a positive direction to her life allowing her personality to blossom and her innate talents to develop. This is the life-story of that girl wherein she has woven the tender flowers of her emotions into beautiful garlands of poems to offer them at the feet of her guru.

This story is a delightful read for children, adults and old alike. It is an invaluable message for those engaged in the world and for those seeking the spirit. This journey is your journey, these challenges are your challenges, and this victory is your victory. It is a story that will touch your heart, give you joy, hope, conviction and, above all, faith. Perhaps a little *muskan*, a sweet smile may break across your face as well . . .

— Editor

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Please note:

- This collection of *Satyam Tales* is dedicated to our masters, Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati and Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati, and is the vehicle to bring their spiritual and yogic teachings in an understandable and applicable form into the lives of individuals throughout the world.
- *Satyam Tales* will be exclusively published by Yoga Publications Trust to ensure the accuracy and correctness of the teachings and the context in which they are being presented.
- *Satyam Tales* is a loving offering to all the children and the future generations of the world to remind them of their true nature and inspire them to explore and enhance their own potential.
- We invite all aspirants to share these tales with your group and if you have some tales of your own, we request you to contribute as well. You can also publish these tales in your own language, fulfilling the conditions of YPT, for which you may contact:

Yoga Publications Trust, Ganga Darshan, Fort, Munger, Bihar, India 811201

Tel: +91-6344 222430, 9162783904

Homage to a Rishi

Dear Readers! It is a matter of great joy and satisfaction for me that you liked my last story (See Satyam Tale 24, Glory to a Rishi – Ed) Yet I was disappointed not to have been able to include the story of that promising girl, Muskan. Fortunately this disappointment also ended when a parcel was delivered at my doorstep. Keeping her promise, Muskan had sent me a big collection of her poems and memoirs. Her story forms the perfect epilogue to the earlier story . . .

I am Muskan Kumari, a fourteen year old member of the *Bal Yoga Mitra Mandal*, the Childrens' Yoga Fellowship. Ravi Uncle, I want to share some very memorable and pleasant moments with you. I consider it the most special day of my life when I was introduced to the ashram and had the opportunity to see a great person like Swamiji. I believe that I am very fortunate to have had a chance to come to such a sacred environment. It is here that I found my identity and a new way of living life. Everything related to Swamiji and the ashram is never far from my heart.

I came to Ganga Darshan for the first time in 2011. I was only eight years old, but for some unknown reason I have always had a very strong desire to meet Swamiji. It always felt nice to listen





about Swamiji, and it was this eagerness which brought me to the ashram through BYMM. I did not know about anything or anyone except Swamiji, but once I came here it felt great! Each and every sight in this place is captivating and I had not seen such an amazing environment anywhere so far.

There are six of us in my family and my eldest sister is already married. So now it is just the five of us and even my father only stays home for few days at a time. He is a policeman and is very very busy. So it is really the four of us – my mother, my sister Khushi, my brother Ankit and myself – at home most of the time. Where can we go by ourselves?

That is why when I visit any place for the first time, it feels strange, but at the ashram I felt totally at ease. It was for Swamiji that I came to the ashram and that is why I did not find it strange at all, though there were times when I would miss my mother. A whole month had gone by since I had started coming to the ashram but I had still not met Swamiji. I was restless, always wondering to myself, ‘When will I finally meet Swamiji?’

When will I meet you?
I have something to say to you,
Muskan’s faith rests in you.
When, O, when will I meet you?

There is nothing, when you are not there,
Where you are, there is everything.
You are my longing for life,
I humbly thirst to see you.
All prostrations to you,
When will I meet you?

Muskan's smile comes from you,
I long for a place at your feet
And long for love from you;
May there be showers of blessings from you.
When, O, when will I meet you?
This is my longing, this is my thirst,
My heart's call is just this –
We will surely meet!

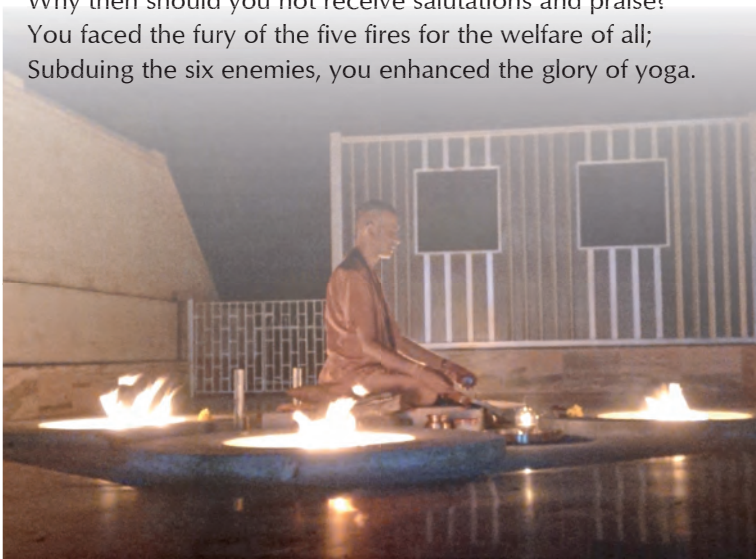
We had spent about three months in the ashram and finally we were fortunate to attend a satsang program where I saw Swamiji for the first time. I had only heard about him and just seen pictures of him but when I finally saw him with my very own eyes, I cannot describe to you how it felt. It



was something out of this world. I was staring at him and thinking, 'Is this really him about whom I have heard so much?' It was difficult to believe that he was carrying the responsibility of this huge institution. He was so unassuming and yet his brightness and lustre lit up everything around him, his face glowed with a charming smile, every aspect of his was unique.

After that first meeting, I was always on the lookout for Swamiji. A few days later, he himself came to meet us children. He spoke to us about so many things and he also played with us. There were so many questions in my mind – How does he look after so many things? How is he able to answer any and every question? I wondered about the many different ways in which he came across, every wonderful quality is seen in him. I feel like a tiny speck in front of him, I salute him from the bottom of my heart:

O victorious one of yoga, a hundred salutations to you!
There is nothing on earth, that you cannot do.
You lead a simple life, yet there is nothing you cannot attain.
Why then should you not receive salutations and praise?
You faced the fury of the five fires for the welfare of all;
Subduing the six enemies, you enhanced the glory of yoga.



There is no one on earth, who has not worshipped you
Or has not been blessed with your grace,
They all bow their heads at your feet.
O mind-born one bestowed by a boon,
O liberated one, O fountain of wisdom,
O supreme Swan, O messenger of God,
O lotus-eyed one, O revealer of Truth,
O victorious yogi, O conqueror of the world,
A hundred salutations to you! A hundred salutations to you!!

I started coming to the ashram every Sunday. I found out about all the rules and regulations of the ashram, and got to know the residents of the ashram as well. As a member of BYMM, the first group that I joined was the havan group. I worked wholeheartedly and with full confidence. Swami Satyamurti told me to guide the other children as he liked the way I worked. At first I was a little afraid whether I would be able to do this properly but I remembered Swamiji and that gave me courage to start my work.

My interests grew in other areas and groups as well. After the havan group, I was drawn to the chanting group where we chanted kirtans, mantras and stotras. This gave me great joy since I had never sung before and I learned a lot. Later I joined the dance group where we learned many different





kinds of dance ranging from classical to modern styles. Then came the day when I got an opportunity to dance on stage. That day my heart was full of joy, confidence and enthusiasm.

I also joined the karate and asana classes. Initially karate was not that much fun, but today I enjoy it as much as dance, kirtan or asana classes.

I had joined the asana classes at the very end, as I thought that there is nothing beyond the set of asanas which we do in our usual Sunday class. But then I found out that



they were only basic asanas and that there are many other asanas and pranayamas which have many different benefits. Very soon I started practising them regularly at home as well. All my tiredness simply disappeared after the asana practices. I feel that asana and pranayama has played the biggest role in my life out of all the different teachings. Nothing is possible without them. If we are not healthy, then how will we be able to do any work? This is why I have included them in my daily routine and I practise them every single day.

As time passed, I got many opportunities to meet Swamiji and know more about him. I have tried to become his most



beloved disciple. Over time I have received so much more than what I had ever dreamed about.

Here in the ashram we are inspired to move ahead in every field, motivated to learn new things. Swamiji not only introduces us to our spiritual and cultural heritage but also offers us opportunities to participate in and organize many programs. He has given us three goals of *samskara*, positive qualities, *swavalamban*, self-reliance and *rashtra samskriti prem*, love for our culture, which blossom in our lives very naturally. Whether it is the chanting of 108 rounds of



Hanuman Chalisa on new year's day, or Christmas or Sivaratri or Bhagavat Katha, we children participate in all these activities with a lot of enthusiasm and energy.

In 2013, the Golden Jubilee of the Bihar School of Yoga was celebrated along with the World Yoga Convention. More than 300 children of BYMM were very much part of the program. We were given many different responsibilities





during this prestigious event. I was in the kirtan group and it was a great experience to sing in the presence of Swamiji and thousands of yoga aspirants in the grand pandal at the Polo Ground. A truly memorable and unforgettable experience!

As the years went on, I became one of the senior members of BYMM and I fulfilled my duties and obligations to the best of my ability. During this time, I also got a



wonderful opportunity to live in the ashram for two whole weeks. I found out even more about ashram life after coming to stay here. It was like living in my own home. Whether we were in class or doing seva or playing, we had a lot of fun. There are two experiences which I want to share. Firstly, while it was great to see everyone busy working, sometimes the stress which I saw on people's faces would make me feel a little sad. I composed a poem for them –



Keep smiling with
smiles upon smiles
Sing the song of life
with a sweet little smile
Smile is the true companion of life.
Without a smile, what is your life?
Without a smile,
how can you enjoy life?
Without smiles, there is no
warbling of joy.
If there is no truth in life,
how colourless would be that smile?
What is this vast creation
without a golden smile?
May there be smiles
in every act and deed of yours,
May you smile in every condition.
May smiles blossom
in each and every moment of life,
May smiles and laughter
resound in every voice of life!

The second experience was Swamiji playing with us children and I was wondering whether he is the person people are dying to meet. I realized that when we see someone as our very own, then he does not remain a distant divine soul, but becomes one of us and gives us all the joy and happiness. When Swamiji spends time with us, he becomes simple and childlike, and we get along with him without any fear



or hesitation. Swamiji has himself said, “When I see these children, I remember my own childhood. When children meet their guru at such a young age, they do not come to the guru with an ambition to fulfil or a problem to solve. They just come with a pure and beautiful feeling. They feel good in the presence of the guru. I stayed with my guru with this feeling and it is with the same feeling that I spend time



with the BYMM children. Do I lecture to them? No. We play together. Sometimes I give them yo-yos and other toys or games. Instead of satsangs, we have a lot of fun together, and in that fun-time the different thoughts and ideas, the faith and belief that they acquire become the foundation to imbibe the positive samskaras of life.” I have a small suggestion for all those people who are anxious to meet Swamiji –

Try and make yourself one with him
in thought, word and deed.
Keep him in your heart, and you'll
have all the happiness of the world
You keep on wondering,
'Why doesn't he hear me?
Why doesn't he understand my pain?
Why does he not meet me?'
Let not this doubt be there,
Do not fret in the shelter of truth,
Remove the veil from your heart
and then see!
Bow your head at his feet and see!
All the joy of the world will be yours
Place your mind at the guru's feet
and keep his image in your heart.
Try to make yourself one with him
and then see!



Once we were taken to witness Swamiji's panchagni sadhana. That was the first time I saw him seated amidst the fires and that scene left an indelible impression on my mind. Faith, respect and surrender filled my heart and my head spontaneously bowed down. Shortly thereafter I was amazed to see him again. I thought, 'He has just completed this difficult panchagni sadhana but there is no sign of stress or strain on his face. Rather, the glow and brightness is even more than ever!' I kept on thinking again and again – How is it that Swamiji can do so many things? How is it possible? After all, Swamiji, who really are you?

Who are you?
who sits amidst the five fires
who intimidates Death himself
You, whose face is ever-smiling
You, who showers us with love
Who are you?

You, whose softness
would make a lotus blush;
You, whose lustre makes
Cupid pale in comparison;
Who are you?

Are you a messenger of God?
Are you Mahakaal?
Or are you Rama himself?
Are you an avadhoot or a yogi?
Who are you?

O cosmic being incarnate!
O ocean of mercy!
O embodiment of wisdom!
O son of Satyam,
Who are you?
Please tell me,
who really are you?

Looking at your many
forms, I have a humble
prayer that you, my
most merciful and most
respected Guru, find me
worthy to receive your
grace. I want to surrender
completely, become
completely yours, but how,
I do not know. I am a little
girl, my thinking capacity,
my understanding, emotion



and intelligence are all so slight but despite this, I pray for your grace –



O Beloved Guru, my esteemed teacher and giver of life,
Help me overcome my weakness
that I may cross this river of life.

Peace and rest are hard to find
All I feel is restlessness.
Please take care of me, my lord.
Please guide me, my Gurudev.

O ocean of nectar,
please accept me as your own.
All my understanding fails me,
Please bless me with wisdom.

O Niranjana, the pure collyrium for
my eyes,
You truly are Alakh Niranjana,
Help me cross this river of life.
Be with me and care for me.
Help me overcome my weakness,
shower your grace and
save me, O my Gurudev!



This is how the days went by, sometimes in remembrance of the Master, sometimes in fun and games, sometimes in learning. Then came a very special day, my birthday. Birthdays come every year but I will never forget this particular 'birthday' because on 28th October 2015 I received a new birth, a new life. I got mantra diksha from Swamiji. I was very happy and thanked the lord from the bottom of my heart that he blessed me with such great grace which brought me to my beloved Swamiji. I wonder how my life would be if he was not in it. I would say that it is an invaluable gift to me from God –

If you were not in my life,
Then how would my life be?
Even if I had endless love,
I would still be as restless
as a fish out of water.
Seasons would come and go,
So would bees on flowers
But who would give me so
much love?
Every comfort is here,
The moon and stars are here,
Sprinkling rays of silvery light
And blossoms of spring
But do they comfort me?
Or pacify my restless mind?
No, I am still as restless
as a fish out of water
And searching for love.
I call out to you with
every breath, every heartbeat.
O God! Thank you for your
shower of grace
Which brought me to my
glorious master.
What a wonderful gift you
have given me!





It was a very memorable day when I went to the sacred place of Paramahamsaji – Rikhiapeeth – for the first time. Although we celebrate his birthday every year on 25th December as well as the day on which he received sannyasa diksha on 12th September, there was something special about going to Rikhia. I was very excited and eager that day. I had never seen Sri Swamiji but I had heard a lot about him and his qualities. We know our Swamiji very well and his qualities which we cannot even begin to describe. When we look at our Swamiji, we can try and guess a little bit about Sri Swamiji. If Swamiji is so amazing, then imagine how incredible his guru would be! I feel very privileged to have had the opportunity to play the role of an angel in a dance-



drama on his great life. This play, based on a Satyam Tale, The Great Escape, was a very enjoyable experience for me.

When I think about Sri Swamiji, I always wonder about how he went out to propagate yoga all alone, how he helped the sick and the suffering. I cannot imagine how many difficulties and problems he must have faced, but he did not lose courage nor did his steps falter because he was determined. It is because of his courage and dedication that today we know Munger as the 'city of yoga' and Rikhia as a *tirtha* or a holy place. It is all because of him. And whenever I heard about Rikhiapeeth, I always wondered whether I would get an opportunity to go there. I knew the city of yoga, now



I was eager to see the beauty of Rikhia which is also the gift of Sri Swamiji.

When we arrived there, the only thought in my mind was that if Rikhiapeeth is so beautiful, then how beautiful and great would its creator be! His personality, his austerity, his devotion to his guru, how grand it must be! That day when we reached Rikhia, I thanked my beloved Swamiji that he gave us children the opportunity to go there.

Even after thinking a lot, I could not figure out what I could offer him to make him happy, what I could do to become his beloved. I am so weak and fragile, with so many

faults, a small little creature, what can I really offer him? What can I give him who is the perfect man, a complete human being? I would like to offer a small tribute dedicated to Paramahamsaji and Swamiji because of whom we are experiencing all this light and joy:



My mind, my body,
every particle of my being is
dedicated to you,
But still I want to give
something more to you,
I still want to do something
more for you.
All my wishes and my
dreams are devoted to you,
Every beat of my heart is
dedicated to you.
Nevertheless, I want to give
something more to you
I want to do more for you.
My every breath and my
whole heart is yours
I pray to God that
I do not ever forget you
And that I may be with you
all the time,
Living every moment in
your world.
I do not know what is
surrender of the soul,
I do not know the meaning
of full surrender.
I just want to be yours.
In this state of confusion
I still want to offer
something more to you.
I still want to do something
more for you.

When I expressed these feelings on stage in Rikhia, Swami Satsangi ji, Rikhia's peethadhishwari, told me, "Sri Swamiji does not want anything, he only wants your smiles. He just wants that you should always be happy. Keep smiling and remain happy!" Swamiji also appreciated my poem before we returned to Munger. We came back to Ganga Darshan and I was eagerly waiting for Swamiji to return. I kept thinking:

What is that life
where there is no fragrance of you?
What kind of happiness is it
if I cannot even get a glimpse of you?

These days Rahul bhaiyya and I are managing all the activities of BYMM – from the admission of new members to conducting various programs of the ashram. We do all this with great ease, efficiency, joy and total faith in ourselves. From planning to execution, we children decide and do everything by ourselves, thus rising to the challenge of self-reliance that Swamiji has set for us.





Both of us oversaw the conduct of the Bal Yoga Diwas which we celebrate on 14th February every year. On that day, people generally celebrate Valentine's Day but we children celebrate this day as Children's Yoga Day. It was in 2012 that I participated in the celebrations for the first time. I took care of the havan that day and I also spoke a little in front of the entire audience. It was my very first time on stage, so I was nervous but I got so much courage just by thinking of Swamiji that everything went off very well. In 2013, I took part in the dance and asana demonstration besides singing kirtan in the celebrations. 2015 saw me participating in the program as a senior in kirtan and dance. But the best moment that year was when I presented a model of Ganga Darshan ashram made with my own hands to Swamiji!

The Children's Yoga Day is a very special day for us. It is the day on which Swamiji incarnated on this earth and that too, especially for us children. Just one compassionate glance from him works like a divine spark – it energizes us beyond description, brightens up the path before us so that we can walk on fearlessly. I can only thank him for his generosity but then I stop and think – how can we thank him? To find an answer to this question is very difficult. After all, how can we thank someone who is perfection personified? I am so



insignificant, so are my heart and mind. After trying very hard, I realized that the only way we can show our gratitude is by devotedly following the path which he has shown us. This would be the best gift we can offer to him. Swamiji, always keep your compassionate gaze upon us. May your magical smile always shine forth when we see you because it is our experience that your smile can work wonders. Inspired by this mysterious smile, I would like to say this to you –

What is there that your smile
cannot bestow upon us?
Compassion, kindness and
immense love,
I get everything from your
wonderful smile.
Sometimes even a rebuke or
a word of caution
I get from your smile.
All the shades of your smile
I enjoy with joy and wonder.
When there was darkness in
my life
Your smile lighted up the path
ahead.





We receive joy and energy,
strength of sacrifice and
austerity

For this journey of life.

The difficult path becomes
easier with your smile.

When we disciples wander off
the path and falter

your smile spontaneously
brings us back.

O supreme saint, O wise sage

O most glorious one, who

sees the essence of everything

All things are possible

because of your smile,

which is full of compassion,

kindness and immense love.

On the occasion of International Day of Yoga, Swamiji gave a slogan which paved the way for its conduct here in Munger: ‘Taking yoga from the ashram environs to courtyards and rooftops of people’s homes’ and we children were an integral part of the program. Yoga camps were conducted throughout the city and its suburbs, in more than 2000 homes, and we, the children of BYMM, conducted yoga classes for our families and neighbours. It was an unforgettable day for me because on this day I was going to conduct a yoga class in Munger for the first time. It was a very unfamiliar experience to go out amongst unknown people and teach yoga and tell them Swamiji’s message. I never dreamt that I would ever do anything like this but when my name appeared in the list of children selected for giving classes, I jumped with joy! I quietly prayed to Swamiji, ‘This is your work. Please give me the strength to do this work well for you.’

And it really happened like that. I did not have any difficulty in the place where I was sent to conduct the yoga class. It was as if everything was taking place with Swamiji’s grace and energy. It felt as if my prayer had been answered

and that Swamiji himself was speaking through me and conducting the class. My head spontaneously bowed down in reverence and gratitude to him. I had heard that there is something called grace but on that day I really experienced Swamiji's kindness and compassion. He listens to even us little children . . .

O Niranjan! O immaculate one!
You are the support of us all,
You are the nurturer of us all,
You are the incarnation of love
and compassion.

I am wicked and fallen,
I am confused and in darkness,
my Lord.

Will I not find salvation,
now that I have surrendered
to you?

O Lord, please save me now.
Make my life fruitful.

I wander about here and there
Seeking your grace.

You who performed the
arduous panchagni sadhana
And have become like the wish-
fulfilling tree.

You who are adorned with
countless glories.

Please O Lord, save me too.

Help steer the boat of my life to
the other shore.



In the end, all I can say is that I have received everything here. Swamiji, you honed my intellect, softened my emotions and made my work efficient. You are the most precious gem in my life which I will treasure with all my heart. When I heard that you were presented with the Padma Bhushan award, my joy knew no bounds. Wherever I may be, you will have a special place in my heart. I only pray that you always keep your kind, smiling gaze upon me –



You are the call of my heart,
You are my very heartbeat,
No matter what anyone may say,
You are very special to me.
Never go away from me,
Be with me even in my dreams.
In every moment of my life,
please show me the way.
All my family may be here,
Mother, father, friends forever,
But amongst them all,
Only you are my identity.
You are the very foundation of
my life.
No matter what the situation
may be,
Even in the most difficult and
trying tribulation
You are very close to me.
You are very very special to me.



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SATYAM TALES 31

