

By His Grace

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By His Grace

A Devotee's Story

stories about
NEEM KAROLI BABA

by Dada Mukerjee



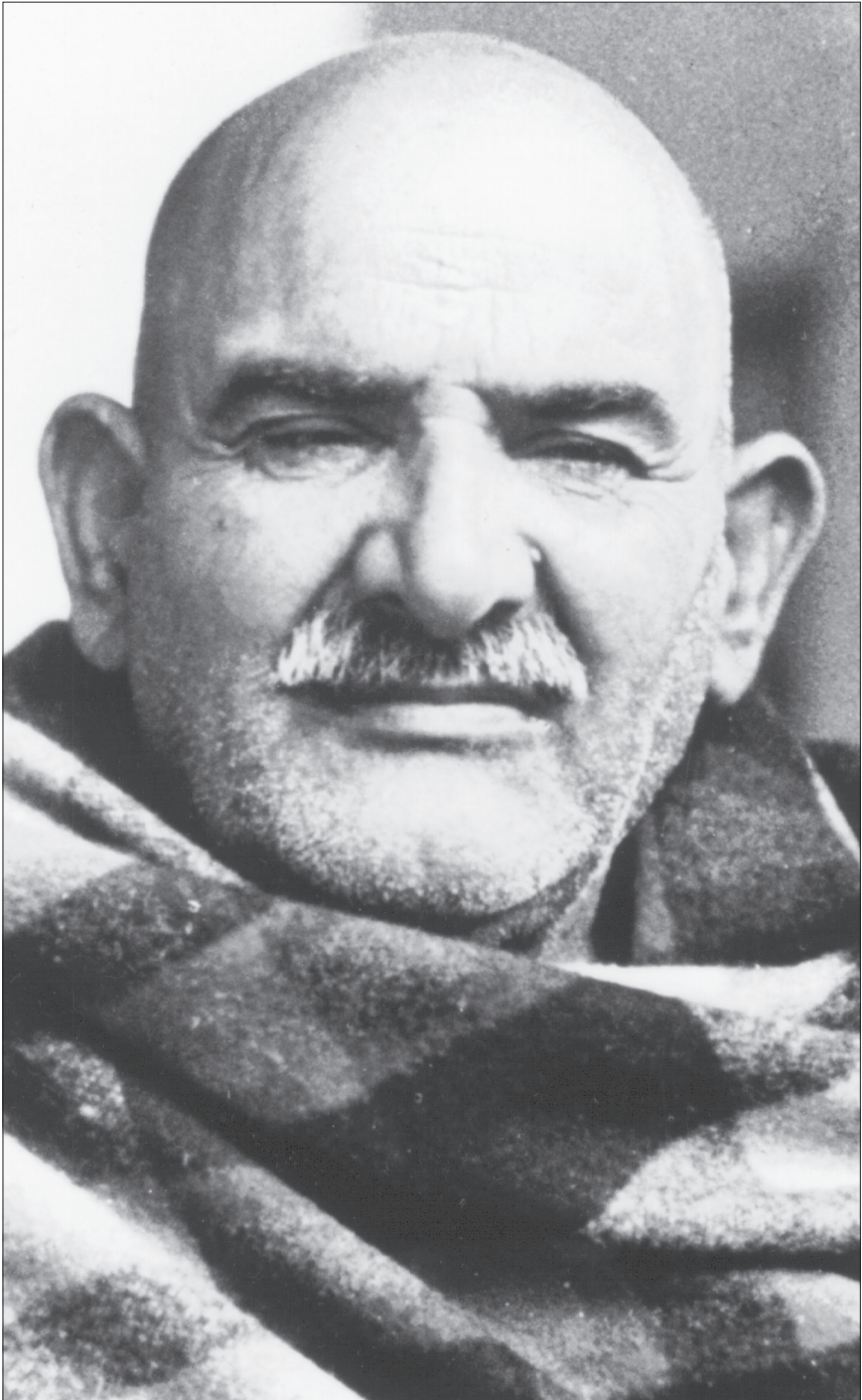
Hanuman Foundation *Santa Fe, New Mexico*

*Tuma karuna ke sagara
Tuma palana karata
Mein sewaka tuma swami
Kripa karo bharata
Om jaya jagadeesha hare*

*You are an ocean of compassion
You are the sustainer
I am the servant, you the Lord
Grant me your grace
Hail to the Lord of the Universe*

Verse from "Guru Arti,"
traditional Hindu devotional prayer.





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EDITOR'S PREFACE

This book came into being through a long process that began after Neem Karoli Baba—Maharajji—left his body in 1973. During the next few years, several Western devotees travelled around India, and later the United States, collecting reminiscences from Maharajji's Indian and Western devotees. Many of those stories ultimately appeared in *Miracle of Love*,¹ which was published in 1979.

Many Westerners began arriving in India in the late sixties and early seventies. Some of us were seeking Maharajji, whom we had learned of from Ram Dass in America. If we were lucky, we found him at one of his ashrams, either in Vrindaban, on the plains not far from Delhi, or at Kainchi in the Kumoan hills near Nainital. Sudhir Mukerjee—Dada—was one of the first Indian devotees many of us met. Since he was fluent in English, he often acted as translator. In addition he was a helpful interpreter of Indian culture and manners and adviser on ashram protocol, as well as sympathetic listener to our personal problems and crises. During our time in India he shared his home, his advice, his view of Maharajji's ongoing lila with us. Especially he shared many wonderful stories of his own experiences as a devotee that helped us begin to understand who Maharajji was. After Maharajji's death, some of Dada's stories were collected and included in *Miracle of Love*, but there were so many more. Over the following decade there began a sporadic, and later systematic, taping of his storytelling as many of us returned to India and visited Dada, and when Dada eventually came to America in 1981 and 1985. It was always obvious that the stories were a treasure that should be recorded and shared. In time it occurred to us that they might become a book, and in 1983 the many tapes began to be transcribed toward that goal.

¹ Ram Dass, *Miracle of Love* (Hanuman Foundation: Santa Fe, New Mexico, 1979)

The transcribing was painfully slow, as the tapes were not all clearly audible or easily understood. There was a particular desire to retain as much as possible of Dada's inimitable oral style, dear to all our hearts. In 1987 a concerted effort began to actually produce a book, and a draft manuscript that Dada himself had written became the preliminary structure. The enlarged manuscript went through several revisions, with input from Dada himself and other devotees at progressing stages, and with his approval obtained on the final version.

There are many devotees, both Western and Indian, who have contributed to this project, from recording, transcribing, editing, and photographic contributions through generous financial support, loving encouragement and interest. Our names are not important and recognition is not needed. To have helped create this book that brings Maharajji again so vividly before us is reward enough.

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