

## There Is No End That Can Be Called an End

Actually I wanted to narrate this from the end... But can there be any thing that could be called an end...? Such an idea arouses in me and bothers me... Just look here... this is the stream flowing by the side of our village... It flows on and on... and merges with the river Ghataprabha. That Ghataprabha also flows on and on and merges with the river Krishna and would flow ever beyond that *Kudala sangama*... Now tell me... where did the stream of our village end and where did your river Ghataprabha begin...? All are like this only... The thing becomes very deep and mystic... Let it be... leave it. Now let us come to this...

What I intended to tell you... was actually told to me by my grandfather. His father told it to him... That means, this story belongs to the time of my great grand father... and it happened when my great grandfather was still a young boy... Really, I lost count of the number of times my grandfather told it to me... he told it to me when I was still very young, before I attended the school... He told me several times when I was in my Kannada school... He told while I was in high school and in college as well... He narrated it whenever I came home for holidays, seating me before him. Each time I heard from him, it used to appear totally a new narrative... Every time he told it, some event or some part of the narrative would claim his special attention, and then it was described by him elaborately. Some other time, some other event would be emphasized by my grandfather. As a result, the story, my grandfather narrated appears as if it actually happened before my eyes... The details of the story appear as pictures passing before my mind...

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The Basavanna fair in my village lasted for three days. The last day, teams of singers of Lavani and Gigi songs assembled, and there would be tough competitions of questions and answers in verse. The village chief would honor the winner in the competition with silver bracelet and cash prizes. The chief of our village was famous throughout the area of Sindikurbet desagati. Though he was only a village chief, he reigned as a desayi. When the things were so... then at the times of our great grandfather... Bhujangappa gowda, the chief of our village handed over the power because of his old age, to Bapugowda, his son by his third youngest wife. Bapugowda was born to Bhujangappa gowda, when Bhujangappagowda was more than fifty years. Bapugowda became the chief when he was twentyfive years and Bhujangappagowda stayed at home and guided his son when necessary. His three wives were dead leaving him alone... The household was managed entirely by housemaids.

When the things were so... a zeal grew up in the mind of Bapugowda, that, he should make a lavani song subsuming a tough riddle, that raised the toughest question, which no singer even of

highest caliber participating in the competition of Basavanna fair, could be able to solve the riddle and answer the question... As such a zeal aroused in his mind, he immediately sent a servant to Belagavi to fetch ten bottles of *Bhringamalaka taila*, an Ayurvedic medicinal oil, prepared scientifically by Pundit Haribhavu Bhatkhande, the royal vaidya of Peshva palace. The house maids took hand full of the oil and poured over the head and shoulders, and rubbed it hard till he began to dose... His body opened up like a lotus flower and his drooping head rested on the bosoms of house maids... They would leave him to be soaked with the oil and after that they would pour several big pots of steaming water on his body... pot after pot... rubbing soap-nut powder to remove the oil on his body... Then they would wipe his profusely sweating body, again and again... and would make him lie on the cot in his room and burn incense below the cot, to keep him warm. Bapugowda would then drift into a deep sleep... And soon after he awoke, he would begin to worry about the song...! The housemaids would boil buffalo milk with full fat, mixed with almond and cashew ground, raisins, saffron, china grass and other spices. Bapugowda would drink the milk, and begin again to worry about the song...! Bapugowda received all the treatments, normally reserved for the women in confinement. Receiving such treatment for more than fifteen days, Bapugowda kept on worrying about the song, throughout the days and nights. But he could not deliver a song! Like this, he merged days and nights meditated for the song and called the song... pleading desperately for its arrival... 'Oh song...! Please come to me... Please come!' he called the song incessantly till he exhausted. But the song wouldn't come to him...

When Bhujangappagowda saw his son wearing himself day after day for some unknown reason, he became worried, and spoke to his son, 'Why son...? It appears that you are worried about something seriously... Have you kept your mind on any of the maids...? Tell me who that girl is... I shall make arrangement to take her to our garden house and keep her there... Never bother... We will give a piece of land to her people... That will be all right...'. Bapugowda immediately told denying, 'No no... nothing of that sort'.

'Then... what is that... worrying you...? tell me...'. Bhujangappagowda asked persistingly. Bapugowda told his worry for the song ultimately. Knowing the deep desire of Bapugowada, elder Bhujangappagowda immediately laughed... But he was alarmed by the strange unnatural desire of his son. He consoled himself by thinking, 'allright... let me see it...' and told his son, 'What folly of your's is this, my son...! I was worried that some severe thing is distressing you...! If you desire this song so much... let us invite teams of dancers from Pune and Goa... Have them sing for you all the days and nights... as many days as you like... Have as many of them to drench the thirst of your heart for the songs...! But instead... why should you, yourself aspire to compose a song like a street singer...? It is no good for you...'. But these consoling words of his father didn't satisfy Bapugowda in any way... His urge to make a song and sing it in the competition of lavani in Basavanna fair and to earn kudos didn't subside...

As he was fully engrossed in such a desire of his and contemplating for the arrival of the song... during that dawn... when the east was turning red... the seed of the song fell in his mind...

Bapugowda joyfully watered the seed... Then the seed soaked and sprouted leaves... and it readily grew into a creeper. The young chief of the village took a pen and wrote out the song... The song contained a riddle that went like this...

A bird came from the east flying in the sky, holding a fruit in its beak. The bird dropped the fruit on the earth... The fruit broke open, and the seed in it entered the soil... The embryo in the seed sent roots to the nether world and its stem towards the sky... and it spread over the entire creation. The stem that grew towards the heavenly sky gave out twelve branches. The branches had all, thirty leaves each. Of these thirty leaves, fifteen were white and remaining fifteen black. A bird came from darkness and nursed its milk, and breathe life into them. But the bird came only in the alternate fortnights... When the bird didn't arrive, the white leaves faded and the black leaves laughed in delight and burst into life. Bapugowda rehearsed the song he composed, in full throat repeatedly. After practicing it for several times, he sang it before his father. Bhujangappagowda applauded the song saying `Vah... Vah Va... Shabas...' and said with confidence, `The riddle in your song is very good... I can tell you... my son... no one in ten villages around would be able to solve this riddle'. These encouraging words of Bhujangappagowda were to spell disaster later. But Bapugowda rehearsed with all the enthusiasm and prepared himself for the battle that was to take place at the Basavanna fair...

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There was a full audience... The news, that Bapugowda, the village chief, himself had composed song, was spread in all the neighbouring villages... The teams from outside then thought there would be no scope for them as the village chief himself composed a song and it would not be proper also to compete with the chief... Thinking so, most of the teams from outside refrained from attending the meet. A special platform was raised for the Lavani meet and a special chair was placed for Bapugowda. A drum rested on a table kept by the side of the chair. In addition, a small stool was kept on the stage carrying a silver plate with betel leaves and betel nuts on it. Bapugowda wearing black shoes, silk trousers and a silk shirt and silk turban, went up the platform in style. Aha... It appeared as if the Peshave Maharaj himself arrived... ! The people sitting there burst out with applause... `Ughe... Ughe...'. Gowda folded his hands and stylishly greeted the gathering and asked them to observe silence by raising his hands. The gathering sat in absolute silence. Then Bapugowda addressed the gathering... `I salute all the people present here... I have made no difference between day and night and observed strict penance for a whole month... day and night... and have been blessed with a song... There is riddle in it and if any wise man solves it, I will fall at his feet... bowing to his feet, I would dedicate this song to his feet... If some one from outside solves it, I will give up the right of our village to hold this competition of songs during Basavanna fair'. When Bapugowda made such declaration in the full assembly, the people of the village were struck with fear as though some heavy object had fallen on them. They looked at each other in disbelief and said to themselves... `What is this that our gowda did...! If some worthless person comes forward and tells... look gowda... this is this... and this is the solution for your riddle... then should our gowda fall at his feet and give up the ancient right of

our village to hold such assembly of competitions of Lavani songs...? No, no... If such thing is allowed to happen, the honor of our gouda's dynasty and the honor of the village, all will be bundled out. Oh...! what is this that our gowda did...!' This fear crept into the hearts of the villagers, and they prayed to their goddess... 'Oh mother...! Mother of all the songs in the world... you Uddavva of Udagatti... All our honour depends on you... you can sink us or save us...'. They prayed and pledged her offerings. And here, the artists that came from outside, from neighbouring villages thought, 'This village chief is like the king himself in the neighbouring ten villages... Every year he conducts these assemblies of singing competitions and honors the artists by awarding of silver bracelets and cash prizes... If such a kingly person once composes a song with a riddle in it, and challenges us... let him challenge us if he pleases... We are not going to solve the riddle... even if we know the solution for his riddle...' the artists decided so and sat there.

When the things were so, Bapugowda stood up, took the drum and played dha dhinna... dha dhinna... on it and began to sing to the beat... geeya gaa... ga geeya gaa...As his song progressed and spread... stanza by stanza... smiles appeared on the faces of all the villagers sitting in the assembly... and they thought for themselves... Aha...! Mother Uddavva of Udagatti has preserved our honor... The riddle in the song of our gowda is very tough... not any light one... They felt very happy and burst out into loud cries of joy... Chang bolo... Chang bolo... Bapugowda saw the excitement of the crowd and felt proud. Then he saw all the audience braggartly from this side of assembly to that side... from end to end... and again made the announcement that he made before his singing... and said, 'Haam... if there is any wise man sitting in this assembly that can solve the riddle in my song... let him come forward and accept my challenge by receiving the betel leaves kept here in this plate...', telling so he sat in his chair.

'Hey... our gowda has composed such a solid riddle that is as deep as *patala* and as high as the sky... Who can solve this riddle...?' the villagers whispered and it went round among the people... and the teams of artists that came from outside, sat quietly reminding themselves of the resolution they made in the beginning, before Bapugowda began to sing... As everybody in the assembly were heaving a sigh of relief that all the things went on well, smoothly, a voice came from the side of Kalabasappa temple... 'Gowdare... you have sung a song and presented a riddle... that is enough. Why should you pose these challenges and all... If the challenge boomerangs and hits back, it may prove costly for you...!'. All of a sudden, a great turmoil was created in the audience... 'Who is that fellow...?' 'Who is that fellow...?' 'Can't he keep his mouth shut...', the people shouted with anger. Sitting at their places, and turning and stretching their necks to see the man that spoke so, a few youths stood up and shouted, 'who is that...?', and advanced towards that man. And Gulaganjara Chandrya, who was sitting nearby the man who spoke so to gowda, stood up and attacked him shouting, 'you bastard... how dare you to challenge our gowda...?' Bapugowda rose from the chair, clapped and said loudly, 'Silence... keep silent...', and looking towards that man he shouted, raising his hands... 'Hey... leave him...

leave him... don't manhandle him... bring him here'. Halaba Bhimarayi rushed, pulled back Chandrya, and escorted that man towards the stage...

The shirt of that man was torn into pieces in the scuffle... A satchel was hanging from his shoulder... It looked as though contained something like a snake box of a snake charmer. Leave alone the villagers, even the artists in the troupes coming from outside had never seen that man... Whispers went round among the people sitting there... Who he might be...? Appears like a snake charmer... look there... it must be a snake box in his satchel... a very queer person... though received thrashes from our Chandrya, look... how proudly he is walking... as though not aware of the fierce personality of our Bapugowda, towards whom he is walking...! As the people were whispering among themselves, this scrawny person with stubs of beard that were grey... was walking with his head held high as if to show it to all the people in the assembly...! He was walking lifting his limbs and putting down cautiously, as though he intended not to let his limbs touch anybody... Walking so he came near the stage...

He was neither short nor tall... He had a long sharp nose like a parrot's beak on his dry wrinkled face... Bapugowda stared at him... and he also felt... this man must be a snake charmer... Even his eyes were like those of a snake! Gowda started his enquiry...

`Are you a snake charmer...?'

`Yes sir...'

`Where from do you come...?'

`Talakattanaal...'

`Your name...?'

`Mainuddeen Talawar...'

`Haam...?'

`They call me as Talawar Mainuddeen gowdare...'

`Talawar Mainuddeen...? You say Talawara and you say Mainuddeen... How can it be...?'

He said whispering... `it is so only'.

Bapugowda queried, `Haam... you said something...?'

`Nothing... leave it sir... It is regarding that... that... the riddle you composed... regarding that riddle gowdare... you just make an announcement withdrawing the challenge... If you announce so, I will walk back to my village...'

`Khabardar...!' Bapugowda shouted in anger. That man just whispered, `consider it...' and became silent.

Bapugowda cooling himself, deliberating for sometime, said stubbornly, `Bhimya... bring him up the platform...'

`Give up this idea of challenge sir...' Mainuddeen pleaded again.

Gowda shot back, `If you are brave enough, come up the platform and accept the challenge by picking up the betel leaves and betel nuts from this plate... Otherwise take the road back to your village, like a stray dog...'. He said further, `Haam... I forgot to tell you one more thing... you can't leave just like that... you should tell the audience, that you have committed something like a blunder, and you should ask for their forgiveness... admitting that, you do not belong any where and there is no one to care for you... You can't go without their permission...' he said firmly and stuck to his chair. Mainuddeen again pleaded with all the humility, that the Gowda should give up the idea of challenge and competition... The more Mainuddeen pleaded the more intractable the Gowda became... `I have already told you...' he said, `There are two choices for you... choose one of them... I don't want to hear idle talk of yours any further...'. But Mainuddeen stood firm, like a pillar and clung to the opinion in his request to the Gowda. Some people in the audience intervened... `You... son of a prostitute... this is not your job... go back for your snake play... Do as our Gowda has advised you... Accept that you have been wrong, fold your tail between your legs and walk back to your village'. Amidst all these noises, Mainuddeen suddenly bent down and touched his head to the stage, folded his hands and went up the platform where the Gowda was sitting. Standing straight like a pillar, he folded his hands and stared at the eyes of Bapugowda for a while... A kind of cold crept up in the spine of the Gowda... and Bapugowda shuddered.

Mainuddeen turned towards the audience, folded his hands and began to take out something from his satchel... The people thought... this bastard might take the snake box out of his satchel and let the snakes loose in the crowd... But Mainuddeen took out a drum from the bag...! Looking at the drum the audience were stunned into silence... and they sat dumb with their mouths opened... Mainuddeen started to beat the drum... dhimi dhimi dhipanaang... dhimi dhimi dhipanaang... Then the people in the audience were taken totally by surprise and sat there with their mouths wide open... Bapugowda suddenly pulled his legs back, sat straight and stared at Mainuddeen... Mainuddeen started his singing with a long note in the beginning... a..aa...aaa... People swayed their heads from side to side in tune with the singing, like serpents swaying their hoods. He elaborated the starting note to percolate into and to fill the minds of the people... The concerns of the people for the honour of the Gowda and the honor of the village, all melted away... Their minds clung to the tune of Mainuddeen, and they started to swing like the children play the swing... and his song went like this...

There is no end and there

Is no beginning  
How can there be a middle?  
There is no end, no beginning.

When the beginning does not  
Follow the line of no-beginning  
And goes round and round  
How can you locate yourself on this tree?  
There is no end, no beginning.

You turn right and call  
What you see east. You see  
The world in your own image, but  
For a round ball, what is  
Before and after, right or left?  
Ah! There is no end, no beginning.

Where can you go floating  
In this limitless space?  
Where can a straight line take you?  
Directions have lost Direction.  
Oh...There is no end, no beginning.

Like this... the song of Mainuddeen flowing in shruti and dancing in laya... ringing in words and pleasing as song... moving in two channels... entered ears of the music lovers sitting in the audience and the other, reaching their hearts, overwhelmed them... Ah! They recognized the truth and experienced it...! Their eyes, minds and senses merged with those of Mainuddeen... that snake charmer of Talakattanal...!

And like this... when such song of Mainuddeen was over, people felt as though thrown out of the wombs of their mothers once again and they shivered, the cold piercing their entire bodies to reach the apices of hair... Shivering so they came out of the trance and looked at the stage. Bapugowda was not there... and the chair was empty...! Shocked people yelled 'Haam...!' and jumping up they all ran towards the Gowda's wada... They reached the front door, but had no courage to enter the wada of the Gowda... They stopped there, talked among themselves whispering. Old Bhujangappagowda reclining on the bed in the verandah, listening to the murmur outside, and he shouted, 'who are they...?' Four elderly people familiar with the customs of the wada, went into the wada, respectfully, saluted the old Gowda and asked politely, 'Yappa... has Bapugowda returned home...?'

'Why...? He went to the assembly at Basavanna temple... He has not yet returned... Why... is he not present there...? But he was telling that he would be singing his song in the assembly today...' Bhujangappagowda asked. Kashappa, grandfather of halabara Bhimarayi, narrated all

the details that took place there at the assembly, in a trembling voice, and said, 'yappa... all the people were engrossed in the song of that snake charmer of Talakattanal... nobody knew when Bapugowdappa left the stage... Therefore we came running here...'. Bhujangappagowda knew that whenever Bapugowda felt out of mood, he would go to their garden house... Therefore he told them, 'Don't worry about Bapugowda now... he will be there in our garden house... Don't disturb him now... You must first drag that snake charmer here... strip off his clothes and throw water over his body... then thrash him by canes soaked in water... Then we will call Bapugowda here... Seeing the fate of this son of a prostitute, Mainuddeen, will definitely pacify him. But first find that rascal... he might escape and run away... Go quickly... First drag him here... Hurry up...'. Bhujangappagowda told the right thing to do. They felt, alas...! we came leaving that Mainuddeen there only... Who knows... he might have escaped...? They worried, hurriedly came out, and began to run fast towards the temple... The people remaining out side the wada were puzzled, and they also ran after them.

They went and looked for Mainuddeen in the assembly... How could they find that snake charmer...! He was nowhere to be seen. Elders among them were shocked and yelled, 'Oh... deep grief has fallen on us...!' and stood in confusion, not knowing what to do... When others asked them what the matter was, the elders told them the orders of Bhujangappagowda... They also stood stupefied.

'What should we do now...? Who knows where he went...!'

'Nothing else remains now... we must set young wrestlers after him... Find out where is *pahilwan*, the wrestler, Beerajja...'.  
'Haam... Beerajja arrived here'.

'Beerajja... quickly find out your wrestler boys... make them to run in all the four directions to bring that Mainuddeen...'

'Mainuddeen...?'

'Hoom... the one who sang enchantingly in the assembly today... He should be brought'

'Senior Gowda ordered to bring him under any circumstance...'

'Whom do you send towards Talakattanal...?'

'I shall send Chigarya towards Talakattanal...'

'Don't send him alone... send someone with him...'

'Don't worry... I have sent them in groups only...'

'Don't worry... I have sent them in groups only...'

After sending the young wrestler boys in all the directions, they sat calmly... They told each others confidently... 'Hey... there is no possibility of his escaping from our wrestler boys... Our agile boys will definitely catch him and bring here...'. But Kashappa had his own doubts... He said, 'It is all right that we sent the boys in all the directions... But... after all they are young boys... They can't be that responsible... I feel it is better if we ourselves go to search him, in bullock carts... What do you say...?' The rest also had doubts... They readily agreed to it and said, 'yes... what Kashajja said is right... Let us not sit assured by sending the boys... Let us take four-five bullock carts and go in search of him...'. They immediately got five bullock carts yoked, said the womenfolk to lock the doors from inside, and drove away in different directions.



After the carts departed, the whole village became dumb and sat in gloom... But Bhujangappagowda kept the door of the wada open throughout the night and after every ten minutes came out to see whether there was any news of the the people who had gone after Mainuddeen...

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The young wrestlers ran nearly for two hours along the roads they chanced to find and stopped exhausted. There was no trace of Mainuddeen... Looking ahead, so they they walked enduring for another hour or so... By then the bullock carts arrived from behind and the boys boarded. The boys that didn't get any bullock cart, had no stamina or inclination to go ahead, walked back towards the village... The funny thing was... while these boys were running with speed to catch Mainuddeen, the stones and thorns in the road moved themselves away from the path they trod... but now, when they were walking slowly, beaten and tired, those stones and thorns menaced the boys by lying spread on the road... Besides this, thick darkness fell from the sky... The boys couldn't bear any more. Then they started to search for some village temples to retire at night instead of searching for Mainuddeen...!

Meanwhile, the bullock carts were moving fast... The oxen were constantly thrashed with whips... The men in the carts all sat dumbstruck... They drove through the night looking for Mainuddeen but all they could see was only darkness... not even the shape of a single human being...! They looked for him in the villages they passed through... but to no avail. They even looked into the temples lighting matches... but how could they find the man who was not there? They drove on throughout the night, and as the day broke, they stopped the carts near some streams, unyoked the carts, allowed the oxen to quench their thirst and tied them to the cart pole. The oxen didn't touch the fodder that was thrown at them for some time. They merely yawned and stretched their necks but after loosening their bodies by shaking them, they started feeding themselves.

Half an hour before day break, two bullock carts approached Talakattanal... As they entered the village, they saw a few people who had come to answer the call of nature with potfull of water. As the young men in the carts with sticks in their hands, jumped out of the carts to enquire them the whereabouts of Mainuddeen, the villagers mistook them to be robbers and ran away in fear. When the men with the carts ran after them with the intention to know about Mainuddeen, they sprinted away... Realizing it was no use following them, they drove the carts to enter the village. They stopped near village office, unyoked the oxen, tied them to the cart poles and sat on the platform outside the office. Some old men, coughing after a cup of tea at a tea shop saw them and asked, 'Where do you come from...? Who do you want to see...?' Kashappa made a sign to the others to keep quiet and talked to the old men,

'Where is Talawar Mainuddeen's residence here...?'

'What...? Did you say Talawar Mainuddeen...?', one of the old men asked, surprised.

The old men looked at each other, and one of them said, 'There is a person called Talawara Yalya here... There is no one called Mainuddeen...'. Some one else added, 'Not a single muslim family lives here...'.

`Not only in our village Kaka... even in neighbouring villages also... Khandrattee, Kaparattee... also' someone else added.

`We are not sure of Kaparatti though...' some other person added.

A discussion followed, and Kashappa interrupting it, said, 'But... he said he is from this village... Talakattanal... himself said so... He is a snake charmer and is an excellent singer of lavani and gigi songs... and... when he starts beating his drum, the people listening to it, automatically sway their heads as the snakes do when they hear the fife of a snake charmer... If you don't know please enquire some other who knows better...'. To this the old they reacted strongly, 'Hey... Is this village a big city...? Total houses in our village are not more than fifty... and how can anybody live in the village without knowing a fellow villager...? You will find no Muslims not only in this village, even in all the neighbouring villages...', telling so, they went away. Then Kashappa sent two young men round the village to find out the truth... They came back and told that they had seen kumkum marks on the thresholds of all the houses in the village, and not a single one without kumkum mark. The men with the cart were now convinced that the villagers had told them the truth and they decided to go back to their village.

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As they reached their village, they got the news that Bapugowda was not found even in the garden house, and there was no news of him. Who knows, they said to themselves, where the flood of that Mainuddeen's music had carried him away...! When Bhujangappagowda realized that his son Bapugowda had deserted home and village, he let out a long cry, 'hwaaam...', and fell from his bed and lost consciousness... The maids hurriedly sprinkled water on his face and made him to smell crushed onion... Ever since he recovered, he had been crying for his son, they said, 'Bapoo...' 'Bapoo...' 'Where are you... my child... Who will now carry the responsibilities of our Gowdiki of this village...?' 'We can't see him suffer like this... Our hearts burn and tears flow from our eyes...' the people said and gave vent to their sorrow... The people who had returned with their carts said, 'We had our suspicions yesterday itself... But the elder Gowda raised a storm about this snake charmer Mynuddin, and we never worried to know for sure whether Bapugowda was in the garden house or not . . . May be...he must have gone away after we left... And all this happened because of that Mainuddeen...'. They too felt as if deceived, and felt deeply sorry.

Bhujangappagowda sent message to the Desayi of Sindikurubet requesting him to send some horsemen. When they came, he gave them his own horses and handful of money and ordered them to go in all directions and find out Bapugowda. Several men were also sent on foot giving them hands full of money in search of Bpugowda. The horsemen and the foot soldiers travelled all over the land for six months and searched every nook and corner and made sure that no unidentified corpses were found in the wells and lakes of surrounding villages. While searching for Bapugowda, they also enquired about this Mainuddeen, telling the people that... he was a snake charmer but a fantastic singer of lavani and gigi songs... His singing would charm everybody and anybody listening to his songs would sway his head... The people across the land

almost denied his existence, saying that they never saw or heard of, any such snake charmer who was an excellent singer.

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Bhujangappagowda lived for three and a half years after all these events...calling his missing son day and night 'Bapoo... Bapoo...'... He was worn out and in his deathbed, holding his life only in his eyes, hoping against hope, that he should die only after seeing his son's face... The year after the tragedy took place, people debated whether the singing contest should be held on the third day of the Basavanna fair. They went to the Gowda for advice. 'Let the event be held as usual' the Gowda said. When people reminded him of Bapugowda's declaration, that he would give up the right to hold the assembly, the Gowda shot back and said, 'I know that... but who has come up to claim the right? The question would arise if somebody comes forward claiming the right... Don't you know that those defeated in battle fight again and win back what they have lost? Let the assembly meet as usual this year also... Bapugowda will definitely come back and nail all lies by producing a riddle that no one would be able to solve... I am sure he will be here... And I order you now only in advance... if that rascal Mainuddeen returns, capture him and bring him here... Don't repeat the mistake you committed last year...'. People waited eagerly for Bapugowda till sunset, and then declared the closure of the meet. Even after this, Bhujangappagowda clung to the hope that Bapugowda would definitely return one day. But when year after year passed, his bundle of hopes became smaller and smaller...

When the things were going on so... the third annual Basavanna fair was also over. Then Bhujangappagowda decided that it would be of no use waiting any more for his son, and sensing he would not live much longer, Bhujangappa immediately wrote a letter to the swami of Gulabasar Math, and sent it with a servant. He had written in it, that he had made up his mind to donate all his property to the Math. This *Gulabasar* Math was a *Virakta* Math, owning extensive property. The specialty of this Math was that, in ten acres of its land, they had grown Gulabasara plants... The flowers of these plants have no fragrance. Normally these plants grow knee high, but in the land of Math, they grew much higher, almost to the height of swami's thighs! There is an Isvara temple in the Math... The Linga there is head high... The Swami worships it twice every day. He offers white Gulabasara flowers to the Linga in worship in mornings, and red ones in the worship in evenings... Seven to eight female servants are employed to pluck these flowers from morning to evening. The Swami must have basketfuls of these flowers when he sits down to worship the Linga. Two junior swamis help their Master by filling two big silver bowls with these flowers, and continuing supply of flowers throughout the *Puja*. The Swami would continuously pour bowlful of these flowers without fragrance, on the Linga till it was totally buried under the flowers... The devotees who visited the Math would be given these flowers as sacred *prasadam*...

The swami of this Gulabasara Math arrived at the wada on Makarasankranti with his entourage... The aged Bhujangappagowda had asked the Manager of Sindikurabet Desai to be present. Gowda made over his entire property and placed the document with seal and signature at the feet of the Swami with a request: 'Yappa... if at any time in the future, my son Bapusaheb or

any of his children return, Sri Math should welcome them and offer them help and support. This is my humble prayer to you... Similarly, if that Mainuddeenn, the snake charmer, who is responsible for my son's exile, or any of his children come to your notice, they should be captured and hanged. That would bring peace to my soul'. The Swami heard the requests of Bhujangappagowda and blessed saying, 'So be it...'.

Three months after this, on the eve of yugadi, the New Year's day, Bhujangappagowda joined Shiva's feet. Six months later, news came that Bapugowda was somewhere in the northern parts of India...that he had married a Christian girl in Mumbai and had risen high in the service of the Company Sarkar.

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But neither Bapugowda nor any of his children or descendants have returned to our village so far. And from the year Bhujangappagowda died, the singers meet being held on the third day of the Basavanna fair has also been cancelled permanently...