

Dheghōm

Matter 2

Summary

The False Destroyer

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Report

I am an educated man.

I tell you this not to add credibility to this account, but to add incredibility to it. What I have witnessed I do not believe possible, yet I cannot deny the evidence of my own eyes. I cannot deny the evidence of the eyes of those who also saw what I saw.

I am a doctor of medicine. I practice in Garhwal in the north of India, a region thick with temples and holy places in the western foothills of the Himalayas. Although I am based in Uttarkashi, I visit many local towns and villages where my

services are required. I drive when I can, but the roads are not always good and sometimes I have to travel by cart or animal. The events I am about to describe occurred on one such occasion.

I was on my way to visit the wife of a farmer. She was heavily pregnant in fear of a breech birth. Already the mother of many children, she sensed that this one moved differently. One of the farmer's nephews, named Prem, picked me up in his cart on the way back from the market. Also with him was a labourer, Amit, whom I knew but did not like; he had little use for conversation and when he did speak it was generally to mock or to deny.

The incident unfolded as we followed a narrow track up into the hills. Prem was driving the oxen, I was reading and Amit was glowering at the world about him. Suddenly, he yelped in surprise and pointed towards a temple a little way below us. On the flattened earth before it was a blue man with three eyes and four arms, wielding a trident.

"Lord Shiva!" exclaimed Amit.

Prem pulled the oxen to a halt and turned around. "It cannot be!" he said in hushed words.

I was as shocked as the uneducated men with me. However, I knew immediately that the entity I was witnessing was not Lord Shiva. I am not a religious man, but I study our traditions: the four-armed being swinging its trident in extravagant circles was a ghastly parody of received belief, as if imagined by a reader of a children's book.

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I looked for cameras, because my first thought was that this must be a film shoot. Of course, it was not: no director would bring a crew all this way from Bombay to film what could have been filmed better in a studio.

Amit was both awed and afraid. He began to speak prayers beneath his breath, pleading with the Destroyer to spare his miserable life.

Prem was more level-headed and looked to me for guidance.

"Whoever that is, it isn't Lord Shiva", I said.

"Then who is it?" he asked. "He has four arms and a third eye!"

I began to reply, but at this point a second being appeared. It looked like an ordinary man, dressed in the garments of the past. He came out of the temple, then began to walk towards the trees as if false-Shiva was not there.

False-Shiva gave a great cry and set about the man with his trident. In three blows, the man was dead.

At this point, something strange happened. The body of the dead man turned into particles of glistening light that rose into the air and dissipated.

Prem and I exchanged glances in astonishment. Amit's fear only grew. "Get moving! He'll come for us next!" he shouted.

False-Shiva must have heard him, for he spared a look in our direction. He was distracted, however, by the reappearance of the dead man, who strode out of the temple looking very angry indeed. He

pointed at false-Shiva and said something. None of us caught his words, but they did not sound friendly.

False-Shiva laughed, and leapt trident-first towards the man. As if expecting this, the man stepped aside and held out his arm, his palm facing false-Shiva. Something came from his hand: it looked like a horizontal pillar of strong, blue light, but it could not have been because it cast a shadow. The light struck false-Shiva and pushed him back a great distance.

False-Shiva tried to laugh this off, but it was clear he was stung by it. He leapt at the man again, but this time was met mid-air by a golden globe of light that encircled him. As he flew towards his target, the globe shrank and crushed him. When it arrived at the man's feet, false-Shiva was dead.

The same rising particles of light that had presaged the earlier death of the man now floated heavenward, only this time from false-Shiva.

"His soul departs!" gasped Amit.

The man bent down and picked something up, then walked out onto the flattened earth and faced the temple.

A few moments later, false-Shiva came out of the temple, his face wrought with ire.

"He has returned", said Amit, his faith reassured.

The man pointed both arms at false-Shiva and blasted him with what looked like fire but which also cast a shadow.

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False-Shiva disintegrated as before.

Amit was horrified. "Who is he, who could do that to Lord Shiva?" he asked, of himself more than anyone.

"That is not Lord Shiva", said Prem. "That is a demon pretending to be Lord Shiva. It is more likely that the man in the garb of yore is an avatar of Lord Shiva."

False-Shiva reappeared twice more and on each occasion received the same treatment before he could act.

The man waited. We watched.

After a few minutes, the man was apparently satisfied that false-Shiva would not be returning. He turned to walk to the forest, but spotted us on the track above and halted his steps. He raised a fist before his chest and waved it slightly, then drank from something that had appeared in his grasp. The effects of this beverage seemed to indicate to him that we were of no consequence, and he continued his journey.

We also continued our journey, for we had no wish to be there should a wrathful false-Shiva suddenly emerge from within the temple.

On the way to the farm, we discussed what we had seen. None of us believed it had been an illusion, but if it was real then what did that imply about reality?

Amit considered what we had witnessed to be a vision, and wished to speak to a holy man for an interpretation. Although we did not deny him his

right to do this, Prem and I were less willing to expose ourselves to possible accusations of blasphemy. We agreed not to speak of the matter except to each other or to Amit, and that if those Amit told came to question us we would say he was asleep and must have dreamed it.

I am a man of science, however, so am writing this monograph while my memory of the event is still complete. In time, I may ask permission of Prem to send it to other men of science for their opinions.

As a footnote, the baby in the farmer's wife's womb was indeed transverse, but I was able to manipulate it into position. A healthy boy was delivered safely two days later with the aid of the woman's mother. Prem requested that the boy be named with reference to Lord Shiva, but his aunt did not think this auspicious and his suggestion was denied.

Notes

Received by FAX from a bureau in New Delhi. The identity of the sender is not stated, but it is believed to be Prem Mahra, who moved to New Delhi in 1964. Efforts to locate or contact him have to date been unsuccessful.

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The Amit the document references has been identified as one Amit Chakra. He died of liver failure in 1974.

Dr Chaturvedi died aged 90 in 2003 at his home in Uttarkashi.