

Short Story

Walking By A Waterfall with A Turbulent Mind

by Musafir



Butch (Real name Bacchan) and I were childhood friends. We used to climb hills and walk through streams together in the hilly span of Jharkhand (a rolling and scenic state of India). Both Butch and I felt

frivolous and inconsequential to the world at large. Such were our conditioning.

Butch and I were getting near the Lower Ghaghri Fall. It was an intimidating display of nature. I was awestruck with the beauty and intensity of nature. Suddenly, Butch broke my concentration and asked, "What does the enormous force of water remind you of?"

"It reminds of nothing. Of course, it's awesome and beautiful," I replied.

Sixty years later, I got to visit the Niagara Falls for the umpteenth time. I don't know why, but this time I got reminded of Butch's question, "What does the enormous force of water remind you of?"

I started reflecting. It reminded me of my state of mind which was full of restless thoughts. The gushing water felt similar to my mind, and the currents were my thoughts. The mind was neutral like the water. It was neither peaceful, nor turbulent in itself. The current made it turbulent as desires and fears produced thoughts inside me.

I realized that my mind was always disturbed. I was restless like water falling from the falls. Thoughts of all kinds ingressed and egressed incessantly inside me agitating my inside similar to the current that was

agitating the water.

"How do I become tranquil and calm down my mind?" I thought.

I realized that I couldn't calm the water by holding the water and not letting it move. It was necessary to let the water flow to the Niagara River and then to Lake Ontario. Rivers provide direction to water and lakes (ultimately the ocean) provide them a peaceful reservoir. Our thoughts, desires and fears are like the water. We need to direct our thoughts to a purpose and provide them a focus. Ultimately, our thoughts will find self-knowledge, the ultimate reservoir.

We must learn to calm down the turbulence in our mind. When we control our mind and make it peaceful, we get more control over our life. However, as water flows in its own direction disregarding anything else, we must control ourselves without trying to change others. This is the key to living. I was peaceful, at least, for the time being.