

CHAPTER 2
BALAGOPALA



GRANDPARENTS

**KONDAMA RAJU
GRANDFATHER**



**LAKSHAMMA
GRANDMOTHER**



PARENTS

**PEDDA VENKAMA RAJU
FATHER**



**EASWARAMMA
MOTHER**



SIBLINGS

**SESHAMA RAJU
FIRST CHILD**



**VENKAMMA
SECOND CHILD**



**PARVATHAMMA
THIRD CHILD**



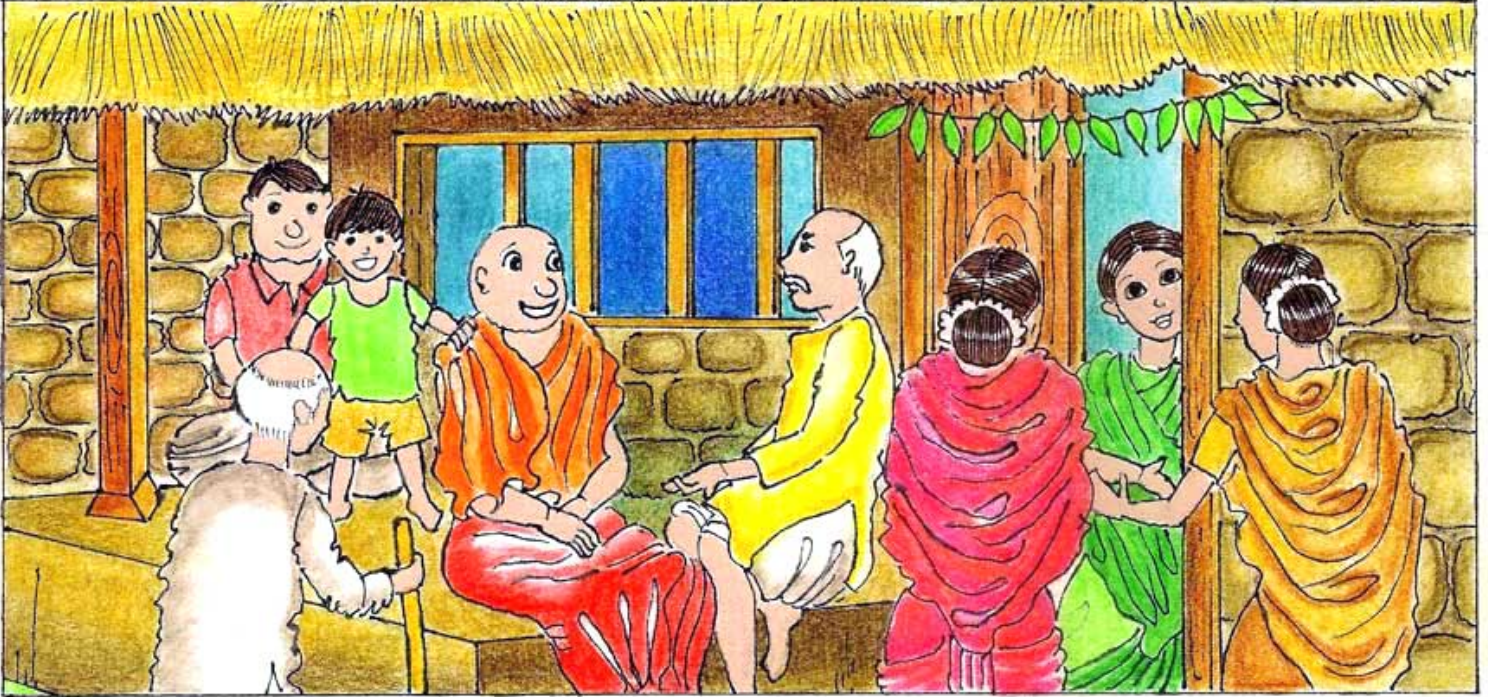
**BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA
FOURTH CHILD**



**JANAKIRAMAIAH
FIFTH CHILD**



The boy was named Sathyanarayana as the relationship between the pooja performed and the child seemed very special to Easwamma. In the naming ceremony the name was whispered into Swami's ears. He broke into a smile as if acknowledging it. The child attracted people like magnet. The Raju family had many visitors in their house all the time, waiting to have a glimpse of the beautiful baby.



People from all over Puttaparthy came with some pretext or the other and stayed on to play with the baby. They vied with each other in fondling it, feeding it and playing with its silken curly locks. They forgot their own worries around the charming baby as they sang lullabies and showered it with love.

It was noticed by all in wonder that the baby delighted in having broad vibhuti markings on his forehead. He insisted on the marks being renewed, as and when they wore off.



He preferred also to have a circular dot of Kumkum in the middle of his broad forehead. Though for the fear of the 'evil eye' the mother seldom satisfied this desire. This only made the child go ahead and seek Kumkum out from the toilet box of his sisters and dab it on himself.

He is Siva, He is Sakthi. He must have both vibhuthi (sacred ash smeared by Siva) and kumkum (red ochre saree worn by Devi).



At the tender age of three and four, little Sathya behaved as if his heart melted at human suffering. One call of the beggar was sufficient for Sathya to leave all play and rush to his aid. He forced his sisters to dole out grain of food for the poor fellow.

The elders lost their patience sometimes and asked the beggars to leave before Sathya could bring relief. This made Sathya cry so loud that only by bringing them back could they pacify him.



Sometimes to put an end to what the elders thought 'this expensive and misplaced charity,' the mother caught hold of the child and with a finger raised in warning said -

Look here! you may give him food, but, you will have to starve.

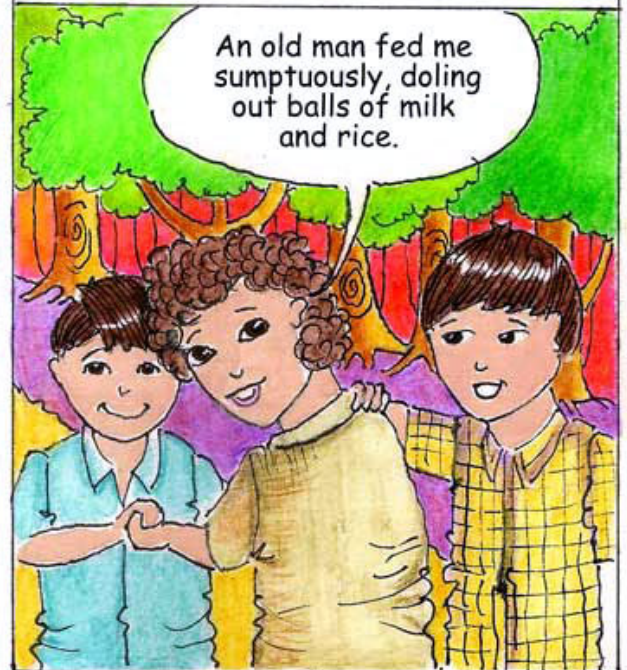


This did not daunt the child. He would not touch his food come what may and gave it away happily.

He refused food and persisted in the refusal for days. Yet his movements and activity showed no signs of starvation.



He would clarify Easwaramma's doubt saying -

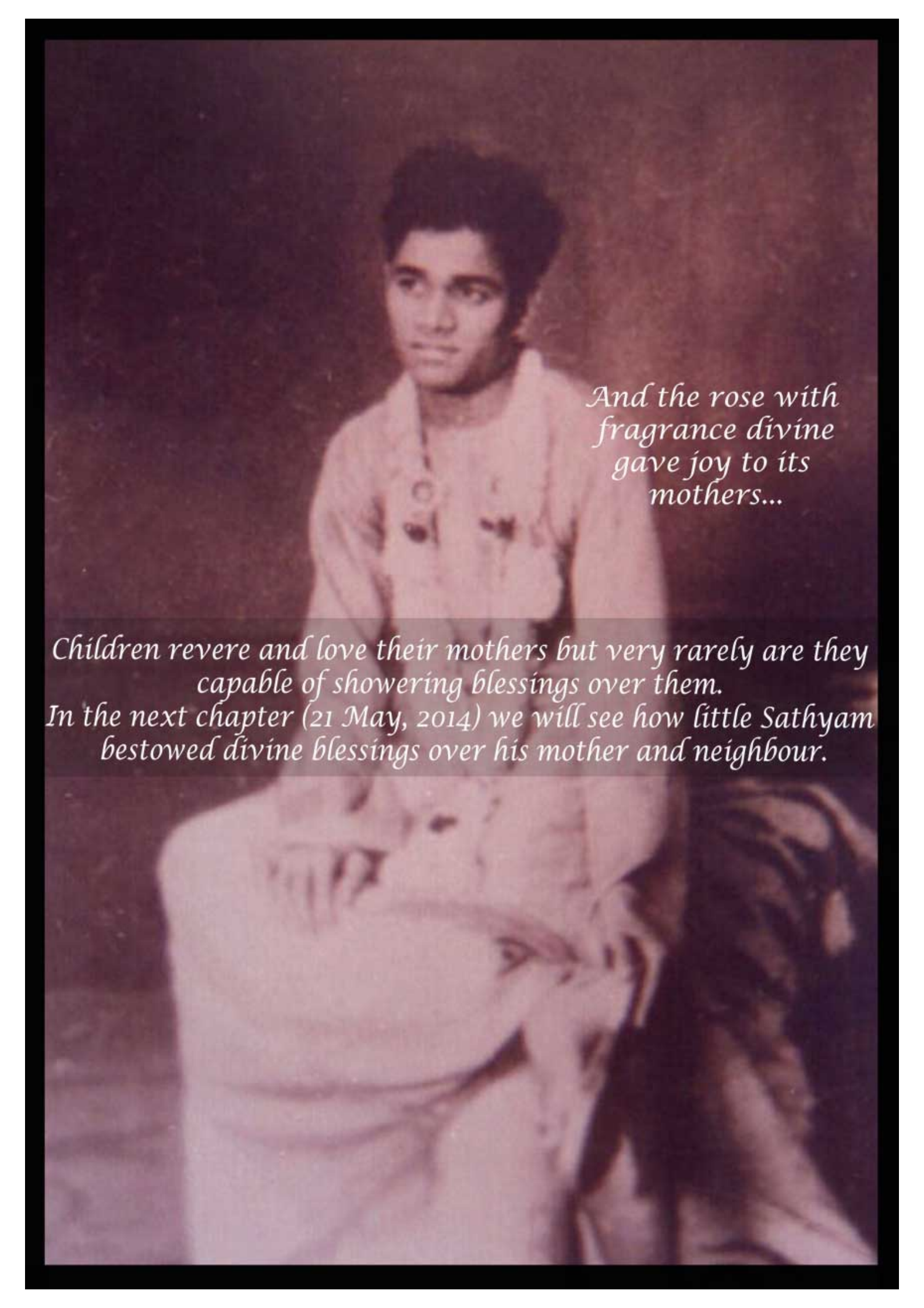


His full stomach was a proof of that. He even volunteered to give her another proof. His palms were fragrant with the aroma of milk, curd and ghee that no one had enjoyed before.



Sathya often sought out maimed, the blind, the decrepit and the diseased, and led them by hand to the doorsteps of his home. The sisters had no choice but to fetch some food from the store or the kitchen and feed them.



A young boy with dark hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, is shown from the chest up. He is holding a baby wrapped in a white blanket. The background is a dark, textured wall. The image has a slightly grainy, vintage quality.

*And the rose with
fragrance divine
gave joy to its
mothers...*

*Children revere and love their mothers but very rarely are they
capable of showering blessings over them.
In the next chapter (21 May, 2014) we will see how little Sathyam
bestowed divine blessings over his mother and neighbour.*