

**Translation of Benyamin's "Tao Manushyan" as Tao Man
(from Malayalam to English)****By Pratheesh Peter****TAO MAN**

We have to leave this flat said wife in a rough manner. I was reading. The highest politeness is free from all kinds of formalities. The excellent wisdom is not ever planned and the excellent sincerity never gives assurances.

"Did you hear?"

"I think I heard"

"Then?"

"The excellent sincerity never gives assurances."

"Why"

"Circumstance"

"What circumstance"

I read loudly. All kinds of explanation would disappear if this world becomes a home. You people are giving for explanations since you do not know about the other.

"Answer my question. Why?"

And I read in my mind. Explanation is the civilized way to avoid conflicts. I believe in Tao

"You haven't told, yet that such a spacious flat is not available for such a low rent. We cannot imagine such a spacious flat in this city and for a low rent. This is our luck."

"Luck, spacious" good to hear. But why don't you think at least once that this building is 25 year old.

In comparison with others, this is not at all old.

"No, never shame to say this" hell whatever it is old. I can't live among these cockroaches.

I read Tao man lives free and his doings never hurt others. His way of life is not to annihilate but to transform.

Don't make me mad. I am not a defective person to live among dirty creatures.

Is it for seeing a cockroach near washbasin that you are speaking so much?

"Oh one cockroach? You must be blind! Don't you see that it is coming from the dark corner of the store and drainage like wild buffalos?"

"What should I do?"

"That is why I told you in the beginning that we have to leave this flat"

"And . . . ?"

Have to shift new place

"This is so bad, that this will not improve. So we have to change into new one."

"Who can assure that cockroaches will never come into the new flat. If so, would you say to leave this one too?"

"I am fed up with these, try to kill them by using any insecticide"

"Let them also leave. What can I do where atom bomb has failed?"

"Leave it. You live here. I'll go somewhere"

"That is only possible. The cockroaches will not go."

I read. Tao men will not harm other beings. This does not mean that he is saintly or follower of non-violence or compassion. Not hurting others means that he has stopped hurting himself.

In answer, wife rushed to kitchen. Whispering and murmuring has been heard from kitchen along with that heard the noises of vessels and clacking of dishes.

Abusive words rushed in to my mouth. But I continued reading. Renouncement means that you have to give up the possessiveness you keep on others. The feeling of my wife, my father, and my child will spoil all relations. That is why it is said that you have to avoid the feeling of selfishness. Once you avoid the feeling of yours, you need not have to escape from your wife.

A week passed without any happenings. The cockroaches continued their freedom. Though in the beginning only one or two were found near the kitchen sink, now they have spread in place such as door, beneath the stove, on the dressing table, corner of the toilet, dish basin, bellow the bed and rice plate.

Wife again flared up:"can you do anything? A man who cannot even kill cockroaches!"

I read! A real Tao man will have no obstinacy. He can easily move from one obstacle to another. Because he lives in balanced stage, he uses wings together.

I should have read and understood this portion earlier, and then this anger and disrespect have been avoided.

I went to supermarket in search of the pesticide for but all were repeated and proved ineffective. They drained my purse. It was then a friend of mine has suggested a new technique.

He suggested putting the mixture of milk powder, boric powder and sugar equally and the same powder may be placed in different corners of the flat. My wife looked with disgrace and murmured that "nothing is going to happen by your work". I waited with expectation and patience. For the first few days there was no response and I became slowly disturbed that is my technique going to fail.

Tao says when an archer shoots arrows with passion, he will have all efficiency but when

he shoots for it for a bronze medal, he would become blind and loses his presence of mind.

I aimed at a golden medal.....

But slowly one or two cockroaches have been seen here and there. The death was caused by the reaction of boric powder in their stomach. There was none appeared after two weeks.

My wife became happy. Dear the drug is useful. Cockroaches had gone.

"Shall we change the flat now?" "To change the flat! At such a low rate. Dear, you know even the flat with a double rate is smaller than our kitchen". We laughed.

A week passed. Life continued to be simple and happy.

"One fine morning wife asked again how long I have been asking to you that we have to change this flat"

"Cockroaches again?"

"You did not listen to my saying that it is an old flat. See now, the toilet above our flat is leaking and all dirty water is falling down in our kitchen. How long can we suffer this?"

"We will call the owner and tell this?"

"Owner?!" We have to wait till the next rent due date to see such a person

"He will at least comes on that day"

"Till then we have to suffer the leak and stay here isn't it?"

"Now don't say anything. We have to shift, that is it.

Shift, that is better but the rent, our salary"

"Learn from others. Nothing will happen if you sit here and go on reading".

"What should I do now?" The leak should be stopped. I will tell those in the above flat to stop pouring water in the toilet".

"You always retort. Nothing will be alright. You and this flat life, nothing.

"You don't play with the words. Don't deny their coming, don't receive and refuse them. Don't congratulate and curse them. Be passive. They will approach as clouds and swim in the sky and they disappear as clouds. Let them come and go. Don't restrain them. You won't lose the sky by clouds coming to it.

I am a complete Tao man. The owner was informed. No response for three days and all these three days the toilet water was leaking into the kitchen and wife's complaint continued.

On third day, the owner came with workers. They broke open the ceiling of the kitchen and sealed with cement all the parts where the leak occurred, did some work in the toilet upstairs.

Anyhow, the leak was stopped. That is good. But the breakage of the ceiling was left open through which the pipeline of the above toilet was visible.

"Oh the leak is stopped I jubilantly said the owner's workers are excellent."

"Hell! This pipe is seen always"

"Let it be there. Why do you bother?"

"Above the place we cook, this toilet pipe is visible and it's howling, hell with this flat"

"They promised to come with new plywood"

"Wait... they will come early to take the rent"

"At least they will come on that day"

"Nothing will become alright. You and this flat and the life here."

She has been opening the knapsack of grievances, affronts, and accusations.

I read a story:

One day a drunken Mulla Nazurdin was knocking at door in search of his house. It was late mid night and his wife opened the door. "Please show me the residence of Mulla Nazurdin's house" he asked to his own wife.

"This is too much. You are MullaNazurdin"

Mulla replied "That I know. But, this is not the answer of my question. Where does he live? This is my question"

I smiled then she became more angry. She went to room angrily, continued to be angry for some time and became calm.

One week passed

"One fine morning wife asked once again. How many times I have told you to change the flat"

"Again cockroach? Or leak?"

The bloody septic pipe is not been covered yet. In the mean time it gives shock when we switch on the light. Informed the owner and waited for three days, in between many got electric shock and all time my wife cursed my irresponsibility. At last I found myself an electrician and he examined something, some wires and connections. Anyway the problem of electric shock solved. By then several other bulbs were not working. The electrician left says that he will come afterwards. For few days he was not at all seen. All these days my wife was accusing me and she wanted to leave this flat. at the end of each conversation she adds- nothing will be alright. You and this flat and our life.

After two days, to my wonder, the owner has come with plywood. Sealed the crack on the ceiling, changed the two defective power sockets and done some wiring. Painted the wall, repaired defective taps in the toilet, fitted a new hinge to the door and also repaired broken tiles nearing the washing basin. In all respect the flat is renovated in a day

"Dear our owner become mad or he got a lottery.....?"

"Whatever it may be, your long time complaints are solved completely. Shall we change the flat?"

"No, never, such spacious flat for this low rent."

I felt relieved that all the problems were solved suddenly. I turned to Tao.

When you are safe and when you have no problem to be solved, when you are comfortable in every manner, your soul shrinks. Then it has no challenges. But when you enter into infinite cosmic, your soul also expands. It is the challenges of ignorance that creates the soul.

Whatever Tao may have said, I was happy for the next two weeks because there were no

challenges. But suddenly my son has got fever. We cannot insist that fever should come only after a prior intimation.

My wife fed up of the discomfort, crying child. She said, it is because of your carelessness. The child was taken out in rain and sun by which it got fever.

I hired a taxi and get the son to the hospital; a huge amount was spent on check-up, injection and medicine etc.

When I returned to the flat the owner was waiting for me unusually. By making all the repairs, how much I have spent for this flat, you know?

"That is the responsibility of the owner"

"Yes! Yes, you don't use things with care to make lost to me, anyhow I have decided to increase your rent from next month"

"To increase rent for this old flat again?"

"Old? This flat if you live on such a low rent, you will feel like this. If you wish you can continue otherwise you can vacate immediately"

He left.

My wife thought to herself doleful. Already fed up with our stingy life. Nothing will improve, you this flat and our life...fed up"

"What?"

"This life"

She waited for my reply for a long time then went to the kitchen with frowned face. I turned to the book to find out what Tao says about death.