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Self-Other

---- Bonoful (Balai Chand Mukhopadhyay)

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After a busy morning i just reclined at noon, preparing a bed in our western Verandah. As I felt a little drowsiness, something fell on my face. I quickly sat up and found a hideous little baby bird. It had no feather, no wings, in a word, it was peculiar. Out of hatred and disgust I threw it out on the courtyard. A cat was, as if, waiting and promptly picked it up and left away. Piteous cry of the birds was heard.

I slept once again after a while. Four or five years had passed since then. Suddenly, one day our loving son Sachin had died of snake-bite. Doctor, Ayurveda, exorcist – no one could save him. Sachin had left us forever.

The pain-stricken house began to lament. My wife became senseless in grief. Everybody got busy with her. Outside i saw, a cot was being prepared to take our son out for cremation.

Then, after a long time, I recalled that little baby bird – four or five years back the poor little bird in the grasp of the cat in a silent noon and the cry of the mother-birds around.

Suddenly an uncanny sensation loomed large over me.