

THE STRUGGLE AND THE VICTORY OF SAVITRI IN AUROBINDO GHOSH'S EPIC "SAVITRI"

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Abstract: Sage Narad forecasts Satyavan's doom in front of King Aswapathy, Queen and other courtiers. Queen becomes restless. The Queen's mind is indeed a whirl of questions. Why Savitri should go to Satyavan. But Narad warns the Queen not to meddle with the decree of Providence. King tells the sage Narad that Savitri is born with some spiritual powers. Narad suggests that they should not try to separate the young lovers. As Destiny has its own fulfillments. Savitri now rejoins Satyavan and his family in forest. She cannot tell anyone about future and coming death of Satyavan. But Savitri is capable of winning her husband from the clutches of death after a long struggle. She beats all the tricks and greeds offered by gods, goddesses, goblins and Death.

Keywords: transcendentalism, destiny, death, victory, struggle, sage.

Sage Narad has unveiled Savitri's future; a future that is death. But Savitri instead of changing her path, has decided to travel in the same road. The king (Aswapathy) and the Rishi sit quiet looking straight into the "eyes of Fate". But Savitri's mother will not so easily be silenced. God's gift of this bright and pleasant world to man is itself darkened by a shadow overhanging it. All nature is ambivalent there is a good, bright side, and withal, a bad and cloudy side too.

Error is the comrade of our mortal thought, And falsehood licks in the deep bosom of truth, Sin poisons with its vivid flames of joy or leaves a red scar burnt across the soul, Virtue is grey bondage and a goal at every step is laid for us a snare. (ibid, p. 498)

Not satisfied with fate's wreckage, man also contrives miseries of his own doing. He commits countless blasphemies and unthinkable follies. The ultimate goal of our life is to return to our harbour home, that golden source of the life Divine. If we are of heaven and are to return there again, where is the need for this strange savage interlude of the earth? The Queen's mind is indeed a whirl of questions. Why, why, why this tragedy of a word signifying nothing? In the end the tragedy that threatens Savitri turns her mother into a nihilist.

Perhaps the soul we feel is only a dream, eternal self a fiction sensed in trance, (ibid, 501).

The sun doesn't cease to exist during the night. Even so, the presence of tragedy doesn't exclude the reality of the eternal spirit that abides in our inmost heart. Our own ignorance veils the light from ourselves that is within us. It is also true that one cannot attain Joy without first undergoing pain. Every mortal has divine spark but it is to be fanned into a divine flame. The world - redeemer, the Divine soul, stands steadfast in this tremendous task. Narad warns the Queen not to meddle with the decree of providence.

Thy spirit's strength shall make thee one with God, Thy agony shall flange to ecstasy, Indifference deepen into infinity's calm. And joy laugh made on the peaks of the Absolute. (ibid P. 514)

Narad tells Queen that the spirit of mankind was originally perfection itself. But the spirit was not content to rest in its perfect state. It instead to see what the world was like. In this descent to lower levels, there was the fall that brought pain in its wake. The forbidden fruit had been picked & eaten. So the pain of knowledge came.

Thus came, born from a blind tremendous choice, this great perplexed and discontented world, this haunt of Ignorance, this home of pain: There are pitched desire's tents grief's headquarters. A vast disguise conceals the eternal bliss. (ibid p. 516)

The king now questions the Sage whether there is any power in man to save himself. He had heard that Savitri is descended with some inner power, Narad tells that it is true Savitri is born with an imprisoned splendour. If trouble and pain lie before her, she will not fail to advance. Hence the King should not entertain any doubt regarding her future. And both Aswapathy & his Queen should try to separate the young lovers, because of the encyclical doom. He suggests Queen to leave the course of Destiny to its own fulfillment. The Queen would do better to stand back & leave Savitri to work out mankind's destiny.

Soon will a day come when armed by her own will, she will be facing alone a might power, Narad after enlightening King and Queen and strengthening Savitri's will vanishes to keep faith with Satyavan strengthens more and more. Leaving her parental home a second time, Savitri speeds back to rejoin Satyavan. She cannot share her pain of knowledge with Satyavan and his revealed parents. She vainly tries to forget.

Vainly she fled into abysses of bliss from her pursuing foresight of the ends (ibid p. 532)

She keeps herself busy in her routine movements from her actions flow peace and joy to others, She cannot tell even to Satyavan however he know that something, somewhere, somehow is wrong.

Satyavan sometimes half understood, or felt atleast with the uncertain answer of our thought blinded hearts the unuttered need, the unplumbed abyss of her deep passionate want. (ibid p. 535)

Satyavan gives her as much time as he can-still rushing to her from the forest after hewing wood or from attendance on his sight less father. Savitri ponders what would happen then to those sad parents. Satyavan's mother and blind father? The sole year of permitted bliss now draws to a close. At the commencement of her quest, a voice tells her that she should "help man to grow into the God." Her sorrow and darkness ultimately being symptomatic and should be crossed and mastered finally. As Savitri approaches the "inner countries", she is faced by a serpent guardian, gnomes and goblins but she remained unaffected. The occult inner continents follow, one after another, and leads to

A form of things

A start of finiteness, a world of sense. (Savitri, p. 556)

This is the world of primitive heroism, compact of great and impressive results. It is, no doubt, a balanced reign, but also a cabined reign. There is no space for imagination. In this quite country, Savitri assures herself that this is the home of cosmic certainty. Savitri comes across a crowd of brilliant and fire-footed messengers, Savitri wants to live with them but first she has to pursue her quest and the amazing answer comes.

O Savitri, from they hidden soul we come.....

O Human copy & disguise of God

Who seekst the deity thou keepest hid

And livest by the Truth thou hath not known

Follow the world's winding highway to its source

(ibid, p. 560).

Savitri single-minded quest has now brought her almost to the threshold of her inmost her secret soul. Savitri met Madonna of suffering of might and of light. Each claims to be Savitri soul, and each is partly right. But Savitri moves on. Next to meet Savitri on her upward route is a woman in gold and purple sheen. It is the goddess of might. Savitri promises to return to the Madonna of might. She meets last the mother of joy and peace. But mind-centered man cannot achieve transcendence. Having heard thesis and antithesis, the Madonna and the Man, Savitri acknowledge here kinship with the Madonna. But she must pass on as her quest is not ended yet. Learning the three Madonna's behind, Savitri presses on her quest to the soul's mystic cave. Savitri now comes to the last chamber. She meets mother, Brahma's word, Shiva's spouse, Krishna's Radha. She is indeed the 'Adore and adored self-lost and one. Savitri now comes to the last chamber and passing beyond it through a tunnel to a house of flame and light, she meets her secret soul.

Here in this chamber of flame and light they met;

They looked upon each other, knew themselves,

The secret deity and its human part,

The calm immortal and the struggling soul,

Then with a magic transformations speed

They rushed into each other and grew one. (ibid, p. 598)

Savitri has at last seen and grown into her secret soul. She is now back in the world of man and has undergone a "high celestial change." Her secret soul is infinity, it is all infinities, lost in the transcendent it is lost, infinity minus infinity is infinity still. Meantime Savitri lives her routine in the forest. Savitri now is the link between man and God, time and Eternity existence and transcendence.

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