

Track 36: Section 3, lines 407 to end

Ascending still her spirit's upward route
She came into a high and happy space,
A wide tower of vision whence all could be seen
410 And all was centred in a single view
As when by distance separate scenes grow one
And a harmony is made of hues at war.
The wind was still and fragrance packed the air.
There was a carol of birds and murmur of bees,
415 And all that is common and natural and sweet,
Yet intimately divine to heart and soul.
A nearness thrilled of the spirit to its source
And deepest things seemed obvious, close and true.
Here, living centre of that vision of peace,
420 A Woman sat in clear and crystal light:
Heaven had unveiled its lustre in her eyes,
Her feet were moonbeams, her face was a bright sun,
Her smile could persuade a dead lacerated heart
To live again and feel the hands of calm.
425 A low music heard became her floating voice:
"O Savitri, I am thy secret soul.
I have come down to the wounded desolate earth
To heal her pangs and lull her heart to rest
And lay her head upon the Mother's lap
430 That she may dream of God and know his peace
And draw the harmony of higher spheres
Into the rhythm of earth's rude troubled days.
I show to her the figures of bright gods
And bring strength and solace to her struggling life;
435 High things that now are only words and forms
I reveal to her in the body of their power.
I am peace that steals into man's war-worn breast,
Amid the reign of Hell his acts create
A hostel where Heaven's messengers can lodge;
440 I am charity with the kindly hands that bless,
I am silence mid the noisy tramp of life;
I am Knowledge poring on her cosmic map.
In the anomalies of the human heart
Where Good and Evil are close bedfellows
445 And Light is by Darkness dogged at every step,
Where his largest knowledge is an ignorance,
I am the Power that labours towards the best
And works for God and looks up towards the heights.
I make even sin and error stepping-stones
450 And all experience a long march towards Light.
Out of the Inconscient I build consciousness,
And lead through death to reach immortal Life.
Many are God's forms by which he grows in man;
They stamp his thoughts and deeds with divinity,
455 Uplift the stature of the human clay
Or slowly transmute it into heaven's gold.
He is the Good for which men fight and die,
He is the war of Right with Titan wrong;

460 He is Freedom rising deathless from her pyre;
He is Valour guarding still the desperate pass
Or lone and erect on the shattered barricade
Or a sentinel in the dangerous echoing Night.
He is the crown of the martyr burned in flame
And the glad resignation of the saint
465 And courage indifferent to the wounds of Time
And the hero's might wrestling with death and fate.
He is Wisdom incarnate on a glorious throne
And the calm autocracy of the sage's rule.
He is the high and solitary Thought
470 Aloof above the ignorant multitude:
He is the prophet's voice, the sight of the seer.
He is Beauty, nectar of the passionate soul,
He is the Truth by which the spirit lives.
He is the riches of the spiritual Vast
475 Poured out in healing streams on indigent Life;
He is Eternity lured from hour to hour,
He is infinity in a little space:
He is immortality in the arms of death.
These powers I am and at my call they come.
480 Thus slowly I lift man's soul nearer the Light.
But human mind clings to its ignorance
And to its littleness the human heart
And to its right to grief the earthly life.
Only when Eternity takes Time by the hand,
485 Only when infinity weds the finite's thought,
Can man be free from himself and live with God.
I bring meanwhile the gods upon the earth;
I bring back hope to the despairing heart;
I give peace to the humble and the great,
490 And shed my grace on the foolish and the wise.
I shall save earth, if earth consents to be saved.
Then Love shall at last unwounded tread earth's soil;
Man's mind shall admit the sovereignty of Truth
And body bear the immense descent of God."
495 She spoke and from the ignorant nether plane
A cry, a warped echo naked and shuddering came.
A voice of the sense-shackled human mind
Carried its proud complaint of godlike power
Hedged by the limits of a mortal's thoughts,
500 Bound in the chains of earthly ignorance.
Imprisoned in his body and his brain
The mortal cannot see God's mighty whole,
Or share in his vast and deep identity
Who stands unguessed within our ignorant hearts
505 And knows all things because he is one with all.
Man only sees the cosmic surfaces.
Then wondering what may lie hid from the sense
A little way he delves to depths below:
But soon he stops, he cannot reach life's core
510 Or commune with the throbbing heart of things.
He sees the naked body of the Truth

Though often baffled by her endless garbs,
But cannot look upon her soul within.

Then, furious for a knowledge absolute,
515 He tears all details out and stabs and digs:
Only the shape's contents he holds for use;
The spirit escapes or dies beneath his knife.

He sees as a blank stretch, a giant waste
The crowding riches of infinity.

520 The finite he has made his central field,
Its plan dissects, masters its processes,
That which moves all is hidden from his gaze,
His poring eyes miss the unseen behind.

He has the blind man's subtle unerring touch
525 Or the slow traveller's sight of distant scenes;
The soul's revealing contacts are not his.

Yet is he visited by intuitive light
And inspiration comes from the Unknown;
But only reason and sense he feels as sure,
530 They only are his trusted witnesses.

Thus is he balked, his splendid effort vain;
His knowledge scans bright pebbles on the shore
Of the huge ocean of his ignorance.

Yet grandiose were the accents of that cry,
535 A cosmic pathos trembled in its tone.

"I am the mind of God's great ignorant world
Ascending to knowledge by the steps he made;
I am the all-discovering Thought of man.

I am a god fettered by Matter and sense,
540 An animal prisoned in a fence of thorns,
A beast of labour asking for his food,
A smith tied to his anvil and his forge.

Yet have I loosened the cord, enlarged my room.

I have mapped the heavens and analysed the stars,
545 Described their orbits through the grooves of Space,
Measured the miles that separate the suns,
Computed their longevity in Time.

I have delved into earth's bowels and torn out
The riches guarded by her dull brown soil.

550 I have classed the changes of her stony crust
And of her biography discovered the dates,
Rescued the pages of all Nature's plan.

The tree of evolution I have sketched,
Each branch and twig and leaf in its own place,
555 In the embryo tracked the history of forms,
And the genealogy framed of all that lives.

I have detected plasm and cell and gene,
The protozoa traced, man's ancestors,
The humble originals from whom he rose;
560 I know how he was born and how he dies:
Only what end he serves I know not yet
Or if there is aim at all or any end
Or push of rich creative purposeful joy
In the wide works of the terrestrial power.

565 I have caught her intricate processes, none is left:
Her huge machinery is in my hands;
I have seized the cosmic energies for my use.
I have pored on her infinitesimal elements
And her invisible atoms have unmasked:

570 All Matter is a book I have perused;
Only some pages now are left to read.
I have seen the ways of life, the paths of mind;
I have studied the methods of the ant and ape
And the behaviour learned of man and worm.

575 If God is at work, his secrets I have found.
But still the Cause of things is left in doubt,
Their truth flees from pursuit into a void;
When all has been explained nothing is known.
What chose the process, whence the Power sprang

580 I know not and perhaps shall never know.
A mystery is this mighty Nature's birth;
A mystery is the elusive stream of mind,
A mystery the protean freak of life.
What I have learned, Chance leaps to contradict;
585 What I have built is seized and torn by Fate.
I can foresee the acts of Matter's force,
But not the march of the destiny of man:
He is driven upon paths he did not choose,
He falls trampled underneath the rolling wheels.

590 My great philosophies are a reasoned guess;
The mystic heavens that claim the human soul
Are a charlatanism of the imagining brain:
All is a speculation or a dream.
In the end the world itself becomes a doubt:

595 The infinitesimal's jest mocks mass and shape,
A laugh peals from the infinite's finite mask.
Perhaps the world is an error of our sight,
A trick repeated in each flash of sense,
An unreal mind hallucinates the soul

600 With a stress-vision of false reality,
Or a dance of Maya veils the void Unborn.
Even if a greater consciousness I could reach,
What profit is it then for Thought to win
A Real which is for ever ineffable

605 Or hunt to its lair the bodiless Self or make
The Unknowable the target of the soul?
Nay, let me work within my mortal bounds,
Not live beyond life nor think beyond the mind;
Our smallness saves us from the Infinite.

610 In a frozen grandeur lone and desolate
Call me not to die the great eternal death,
Left naked of my own humanity
In the chill vast of the spirit's boundlessness.
Each creature by its nature's limits lives,
615 And how can one evade his native fate?
Human I am, human let me remain
Till in the Inconscient I fall dumb and sleep.

A high insanity, a chimaera is this,
To think that God lives hidden in the clay
620 And that eternal Truth can dwell in Time,
And call to her to save our self and world.
How can man grow immortal and divine
Transmuting the very stuff of which he is made?
This wizard gods may dream, not thinking men.”
625 And Savitri heard the voice, the warped answer heard
And turning to her being of light she spoke:
“Madonna of light, Mother of joy and peace,
Thou art a portion of my self put forth
To raise the spirit to its forgotten heights
630 And wake the soul by touches of the heavens.
Because thou art, the soul draws near to God;
Because thou art, love grows in spite of hate
And knowledge walks unslain in the pit of Night.
But not by showering heaven’s golden rain
635 Upon the intellect’s hard and rocky soil
Can the tree of Paradise flower on earthly ground
And the Bird of Paradise sit upon life’s boughs
And the winds of Paradise visit mortal air.
Even if thou rain down intuition’s rays,
640 The mind of man will think it earth’s own gleam,
His spirit by spiritual ego sink,
Or his soul dream shut in sainthood’s brilliant cell
Where only a bright shadow of God can come.
His hunger for the eternal thou must nurse
645 And fill his yearning heart with heaven’s fire
And bring God down into his body and life.
One day I will return, His hand in mine,
And thou shalt see the face of the Absolute.
Then shall the holy marriage be achieved,
650 Then shall the divine family be born.
There shall be light and peace in all the worlds.”

End of Canto Four