

Track 25: Section 1, lines 1 to 111

Fate followed her foreseen immutable road.

Man's hopes and longings build the journeying wheels
That bear the body of his destiny
And lead his blind will towards an unknown goal.

5 His fate within him shapes his acts and rules;
Its face and form already are born in him,
Its parentage is in his secret soul:
Here Matter seems to mould the body's life
And the soul follows where its nature drives.

10 Nature and Fate compel his free-will's choice.

But greater spirits this balance can reverse
And make the soul the artist of its fate.

This is the mystic truth our ignorance hides:
Doom is a passage for our inborn force,
15 Our ordeal is the hidden spirit's choice,
Ananke is our being's own decree.

All was fulfilled the heart of Savitri
Flower-sweet and adamant, passionate and calm,
Had chosen and on her strength's unbending road
20 Forced to its issue the long cosmic curve.

Once more she sat behind loud hastening hooves;
A speed of armoured squadrons and a voice
Far-heard of chariots bore her from her home.

A couchant earth wakened in its dumb muse
25 Looked up at her from a vast indolence:
Hills wallowing in a bright haze, large lands
That lolled at ease beneath the summer heavens,
Region on region spacious in the sun,
Cities like chrysolites in the wide blaze
30 And yellow rivers pacing lion-maned
Led to the Shalwa marches' emerald line,
A happy front to iron vastnesses
And austere peaks and titan solitudes.

Once more was near the fair and fated place,
35 The borders gleaming with the groves' delight
Where first she met the face of Satyavan
And he saw like one waking into a dream
Some timeless beauty and reality,
The moon-gold sweetness of heaven's earth-born child.

40 The past receded and the future neared:
Far now behind lay Madra's spacious halls,
The white carved pillars, the cool dim alcoves,
The tinged mosaic of the crystal floors,
The towered pavilions, the wind-rippled pools
45 And gardens humming with the murmur of bees,
Forgotten soon or a pale memory

The fountain's splash in the white stone-bound pool,
The thoughtful noontide's brooding solemn trance,
The colonnade's dream grey in the quiet eve,
50 The slow moonrise gliding in front of Night.

Left far behind were now the faces known,
The happy silken babble on laughter's lips
And the close-clinging clasp of intimate hands
And adoration's light in cherished eyes
55 Offered to the one sovereign of their life.

Nature's primaeval loneliness was here:
Here only was the voice of bird and beast,—
The ascetic's exile in the dim-souled huge
Inhuman forest far from cheerful sound
60 Of man's blithe converse and his crowded days.

In a broad eve with one red eye of cloud,
Through a narrow opening, a green flowered cleft,
Out of the stare of sky and soil they came
Into a mighty home of emerald dusk.

65 There onward led by a faint brooding path
Which toiled through the shadow of enormous trunks
And under arches misers of sunshine,
They saw low thatched roofs of a hermitage
Huddled beneath a patch of azure hue
70 In a sunlit clearing that seemed the outbreak
Of a glad smile in the forest's monstrous heart,
A rude refuge of the thought and will of man
Watched by the crowding giants of the wood.

Arrived in that rough-hewn homestead they gave,
75 Questioning no more the strangeness of her fate,
Their pride and loved one to the great blind king,
A regal pillar of fallen mightiness
And the stately care-worn woman once a queen
Who now hoped nothing for herself from life,
80 But all things only hoped for her one child,
Calling on that single head from partial Fate
All joy of earth, all heaven's beatitude.

Adoring wisdom and beauty like a young god's,
She saw him loved by heaven as by herself,
85 She rejoiced in his brightness and believed in his fate
And knew not of the evil drawing near.

Lingering some days upon the forest verge
Like men who lengthen out departure's pain,
Unwilling to separate sorrowful clinging hands,
90 Unwilling to see for the last time a face,
Heavy with the sorrow of a coming day
And wondering at the carelessness of Fate
Who breaks with idle hands her supreme works,
They parted from her with pain-fraught burdened hearts

95 As forced by inescapable fate we part
From one whom we shall never see again;
Driven by the singularity of her fate,
Helpless against the choice of Savitri's heart
They left her to her rapture and her doom
100 In the tremendous forest's savage charge.

All put behind her that was once her life,
All welcomed that henceforth was his and hers,
She abode with Satyavan in the wild woods:
Priceless she deemed her joy so close to death;
105 Apart with love she lived for love alone.

As if self-poised above the march of days,
Her immobile spirit watched the haste of Time,
A statue of passion and invincible force,
An absolutism of sweet imperious will,
110 A tranquillity and a violence of the gods
Indomitable and immutable.