

Epilogue

The Return to Earth

OUT OF abysmal trance her spirit woke.
Lain on the earth-mother's calm unconscious breast
She saw the green-clad branches lean above
Guarding her sleep with their enchanted life,
And overhead a blue-winged ecstasy
Fluttered from bough to bough with high-pitched call.
Into the magic secrecy of the woods
Peering through an emerald lattice-window of leaves,
In indolent skies reclined, the thinning day
Turned to its slow fall into evening's peace.
She pressed the living body of Satyavan:
On her body's wordless joy to be and breathe
She bore the blissful burden of his head
Between her breasts' warm labour of delight,
The waking gladness of her members felt
The weight of heaven in his limbs, a touch
Summing the whole felicity of things,
And all her life was conscious of his life
And all her being rejoiced enfolding his.
The immense remoteness of her trance had passed;
Human she was once more, earth's Savitri,
Yet felt in her illimitable change.
A power dwelt in her soul too great for earth,
A bliss lived in her heart too large for heaven;
Light too intense for thought and love too boundless
For earth's emotions lit her skies of mind
And spread through her deep and happy seas of soul.
All that is sacred in the world drew near
To her divine passivity of mood.
A marvellous voice of silence breathed its thoughts.
All things in Time and Space she had taken for hers;

In her they moved, by her they lived and were,
The whole wide world clung to her for delight,
Created for her rapt embrace of love.
Now in her spaceless self released from bounds
Unnumbered years seemed moments long drawn out,
The brilliant time-flakes of eternity.
Outwings of a bird from its bright home,
Her earthly morns were radiant flights of joy.
Boundless she was, a form of infinity.
Absorbed no longer by the moment's beat
Her spirit the unending future felt
And lived with all the unbeginning past.
Her life was a dawn's victorious opening,
The past and unborn days had joined their dreams,
Old vanished eves and far arriving noons
Hinted to her a vision of prescient hours.
Supine in musing bliss she lay awhile
Given to the wonder of a waking trance;
Half-risen then she sent her gaze around,
As if to recover old sweet trivial threads,
Old happy thoughts, small treasured memories,
And weave them into one immortal day.
Ever she held on the paradise of her breast
Her lover charmed into a fathomless sleep,
Lain like an infant spirit unaware
Lulled on the verge of two consenting worlds.
But soon she leaned down over her loved to call
His mind back to her with her travelling touch
On his closed eyelids; settled was her still look
Of strong delight, not yearning now, but large
With limitless joy or sovereign last content,
Pure, passionate with the passion of the gods.
Desire stirred not its wings; for all was made
An overarching of celestial rays
Like the absorbed control of sky on plain,
Heaven's leaning down to embrace from all sides earth,

A quiet rapture, a vast security.
Then sighing to her touch the soft-winged sleep
Rose hovering from his flowerlike lids and flew
Murmurous away. Awake, he found her eyes
Waiting for his, and felt her hands, and saw
The earth his home given back to him once more
And her made his again, his passion's all.
With his arms' encircling hold around her locked,
A living knot to make possession close,
He murmured with hesitating lips her name,
And vaguely recollecting wonder cried,
"Whence hast thou brought me captive back, love-chained,
To thee and sunlight's walls, O golden beam
And casket of all sweetness, Savitri,
Godhead and woman, moonlight of my soul?
For surely I have travelled in strange worlds
By thee companioned, a pursuing spirit,
Together we have disdained the gates of night.
I have turned away from the celestials' joy
And heaven's insufficient without thee.
Where now has passed that formidable Shape
Which rose against us, the Spirit of the Void,
Claiming the world for Death and Nothingness,
Denying God and soul? Or was all a dream
Or a vision seen in a spiritual sleep,
A symbol of the oppositions of Time
Or a mind-lit beacon of significance
In some stress of darkness lighting on the Way
Or guiding a swimmer through the straits of Death,
Or finding with the succour of its ray
In a gully mid the crowded streets of Chance
The soul that into the world-adventure came,
A scout and voyager from Eternity?"
But she replied, "Our parting was the dream;
We are together, we live, O Satyavan.
Look round thee and behold, glad and unchanged

Our home, this forest with its thousand cries
And the whisper of the wind among the leaves
And, through rifts in emerald scene, the evening sky,
God's canopy of blue sheltering our lives,
And the birds crying for heart's happiness,
Winged poets of our solitary reign,
Our friends on earth where we are king and queen.
Only our souls have left Death's night behind,
Changed by a mighty dream's reality,
Illumined by the light of symbol worlds
And the stupendous summit self of things,
And stood at Godhead's gates limitless, free."

Then filled with the glory of their happiness
They rose and with safe clinging fingers locked
Hung on each other in a silent look.
But he with a new wonder in his heart
And a new flame of worship in his eyes:
"What high change is in thee, O Savitri? Bright
Ever thou wast, a goddess still and pure,
Yet dearer to me by thy sweet human parts
Earth gave thee making thee yet more divine.
My adoration mastered, my desire
Bent down to make its subject, my daring clasped,
Claiming by body and soul my life's estate,
Rapture's possession, love's sweet property,
A statue of silence in my templed spirit,
A yearning godhead and a golden bride.
But now thou seemst almost too high and great
For mortal worship; Time lies below thy feet
And the whole world seems only a part of thee,
Thy presence the hushed heaven I inhabit,
And thou lookst on me in the gaze of the stars,
Yet art the earthly keeper of my soul,
My life a whisper of thy dreaming thoughts,
My morns a gleaming of thy spirit's wings,
And day and night are of thy beauty part.

Hast thou not taken my heart to treasure it
In the secure environment of thy breast?
Awakened from the silence and the sleep,
I have consented for thy sake to be.
By thee I have greatened my mortal arc of life,
But now far heavens, unmapped infinitudes
Thou hast brought me, thy illimitable gift!
If to fill these thou lift thy sacred flight,
My human earth will still demand thy bliss.
Make still my life through thee a song of joy
And all my silence wide and deep with thee.”
A heavenly queen consenting to his will,
She clasped his feet, by her enshrining hair
Enveloped in a velvet cloak of love,
And answered softly like a murmuring lute:
“All now is changed, yet all is still the same.
Lo, we have looked upon the face of God,
Our life has opened with divinity.
We have borne identity with the Supreme
And known his meaning in our mortal lives.
Our love has grown greater by that mighty touch
And learned its heavenly significance,
Yet nothing is lost of mortal love’s delight.
Heaven’s touch fulfils but cancels not our earth:
Our bodies need each other in the same last;
Still in our breasts repeat heavenly secret rhythm
Our human heart-beats passionately close.
Still am I she who came to thee mid the murmur
Of sunlit leaves upon this forest verge;
I am the Madran, I am Savitri.
All that I was before, I am to thee still,
Close comrade of thy thoughts and hopes and toils,
All happy contraries I would join for thee.
All sweet relations marry in our life;
I am thy kingdom even as thou art mine,
The sovereign and the slave of thy desire,

Thy prone possessor, sister of thy soul
And mother of thy wants; thou art my world,
The earth I need, the heaven my thoughts desire,
The world I inhabit and the god I adore.
Thy body is my body's counterpart
Whose every limb my answering limb desires,
Whose heart is key to all my heart-beats, — this
I am and thou to me, O Satyavan.
Our wedded walk through life begins anew,
No gladness lost, no depth of mortal joy.
Let us go through this new world that is the same,
For it is given back, but it is known,
A playing-ground and dwelling-house of God
Who hides himself in bird and beast and man
Sweetly to find himself again by love,
By oneness. His presence leads the rhythms of life
That seek for mutual joy in spite of pain.
We have each other found, O Satyavan,
In the great light of the discovered soul.
Let us go back, for eve is in the skies.
Now grief is dead and serene bliss remains
The heart of all our days for evermore.
Lo, all these beings in this wonderful world!
Let us give joy to all, for joy is ours.
For not for ourselves alone our spirits came
Out of the veil of the Unmanifest,
Out of the deep immense Unknowable
Upon the ignorant breast of dubious earth,
Into the ways of labouring, seeking men,
Two fires that burn towards that parent Sun,
Two rays that travel to the original Light.
To lead man's soul towards truth and God we are born,
To draw the chequered scheme of mortal life
Into some semblance of the Immortal's plan,
To shape it closer to an image of God,
A little nearer to the Idea divine.”

She closed her arms about his breast and head
As if to keep him on her bosom worn
For ever through the journeying of the years.
So for a while they stood entwined, their kiss
And passion-tranced embrace a meeting-point
In their commingling spirits one for ever,
Two-souled, two-bodied for the joys of Time.
Then hand in hand they left that solemn place
Full now of mute unusual memories,
To the green distance of their sylvan home
Returning slowly through the forest's heart.
Round them the afternoon to evening changed;
Light slipped down to the brightly sleeping verge,
And the birds came back winging to their nests,
And day and night leaned to each other's arms.

Now the dusk shadowy trees stood close around
Like dreaming spirits and, delaying night,
The grey-eyed pensive evening heard their steps,
And from all points the cries and movements came
Of the four-footed wanderers of the night
Approaching. Then a human rumour rose
Long alien to their solitary days,
Invading the charmed wilderness of leaves
Once sacred to secluded loneliness
With violent breaking of its virgin sleep.
Through the screened dusk it deepened still and there neared
Floating of many voices and the sound
Of many feet, till on their sight broke in
As if a coloured wave upon the eye
The brilliant strenuous crowded days of man.
Topped by a flaring multitude of lights
A great resplendent company arrived.
Life in its ordered tumult wavering came
Bringing its stream of unknown faces, thronged
With gold-fringed headdresses, gold-broidered robes,

Glittering of ornaments, fluttering of hems,
Hundreds of hands parted the forest-boughs,
Hundreds of eyes searched the entangled glades.
Calm white-clad priests their grave-eyed sweetness brought,
Strong warriors in their glorious armour shone,
The proud-hooved steeds came trampling through the wood.
In front King Dyumatsena walked, no more
Blind, faltering-limbed, but his far-questing eyes
Restored to all their confidence in light
Took seemingly this imaged outer world;
Firmly he trod with monarch step the soil.
By him that queen and mother's anxious face
Came changed from its habitual burdened look
Which in its drooping strength of tired toil
Had borne the fallen life of those she loved.
Her patient paleness wore a pensive glow
Like evening's subdued gaze of gathered light
Departing, which foresees sunrise her child.
Sinking in quiet splendours of her sky,
She lives awhile to muse upon that hope,
The brilliance of her rich receding gleam
A thoughtful prophecy of lyric dawn.
Her eyes were first to find her children's forms.
But at the vision of the beautiful twain
The air awoke perturbed with scaling cries,
And the swift parents hurrying to their child, —
Their cause of life now who had given him breath, —
Possessed him with their arms. Then tenderly
Cried Dyumatsena chiding Satyavan:
"The fortunate gods have looked on me today,
A kingdom seeking came and heaven's rays.
But where wast thou? Thou hast tormented gladness
With fear's dull shadow, O my child, my life.
What danger kept thee for the darkening woods?
Or how could pleasure in her ways forget
That useless orbs without thee are my eyes

Which only for thy sake rejoice at light?
Not like thyself was this done, Savitri,
Who ledst not back thy husband to our arms,
Knowing with him beside me only is taste
In food and for his touch evening and morn
I live content with my remaining days.”
But Satyavan replied with smiling lips,
“Lay all on her; she is the cause of all.
With her enchantments she has twined me round.
Behold, at noon leaving this house of clay
I wandered in far-off eternities,
Yet still, a captive in her golden hands,
I tread your little hillock called green earth
And in the moments of your transient sun
Live glad among the busy works of men.”
Then all eyes turned their wondering looks where stood,
A deepening redder gold upon her cheeks,
With lowered lids the noble lovely child,
And one consenting thought moved every breast.
“What gleaming marvel of the earth or skies
Stands silently by human Satyavan
To mark a brilliance in the dusk of eve?
If this is she of whom the world has heard,
Wonder no more at any happy change.
Each easy miracle of felicity
Of her transmuting heart the alchemy is.”
Then one spoke there who seemed a priest and sage:
“O woman soul, what light, what power revealed,
Working the rapid marvels of this day,
Opens for us by thee a happier age?”
Her lashes fluttering upwards gathered in
To a vision which had scanned immortal things,
Rejoicing, human forms for their delight.
They claimed for their deep childlike motherhood
The life of all these souls to be her life,
Then falling veiled the light. Low she replied,

“Awakened to the meaning of my heart
That to feel love and oneness is to live
And this the magic of our golden change,
Is all the truth I know or seek, O sage.”
Wondering at her and her too luminous words
Westward they turned in the fast-gathering night.

From the entangling verges freed they came
Into a dimness of the sleeping earth
And travelled through her faint and slumbering plains.
Murmur and movement and the tread of men
Broke the night's solitude; the neigh of steeds
Rose from that indistinct and voiceful sea
Of life and all along its marchings swelled
The rhyme of hooves, the chariot's homeward voice.
Drawn by white manes upon a high-roofed car
In flare of the unsteady torches went
With linked hands Satyavan and Savitri,
Hearing a marriage march and nuptial hymn,
Where waited them the many-voiced human world.
Numberless the stars swam on their shadowy field
Describing in the gloom the ways of light.
Then while they skirted yet the southward verge,
Lost in the halo of her musing brows
Night, splendid with the moon dreaming in heaven
In silver peace, possessed her luminous reign.
She brooded through her stillness on a thought
Deep-guarded by her mystic folds of light,
And in her bosom nursed a greater dawn.

THE END