

Sarangadhara — Part-II

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The noon was far advanced; the monarch let
The tents, and sought were freshening to the eye
The forest trees a shady bower made
Wearied with morning's mirth, all nature sank to rest
And not the slightest stir was there, save where
The streamlet gurgled over the distant slope,
And butterflies, like the spirits of the wood, among
The foliage moved. And there he laid him down
Upon the grass, and wearied with chase
Soon sunk to sleep and dreamt.

"It was moonlight
And with his queen beloved, long through the park
He walked in converse sweet, till he reached
The summer house, and like a baby held
Her in his arms, a hideous shape came o'er her
And he dropped her in fright; and there was blood,
And broken limbs lay strewn upon the floor !
He woke in fright, and passing hastily
On to the tents, he cried to horse" and rode
Away.

But how was she the object dear
Of all his anxious thoughts ? She when the prince
Ran roughshod over the park like a wide colt
And left the cloak behind, felt like a lover who
In dream obtains his lay's wished embrace
But walking feels the pillow in his arms.

Sorely distressed she felt and from her eyes
Rolled down big drops. In silent grief awhile
She stood, and in her heart the feelings changed
To wounded worth, and anger next followed;
But revenge last took possession of her heart.

She leaned upon the gate and thought on what
To do; cried "He shall rue" and tore as mad
Her costly robe, and broke her bangles o'er
A post, and as if to lock her thoughts in sleep
'Gainst every feeling soft, emptied a glass
And lay upon the floor.

But when she woke
It was night. She rose not, but still with face
Pillowed on crossed arms, she brought to mild
The event of the morn, till coming where
The prince with countenance stern contemptuous looked
On her and turned away, her bosom burned
Once more with dire revenge, and in the fit
She like a fury lifted up her head; and saw
The king seated beside her, anxiously
Looking over the prostrate form before.
The Queen at once withdrew her face and dropped
It over again upon her crossed arms.
"What means the girl," he said, "this torn robe
And broken bangles strewn upon the floor !

And why withdraw the face in haste; as if

You saw some hateful friend in me ? Is there
No better bedding than a floor ? Arise
And speak ! for me the riddle is hard to read."
But when he held her arm to lift her up,
"O ! touch me not my lord," she cried, "I am fouled,
Fouled by a stranger's touch within thy house,
Like harlot slighted. Ah ! 'this woman's fate
To bear ill. "Slighted and fouled ! every
And who the wretch that touched ? For my life
Tomorrow's morning shall not see him whole !"
"Vow not so, King for shy should one be blamed
That fate decreed me this ? First brought by guile,
I have to brook indignity in the Court.
This morn, thy son, knowing you gone to hunt,
Came with the story of a pigeon field;
Desired to see my park, and in this place
This very place, laid violent hands on me;
Said I was once his bride destined, and spoke
Of love, but when I, drawing yonder sword,
Prepared to die rather than yield to his wish.
He like a coward fled, and left me here
Distressed. I am defiled and thee but ill
Befit ! Henceforth an ascetic shall I live
In forest caves secluded from the world,
But harm him not, thy son, for it is my fate
And not his fault, "Enough", he said, and walked
With haughty steps away.

It was the time

When, from their haunts, deities to shrines return
And stars slip out from heaven's azure vault
Where on their silver thrones through all the night
A heavenly hour they keep; and beasts of prey
Completely wearied with their fruitless search
Homeward retrace their cautious steps. 'Twas then
Upon a rock beneath a forest lime
That with a thousand eyes her fragrance wept,
Loud wailing lay, in agony deep, a prince
With severed legs and arms; and none was near
Except the workers of the deed who watched
With heavy hearts from distance over the scene,
But who you shape than like a shadow walks
The nighted wood ? Some ghost whose haunts disturbed
The prince's wail ? Oh no ! it is the saint
Whom of at early morn the woodman meets
Crossing with speed of wind the forest tracts.
Has he then heard prince's cry ? He did,
And is presently at his side "Alas !
Innocent prince", he cried, and from his pot
Sprinkled the holy water over his from.
At once the bleeding stopped, and in his arm
Holding the swooning prince, the holy saint
Winds wift over forest flew.

CONCLUSION

The sun has set: but, linger yet his rays
Over the odorous heights of eastern peaks,

Where, stopping in her thoughtless speed, the fawn
With baby - wonder eyes the setting day,
That, twitching now has mantle bright, walked down
The slopes of the western mount. The forest lay
In all its twilight grandeur robed in shades.

But who be she that like a goddess sat
Upon a rock that edged a noiseless stream
And shiplike rose amidst a leafy sea ?
All clad in purest white; one diamond lace
Alone adorned her neck and dangling rested
Over her fairy breast. Long did she trace
With thoughtful eye the evening evolutions
Of earth and sky, while each image that graced
Her orbs wooed back some relic of the past
Or golden thoughts that blossomed in her breast.
Softly she rose from reverie and withdrew
Her palm from 'neath her rosy cheek and touched
A Veena with flowerets decked, charmed the wood;

Chorus : With power and pelf so falsely fair,
The world is all to thee;
O speak no more; O speak no more,
The world is not for me.

With tempting hues the lilies blow
Upon the lake of Life;
But all below, unseen they grow
The weeds of sin and strife,

The plant of wealth on guile is grown
And watered is with sin;
The craft of power on blood is built
Its sails are puffed with din,
O not to me that power and wealth
O not to me the world;
In muddied streams there life doth flow
And vapours dim are curled,
Mine be these woods, these hills, these dales
Mine be the crystal stream;
Like wildbird in these happy vales
A happy heart I roam,
The prince that was by me undone
Lives in the cave below;
His limbs would all be whole again
In dozen moons or so,
I tend him like a mother true
It is a joy to me;
The holy saint of wondrous powers
Says Gods have forgiven me,
And when the Prince is strong and whole
And to his raj shall hie;
My loved lord the king of kings
Will come and live with me,
And here beside this pleasant stream
A home we'll build of straw;
And here relieved from wordly cares
His easy head shall rest;
Though spurred by fate from faith it's strayed

Upon this dear breast,
And in the noon the gentle winds,
 Shall make us flower beds meet;
And little fawns with fish eyes
 Shall frolic at our feet,
As oft I pass the twilight lake
 I spy the naiad fair;
Like lightning over the dark-blue skies
 She sinks her then and there,
But I shall hind behind some brake
 When moon is shining bright;
When she to ripples walks the lake
 With tread so airy light,
Then half above the water's face
 The naiad glides along
Planting among the furrowed waves
 Her lilies bright and young.



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