

The Death of the Authors

Rabindranath Tagore & Sherwood
Anderson & Their Return to Life in
Four Seasons

A Constant Remix

Spring

Why should I make it worse by allowing hatred to grow up against my husband? "I should like to know what you have in mind, what in the end you hope to gain for yourself or for these men," he said somewhat sharply.

With a slight lifting of his great shoulders McGregor sensed these things although he could not have expressed his sense of them and the hatred and contempt of men, born of his youth in the mining town, was rekindled by the sight of city men wandering afraid and bewildered through the streets of their own city. She did not see in McGregor the making of a man of genius as did Margaret and did not hope to express through him a secret desire for power. "The reformers have raised hell with business," the youth boasted as he looked about to be sure of listeners.

There was a suspicion of an added care in the choice of the colour of her veil, in the setting of the flower in her hair.

A youth came up and took the other woman away. The powers that ruled the First—quiet shrewd men who knew how to make and to take profits, the very flower of commercialism—were frightened. He wished that he might take a stick in his hands and go forth to prowl among the hills as he had gone on such nights in his youth in the Pennsylvania town. Every minute I kept my eye on the rain, and when it began to grow less I prayed with all my might; "Please, God, send some more rain till half-past seven is over. " McGregor thought of Edith Carson and a faint hunger began to grow within him. "After all there is youth and the hope of youth.

With all the ardour of youth he wanted to see if with the strength of his arm he could shake mankind out of its sloth.

In the children men hope vainly to see done what they have not the courage to try to do. Christ himself found the merchants hawking their wares even on the floor of the temple and in his naive youth was stirred to wrath and drove them through the door like flies. And Hari Charan Babu—I've not seen him for a long time—I hope he is not ill. What's the matter with Rakkhal?

"He isn't going to grow a tail," said Labanya, "by becoming a Rai Bahadur, is he?"

"Is there an eternal youth in the world, a state out of which men pass unknowingly, a youth that forever destroys, tearing down what has been built? There is hope in the corn. "My factory began to grow and as an employer of labour I became concerned in the lives of a good many men. At such times he was convinced that mankind would go on forever along the old road, that youth would continue always to grow into manhood, become fat, decay and die with the great swing and rhythm of life a meaningless mystery to them. Everybody said that, unless leading men like Nabendu devoted themselves to the Cause, there was no hope for the country. I told him that, "though I could never for a moment hope to be worthy of marriage connection with such an illustrious family, yet... etc. He was a typical American youth of the upper middle class and was in the University only because he was in no hurry to begin his life in the commercial world. Up to this time he had had no son, and there was no hope that any child would now be born to him. "Is there an eternal youth in the world, a state out of which men pass unknowingly, a youth that forever destroys, tearing down what has been built? "Is there an element in nature and in youth that we do not understand or that we lose sight of? He thought of his youth in the little village plough

factory, of his efforts to get on in the world, of the long evenings spent reading books and trying to understand the movements of men. A glow shone in the cheeks of the spokesman—a clean-looking youth with black curly hair and round pink—and-white cheeks, the son of a Presbyterian minister from Iowa. A swift turn of her neck, a quick eager glance of intense passion and pain glowing in her large dark eyes, just a suspicion of speech on her dainty red lips, her figure, fair and slim crowned with youth like a blossoming creeper, quickly uplifted in her graceful tilting gait, a dazzling flash of pain and craving and ecstasy, a smile and a glance and a blaze of jewels and silk, and she melted away. A brain will grow in the giant you have made. With infinite grace her body gave expression to the movements of the dance and like a thing blown by the wind she moved here and there in the arms of her partner, a slender youth with long black hair. "After all there is youth and the hope of youth.

He thought again of his own youth and of the evenings in the Wisconsin village when, himself a youth, he went with other young men singing and marching in the moonlight. The butterfly, with its bruised wings, buzzes round the flower in blind fury, unable to depart. In her youth she had had a sweetheart—a fat round-cheeked boy who lived on the next farm. "I hope no child of immature age will be allowed to read this story, and I sincerely trust it will not be used in text-books or primers for schools. Then, O, thou flower of the desert, swept away by the blood-stained dazzling ocean of grandeur, with its foam of jealousy, its rocks and shoals of intrigue, on what shore of cruel death wast thou cast, or in what other land more splendid and more cruel?

"It means a lot to be one of us when a chap gets out into the world," the curly-haired youth said. A hot wave of hope and

fear shot through her. At McGregor's left with his legs sprawled into the aisle sat a youth who was thinking of the yellow-haired girl and planning a campaign against her. The people plunging through the streets afire with earnestness concerning nothing had not succeeded in sucking him into the whirlpool of commercialism in which they struggled and into which year after year the best of America's youth was drawn. They have vigour and youth but in them has been builded no dream no tradition of devotion to anything but gain. A youth with unhealthy looking skin sat on a stool by the counter talking to a waiter.

He closed the book, threw it away from him and looked at his big fist lying on the counter and at the youth talking boastfully to the waiter. Let the blows descend upon my head; but may they leave my faith and hope in God untouched.

As I grew she did not grow with me. "Everyone has come here for gain, to grow rich, to achieve. The great bubble of hope burst in my breast, and my heart collapsed. The factory was a huge brick affair fronted by a broad cement sidewalk and a narrow green lawn spotted with flower beds. His mood was that of an evening breeze which played about a favourite flowering shrub, gently shaking her now this side, now that, in the hope of rousing her to animation. Only a short time before he had made, out of these very flower balls, a small go-cart; and the child had been so entirely happy dragging it about with a string, that for the whole day Raicharan was not made to put on the reins at all. "You were drunk with youth and a kind of world madness," says my normal self as I go forward again, striving to think things out. At such times he was convinced that mankind would go on forever along the old road, that youth would continue always to grow into manhood, become fat, decay and die with the great swing and rhythm of life a

meaningless mystery to them. You should have a beard when you grow older.

Summer

The Civil War swept like a purifying fire through the land. Filled with confidence in the strength and quickness of his body he was beginning to have also confidence in the vigour and clearness of his brain. Shekhar forgot his audience, forgot the trial of his strength with a rival.

He dreamed that he and his mother went over the hill and down toward the valley but that his father, wearing a long white robe and with his red hair blowing in the wind, stood upon the hillside swinging a long sword blazing with fire and drove them back. All day he followed McGregor with his eyes, trying to calculate the strength and courage in the huge body. He had heard men talk of the strength and the evil temper of his stableman and it pleased him to have so fierce a fellow cleaning the horses.

The summer sun was setting and over the roofs of buildings the west was ablaze with light. His body shook with the strength of his desire to end the vast disorder of life. The smell of the wet fodder and the pungent smoke of the straw fire would enter into my very heart. The fact that she had lost her man twice—once in the mine when the timber fell and clouded his brain, and then later when his body lay black and distorted near the door to the McCrary cut after the dreadful time of the fire in the mine—was perhaps forgotten but the fact that she had once kept a store and that she had lost her money serving them was not forgotten. He wanted his true note as an individual to ring out above the hubbub of voices and then he wanted to use the strength and the virility within himself to carry his word far. "Are the mature lives of strong men of so little account?"

Labanya laughed inwardly, and said to herself: "Well—well—you have to pass through the ordeal of fire yet. There was something hypnotic in the quiet strength of his mood. The silent ceremonial of the setting sun was revealed in all its glowing splendour. The afternoon sun was playing on her glossy hide. The hatred of Coal Creek that burned in him had set fire to something else. I wondered and felt amused at the idea, and do not know when I fell asleep or how long I slept; but I suddenly awoke with a start, though I heard no sound and saw no intruder—only the steady bright star on the hilltop had set, and the dim light of the new moon was stealthily entering the room through the open window, as if ashamed of its intrusion. I could picture in my mind's eye my old grandmother seated on the ground with her thin wisps of hair untied, warming her back in the sun as she made the little round lentil balls to be dried and used for cooking. He fixed his gaze on the king's face, and all the vast and unexpressed love of the people for the royal house rose like incense in his song, and enwreathed the throne on all sides. From where they sat they could see the workers of the night shift idling in the sun on Main Street. " A fire blazed up in his eyes and a confident ring came into his voice. As the sun sank behind the hill-tops a long dark curtain fell upon the stage of day, and the intervening hills cut short the time in which light and shade mingle at sunset. Then he slowly raised his head, and his clear sweet voice rose into the sky like a quivering flame of fire. Through the window the rays of the sun touched my feet, and the slight warmth was very welcome. " Raicharan rose to his feet and said: "It was not I who did it. "With all the softly suggestive sensuality of their dress and their persons they must in some way have sapped the strength and the purpose of these men who move among

them so indifferently," he thought. For the Cabuliwallah had given it to Mini, and her mother catching sight of the bright round object, had pounced on the child with: "Where did you get that eight-anna bit? The red of the coke ovens, the red sun setting behind the hills to the west and last of all the red stream flowing like a river of blood down through the valley made a scene that burned itself into the brain of the miner's son. Had they the fairer hue and bright complexion of the Hearts, or was theirs the darker complexion of the Clubs? The beginning of a literature of strength and virility arose. "He is a man and not a Joshua to make the sun stand still. " His voice rose and hatred flamed up in him. "Let's sit here until the sun goes down. When he became conscious of her presence and relaxed the grip of his arms about her shoulders she lay still and waited for him to forget again and again to press her tightly and let her feel in her worn-out body his massive strength and virility. He was not in the least excited and with a steady hand lighted the fire in the little stove and then looking up he asked Edith if he might smoke.

A fire began to burn in his eyes and the fists that were thrust into his coat pockets were clenched. The strength in them seemed to kiss, as with the kiss of a lover, the strength within himself and when they had passed and the disorderly jangle of voices broke out again he got on a car and went out to Edith's with his heart afire with resolution.

Her man had died with the others during the fire in the mine. Taking the lad by the hand the miner went up the face of the hill, past the last of the miners' houses, through the grove of pine trees at the summit and on over the hill into sight of a wide valley on the farther side. I even drank the cod-liver oil he gave me, though my gorge rose against it. " In Chicago

Margaret set about the business of living as though nothing were needed but strength and energy. He did not think of his surroundings, of the vast disorder of life about him, but tried with all his strength to bring something like order and purpose into his own mind and his own life. In his very frame there was the possibility of something, a blow, a shock, a thrust out of the lean soul of strength into the jelly-like fleshiness of weakness. So bright were they that they gave a beautiful radiance even to the sordid brick walls of our Calcutta lanes. Was it to increase the strength of the Congress, that you brought this wretch into the world? "I want all of life," she cried; "I want the lust and the strength and the evil of it. All the ugliness of my cruelty rose up to condemn me. Now the quality of the dream and the strength of its hold upon him was to be tested. After a ten minutes' interview, which consisted chiefly of nodding the head, my friend rose to his feet to depart. The city caught fire from the man at the time of that terrible speech of his in the court room when Polk Street Mary grew afraid and told the truth. " McGregor's voice rose and his great fist was raised. On the street as she walked beside her husband, she beamed upon people but when the same people spoke, calling them a handsome couple, a flush rose to her cheeks and a flash of indignation ran through her brain. Across the street a group of city firemen who lounged in the sun before an engine house clapped their hands. It has made them deficient in strength of soul also.

Cracked McGregor died in the mine, almost within reach of the door to the old cut where the fire burned. I recovered strength very slowly, and my eyesight became weaker and weaker.

With all the strength of her spirit she was absorbed in what David was saying. The strength in him made an appeal to the native strong-thing in her.

McGregor rose and went out of the saloon. In the sun before factory doors men stood talking, half understanding, beginning to sense the fact that there was something big in the wind. It was late afternoon and the sun had gone down behind clouds. On warm days she sat in the sun before the shack chewing on a stick that had been dipped in tobacco. The strength in them seemed to kiss, as with the kiss of a lover, the strength within himself and when they had passed and the disorderly jangle of voices broke out again he got on a car and went out to Edith's with his heart afire with resolution.

My brain and strength shall be yours. Shekhar rose from his seat and left the hall. The stars of evening rose and set behind the trees, as she went on to the end of her tale. He got up and looked at the sun going down behind the hill far away at the other end of the valley. From the coke ovens a thin line of smoke rose into the sky. "She touched the ground at my feet, rose and bowed to me, and departed. Six foot three, blue eyed, broad shouldered, his presence had a strength and dignity which marked him out among men and the daughter sensed his strength. "He has a kind of genius for keeping away from the things he don't like," said the liveryman, talking to Uncle Charlie Wheeler in the sun before the door of the post office. The writer thanked him profusely for his donation, and declared that the increase of strength the Congress had acquired by having such a man within its fold, was inestimable. The marriage-pipes sounded, and the mild autumn sun streamed round us. "I would like to fire you but I won't. The miners who hated him for his speech on the steps, admired him for

his strength and brute courage. When they smiled back at him he rose and started toward them. The long black valley with its dense shroud of smoke that rose and fell and formed itself into fantastic shapes in the moonlight, the poor little houses clinging to the hillside, the occasional cry of a woman being beaten by a drunken husband, the glare of the coke fires and the rumble of coal cars being pushed along the railroad tracks, all of these made a grim and rather inspiring impression on the young man's mind so that although he hated the mines and the miners he sometimes paused in his night wanderings and stood with his great shoulders lifted, breathing deeply and feeling things he had no words in him to express. I could watch the sun rising over the sugar-cane in the East, beyond the clump of trees at the side of the village.

Slowly the Queen of Hearts entered, and the whole assembly rose to greet her. And, sure enough, Makhan rose from Mother Earth blind as Fate and screaming like the Furies. My English hat and coat were resting on a rack, and I was about to take them down when a sudden whirlwind, crested with the sands of the Susta and the dead leaves of the Avalli hills, caught them up, and whirled them round and round, while a loud peal of merry laughter rose higher and higher, striking all the chords of mirth till it died away in the land of sunset. Having heard her to the end, Hemanta rose and walked out. He was bright and healthy and good-looking.

After the evening when she stood facing Edith and when she had been unable to arise to the challenge flung at her by the little milliner Margaret Ormsby was forced to stand facing her own soul and there was no strength in her for the test. With all the ardour of youth he wanted to see if with the strength of his arm he could shake mankind out of its sloth.

The south wind was blowing, and the twelve ships sailed away, as fast as the desires which rose in the Prince's breast. As he walked in the streets women stopped to look at him, thinking of the beauty and strength of his maturing body.

Have you like the empty fields that bask in the sun in the summer the right to remain silent in the presence of men who have had thoughts and have tried to put their thoughts into deeds? I won't put it up to you to fire him. "The fire is in the old McCrary cut," she said, her voice quivering, a dumb hopeless look in her eyes. The fire that runs through the veins of his body should light his mind. But when I came back to the country all my earlier hopes and faiths, all that I held true in life during childhood, became fresh and bright once more. The morning sun came into my room, and I was grateful for its warmth. "The fever rose very high, and all that night the boy was delirious.

As he returned in the early morning from his walk on the bank of the river, the mellow rays of the winter sun gave his whole frame that pleasing sensation of warmth which lovers feel in each other's arms. He had met a new kind of man, one who did not live by the raw strength of his muscles and he had given a good account of himself. We mean to march in the morning and in the evening when the sun goes down. That morning it was difficult to say whether the sun had risen or not. She merely buried her face within the palms of her hands, and, with all the strength and intensity of her soul, wished that she could then and there melt into nothingness.

"In my own way I am adding strength to the heart and the brain of labour.

Autumn

In the woods golden brown leaves ran about like frightened little animals and golden-brown were the leaves on the trees about the farmhouses and golden-brown the corn standing shocked in the fields. It stands at the heart of America almost within sound of the creaking green leaves of the corn in the vast corn fields of the Mississippi Valley. Beni, the head man of our village, laughed at me for my devotion, and said: 'Why do you waste all this devotion on Him? In the woods golden brown leaves ran about like frightened little animals and golden-brown were the leaves on the trees about the farmhouses and golden-brown the corn standing shocked in the fields. The simple beauty of this dress of light made me wonder idly at man's deliberate waste of money in setting up tailors' shops to deprive his own skin of its natural clothing. He stood alone amid his thoughts that rustled and quivered round him like leaves in a summer breeze, and sang the Song of the Flute. I get to thinking that another man may come and take you and I waste hour after hour being afraid. So the young men would sit listless on the leaves under the trees, lolling with outstretched limbs in the forest shade. The leaves of the trees were murmuring with rustling delight. At that moment the third eye of divine wisdom was opened, where he kissed me, and verily I had a consecration. My English hat and coat were resting on a rack, and I was about to take them down when a sudden whirlwind, crested with the sands of the Susta and the dead leaves of the Avalli hills, caught them up, and whirled them round and round, while a loud peal of merry laughter rose higher and higher, striking all the chords of mirth till it died away in the land of sunset. The pad of paper fell out of the large girl's lap and scattered its leaves about the floor. It was like the swaying and shaking, and rustling and

soughing, in a summer gale, of a million leaves and branches in the depth of the primeval forest.

And now, when he is dead, his memory clings to me and never leaves me. I would like to come among you teaching the power of force. On the road home through the darkened woods the restless hurrying leaves frightened the boy so that, with his weariness from walking against the wind, his hunger from being all day without food, and with the cold nipping at his body, he began to cry. He is fast disappearing into the barren, waterless waste in his mad thirst for gold. "Poor and humble, I would go teaching them of love. " The old plough maker looked away over McGregor's shoulder to where the leaves of the trees shook in the wind from the lake. He has given his life to that dreary dream and he is teaching his children to follow the same dream.

Winter

"They raise hell with men. I used to get quite cross with my boy when I was compelled to stay at home and nurse him. The mother went so far in her wild grief as to think it possible that Raicharan himself had stolen the child. His chance of Rai Bahadurship throve on the soil carefully prepared by his late father and also by himself in days gone by, nor was any fresh watering required.

"The reformers have raised hell with business," the youth boasted as he looked about to be sure of listeners.

And the queen pines away with grief and cries: "Is my golden daughter destined to die unmarried?"

Colophon

Sources:

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