

सावित्र्याख्यानम् - पतिव्रतमाहात्म्यम्

The Story of Savitri is found in the 3rd book (Vana-Parva) of the Mahabharata (Vulgate edition, chapters 293–299, BORI-edition, chapters 277–283). This beautiful story comprising only roughly 300 verses divided into 7 chapters is ideal reading matter for Sanskrit students who have already finished a Sanskrit textbook and who now want to read a medium-sized self-contained story in original Sanskrit.

1. The Sanskrit text of the Story of Savitri is the text contained in the critical BORI edition by V.S.Sukthankar et al. (Poona 1927-1966).
2. The translation presented thereafter (page 22 seq.) is the out-of-copyright English translation by K.M.Ganguli (Calcutta 1884-1896).

1. Sanskrit Text

Chapter 1

युधिष्ठिर उवाच ।

नात्मानमनुशोचामि नेमान्भ्रातृन्महामुने ।

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द्यूते दुरात्मभिः क्लिष्टाः कृष्णया तारिता वयम् ।

जयद्रथेन च पुनर्वनादपहृता बलात् ॥ १-२ ॥

अस्ति सीमन्तिनी काचिद्दृष्टपूर्वार्थं वा श्रुता ।

पतिव्रता महाभागा यथेयं द्रुपदात्मजा ॥ १-३ ॥

मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।

शृणु राजन्कुलस्त्रीणां महाभाग्यं युधिष्ठिर ।

सर्वमेतद्यथा प्राप्तं सावित्र्या राजकन्यया ॥ १-४ ॥

आसीन्मद्रेषु धर्मात्मा राजा परमधार्मिकः ।

ब्रह्मण्यश्च शरण्यश्च सत्यसंधो जितेन्द्रियः ॥ १-५ ॥

यज्वा दानपतिर्दक्षः पौरजानपदप्रियः ।

पार्थिवो ऽश्वपतिर्नाम सर्वभूतहिते रतः ॥ १-६ ॥

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अतिक्रान्तेन वयसा संतापमुपजग्मिवान् ॥ १-७ ॥

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 न प्रमादश्च धर्मेषु कर्तव्यस्ते कथंचन ॥ १-१३ ॥
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Chapter 2

मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
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 राजोवाच ।
 अविचार्यमेतदुक्तं हि तथ्यं भगवता वचः ।
 करिष्याम्येतदेवं च गुरुर्हि भगवान्मम ॥ २-३० ॥
 नारद उवाच ।
 अविघ्नमस्तु सावित्र्याः प्रदाने दुहितुस्तव ।
 साधयिष्यामहे तावत्सर्वेषां भद्रमस्तु वः ॥ २-३१ ॥
 मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 एवमुक्त्वा खमुत्पत्य नारदस्त्रिदिवं गतः ।

राजापि दुहितुः सर्वं वैवाहिकमकारयत् ॥ २-३२ ॥

Chapter 3

मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।

अथ कन्याप्रदाने स तमेवार्थं विचिन्तयन् ।

समानिन्ये च तत्सर्वं भाण्डं वैवाहिकं नृपः ॥ ३-१ ॥

ततो वृद्धान्द्विजान्सर्वानृत्विजः सपुरोहितान् ।

समाहूय तिथौ पुण्ये प्रययौ सह कन्यया ॥ ३-२ ॥

मेध्यारण्यं स गत्वा च द्युमत्सेनाश्रमं नृपः ।

पञ्चामेव द्विजैः सार्धं राजर्षिं तमुपागमत् ॥ ३-३ ॥

तत्रापश्यन्महाभागं शालवृक्षमुपाश्रितम् ।

कौश्यां बृस्यां समासीनं चक्षुर्हीनं नृपं तदा ॥ ३-४ ॥

स राजा तस्य राजर्षेः कृत्वा पूजां यथार्हतः ।

वाचा सुनियतो भूत्वा चकारात्मनिवेदनम् ॥ ३-५ ॥

तस्यार्घ्यमासनं चैव गां चावेद्य स धर्मवित् ।

किमागमनमित्येवं राजा राजानमब्रवीत् ॥ ३-६ ॥

तस्य सर्वमभिप्रायमितिकर्तव्यतां च ताम् ।

सत्यवन्तं समुद्दिश्य सर्वमैव न्यवेदयत् ॥ ३-७ ॥

अश्वपतिरुवाच ।

सावित्री नाम राजर्षे कन्येयं मम शोभना ।

तां स्वधर्मेण धर्मज्ञं स्तुषार्थं त्वं गृहाण मे ॥ ३-८ ॥

द्युमत्सेन उवाच ।

च्युताः स्म राज्याद्वनवासमाश्रिताश्च

चराम धर्मं नियतास्तपस्विनः ।

कथं त्वनर्हा वनवासमाश्रमे

सहिष्यते क्लेशमिमं सुता तव ॥ ३-९ ॥

अश्वपतिरुवाच ।

सुखं च दुःखं च भवाभवात्मकं

यदा विजानाति सुताहमेव च ।

न मद्विधे युज्यति वाक्यमीदृशं

विनिश्चयेनाभिगतो ऽस्मि ते नृप ॥ ३-१० ॥

आशां नार्हसि मे हन्तुं सौहृदाद्प्रणयेन च ।

अभितश्चागतं प्रेम्णा प्रत्याख्यातुं न मार्हसि ॥ ३-११ ॥

अनुरूपो हि संयोगे त्वं ममाहं तवापि च ।

स्तुषां प्रतीच्छ मे कन्यां भार्या सत्यवतः सुताम् ॥ ३-१२ ॥

द्युमत्सेन उवाच ।

पूर्वमेवाभिलषितः संबन्धो मे त्वया सह ।

भ्रष्टराज्यस्त्वहमिति तत एतद्विचारितम् ॥ ३-१३ ॥

अभिप्रायस्त्वयं यो मे पूर्वमेवाभिकाङ्क्षितः ।

स निर्वर्ततु मे ऽद्यैव काङ्क्षितो ह्यसि मे ऽतिथिः ॥ ३-१४ ॥
 मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 ततः सर्वान्समानीय द्विजानाश्रमवासिनः ।
 यथाविधि समुद्राहं कारयामासतुर्नृपौ ॥ ३-१५ ॥
 दत्त्वा त्वश्वपतिः कन्यां यथार्हं च परिच्छदम् ।
 ययौ स्वमेव भवनं युक्तः परमया मुदा ॥ ३-१६ ॥
 सत्यवानपि भार्या तां लब्ध्वा सर्वगुणान्विताम् ।
 मुमुदे सा च तं लब्ध्वा भर्तारं मनसेप्सितम् ॥ ३-१७ ॥
 गते पितरि सर्वाणि संन्यस्याभरणानि सा ।
 जगृहे वल्कलान्येव वस्त्रं काषायमेव च ॥ ३-१८ ॥
 परिचारैर्गुणैश्चैव प्रश्रयेण दमेन च ।
 सर्वकामक्रियाभिश्च सर्वेषां तुष्टिमावहत् ॥ ३-१९ ॥
 श्वश्रूं शरीरसत्कारैः सर्वैराच्छादनादिभिः ।
 श्वशुरं देवकार्यैश्च वाचः संयमनेन च ॥ ३-२० ॥
 तथैव प्रियवादेन नैपुणेन शमेन च ।
 रहश्चैवोपचारेण भर्तारं पर्यतोषयत् ॥ ३-२१ ॥
 एवं तत्राश्रमे तेषां तदा निवसतां सताम् ।
 कालस्तपस्यतां कश्चिदतिचक्राम भारत ॥ ३-२२ ॥
 सावित्र्यास्तु शयानायास्तिष्ठन्त्याश्च दिवानिशाम् ।

नारदेन यदुक्तं तद्वाक्यं मनसि वर्तते ॥ ३-२३ ॥

Chapter 4

मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 ततः काले बहुतिथे व्यतिक्रान्ते कदा चन ।
 प्राप्तः स कालो मर्तव्यं यत्र सत्यवता नृप ॥ ४-१ ॥
 गणयन्त्याश्च सावित्र्या दिवसे दिवसे गते ।
 तद्वाक्यं नारदेनोक्तं वर्तते हृदि नित्यशः ॥ ४-२ ॥
 चतुर्थे ऽहनि मर्तव्यमिति संचिन्त्य भामिनी ।
 व्रतं त्रिरात्रमुद्दिश्य दिवारान्नं स्थिताभवत् ॥ ४-३ ॥
 तं श्रुत्वा नियमं दुःखं वध्वा दुःखान्वितो नृपः ।
 उत्थाय वाक्यं सावित्रीमब्रवीत्परिसान्त्वयन् ॥ ४-४ ॥
 अतितीव्रो ऽयमारम्भस्त्वयारब्धो नृपात्मजे ।
 तिसृणां वसतीनां हि स्थानं परमदुष्करम् ॥ ४-५ ॥
 सावित्र्युवाच ।
 न कार्यस्तात संतापः पारयिष्याम्यहं व्रतम् ।
 व्यवसायकृतं हीदं व्यवसायश्च कारणम् ॥ ४-६ ॥
 द्युमत्सेन उवाच ।
 व्रतं भिन्धीति वक्तुं त्वां नास्मि शक्तः कथंचन ।
 पारयस्वेति वचनं युक्तमस्मद्विधो वदेत् ॥ ४-७ ॥

मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 एवमुक्त्वा द्युमत्सेनो विरराम महामनाः ।
 तिष्ठन्ती चापि सावित्री काष्ठभूतेव लक्ष्यते ॥ ४-८ ॥
 श्वोभूते भर्तृमरणे सावित्र्या भरतर्षभ ।
 दुःखान्वितायास्तिष्ठन्त्याः सा रात्रिर्व्यत्यवर्तत ॥ ४-९ ॥
 अद्य तद्विवसं चेति हुत्वा दीप्तं हुताशनम् ।
 युगमात्रोदिते सूर्ये कृत्वा पौर्वाह्निकीः क्रियाः ॥ ४-१० ॥
 ततः सर्वान्द्विजान्बृद्धाञ्श्वश्रूं श्वशुरमेव च ।
 अभिवाद्यानुपूर्व्येण प्राञ्जलिर्नियता स्थिता ॥ ४-११ ॥
 अवैधव्याशिषस्ते तु सावित्र्यर्थं हिताः शुभाः ।
 ऊचुस्तपस्विनः सर्वे तपोवननिवासिनः ॥ ४-१२ ॥
 एवमस्त्विति सावित्री ध्यानयोगपरायणा ।
 मनसा ता गिरः सर्वाः प्रत्यगृह्णात्तपस्विनाम् ॥ ४-१३ ॥
 तं कालं च मुहूर्तं च प्रतीक्षन्ती नृपात्मजा ।
 यथोक्तं नारदवचश्चिन्तयन्ती सुदुःखिता ॥ ४-१४ ॥
 ततस्तु श्वश्रूश्वशुरावूचतुस्तां नृपात्मजाम् ।
 एकान्तस्थामिदं वाक्यं प्रीत्या भरतसत्तम ॥ ४-१५ ॥
 श्वशुरावूचतुः ।
 व्रतो यथोपदिष्टो ऽयं यथावत्पारितस्त्वया ।

आहारकालः संप्राप्तः क्रियतां यदनन्तरम् ॥ ४-१६ ॥
 सावित्र्युवाच ।
 अस्तं गते मयादित्ये भोक्तव्यं कृतकामया ।
 एष मे हृदि संकल्पः समयश्च कृतो मया ॥ ४-१७ ॥
 मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 एवं संभाषमाणायाः सावित्र्या भोजनं प्रति ।
 स्कन्धे परशुमादाय सत्यवान्प्रस्थितो वनम् ॥ ४-१८ ॥
 सावित्री त्वाह भर्तारं नैकस्त्वं गन्तुमर्हसि ।
 सह त्वयागमिष्यामि न हि त्वां हातुमुत्सहे ॥ ४-१९ ॥
 सत्यवानुवाच ।
 वनं न गतपूर्वं ते दुःखः पन्थाश्च भामिनि ।
 व्रतोपवासक्षामा च कथं पद्भ्यां गमिष्यसि ॥ ४-२० ॥
 सावित्र्युवाच ।
 उपवासान्न मे ग्लानिर्नास्ति चापि परिश्रमः ।
 गमने च कृतोत्साहां प्रतिषेद्धं न मर्हसि ॥ ४-२१ ॥
 सत्यवानुवाच ।
 यदि ते गमनोत्साहः करिष्यामि तव प्रियम् ।
 मम त्वामन्त्रय गुरून्न मां दोषः स्पृशेदयम् ॥ ४-२२ ॥
 मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।

साभिगम्याब्रवीच्छ्वश्रूं श्वशुरं च महाव्रता ।
 अयं गच्छति मे भर्ता फलाहारो महावनम् ॥ ४-२३ ॥
 इच्छेयमभ्यनुज्ञातुमार्यया श्वशुरेण च ।
 अनेन सह निर्गन्तुं न हि मे विरहः क्षमः ॥ ४-२४ ॥
 गुर्वग्निहोत्रार्थकृते प्रस्थितश्च सुतस्तव ।
 न निवार्यो निवार्यः स्यादन्यथा प्रस्थितो वनम् ॥ ४-२५ ॥
 संवत्सरः किञ्चिदूनो न निष्क्रान्ताहमाश्रमात् ।
 वनं कुसुमितं द्रष्टुं परं कौतूहलं हि मे ॥ ४-२६ ॥
 द्युमत्सेन उवाच ।
 यतः प्रभृति सावित्री पित्रा दत्ता स्तुषा मम ।
 नानयाभ्यर्थनायुक्तमुक्तपूर्वं स्मराम्यहम् ॥ ४-२७ ॥
 तदेषा लभतां कामं यथाभिलषितं वधूः ।
 अप्रमादश्च कर्तव्यः पुत्रि सत्यवतः पथि ॥ ४-२८ ॥
 मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 उभाभ्यामभ्यनुज्ञाता सा जगाम यशस्विनी ।
 सह भर्ता हसन्तीव हृदयेन विदूयता ॥ ४-२९ ॥
 सा वनानि विचित्राणि रमणीयानि सर्वशः ।
 मयूररवघुष्टानि ददर्श विपुलेक्षणा ॥ ४-३० ॥
 नदीः पुण्यवहाश्चैव पुष्पितांश्च नगोत्तमान् ।

सत्यवानाह पश्येति सावित्रीं मधुराक्षरम् ॥ ४-३१ ॥
 निरीक्षमाणा भर्तारं सर्वावस्थमनिन्दिता ।
 मृतमेव हि तं मेने काले मुनिवचः स्मरन् ॥ ४-३२ ॥
 अनुवर्तती तु भर्तारं जगाम मृदुगामिनी ।
 द्विधेव हृदयं कृत्वा तं च कालमवेक्षती ॥ ४-३३ ॥

Chapter 5

मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 अथ भार्यासहायः स फलान्यादाय वीर्यवान् ।
 कठिनं पूरयामास ततः काष्ठान्यपाटयत् ॥ ५-१ ॥
 तस्य पाटयतः काष्ठं स्वेदो वै समजायत ।
 व्यायामेन च तेनास्य जज्ञे शिरसि वेदना ॥ ५-२ ॥
 सो ऽभिगम्य प्रियां भार्यामुवाच श्रमपीडितः ।
 व्यायामेन ममानेन जाता शिरसि वेदना ॥ ५-३ ॥
 अङ्गानि चैव सावित्रि हृदयं दूयतीव च ।
 अस्वस्थमिव चात्मानं लक्षये मितभाषिणि ॥ ५-४ ॥
 शूलैरिव शिरो विद्धमिदं संलक्षयाम्यहम् ।
 तत्स्वप्नुमिच्छे कल्याणि न स्थातुं शक्तिरस्ति मे ॥ ५-५ ॥
 समासाद्याथ सावित्री भर्तारमुपगूह्य च ।
 उत्सङ्गे ऽस्य शिरः कृत्वा निषसाद् महीतले ॥ ५-६ ॥

ततः सा नारदवचो विमृशन्ती तपस्विनी ।
 तं मुहूर्तं क्षणं वेलां दिवसं च युयोज ह ॥ ५-७ ॥
 मुहूर्तादिव चापश्यत्पुरुषं पीतवाससम् ।
 बद्धमौलिं वपुष्मन्तमादित्यसमतेजसम् ॥ ५-८ ॥
 श्यामावदातं रक्ताक्षं पाशहस्तं भयावहम् ।
 स्थितं सत्यवतः पार्श्वे निरीक्षन्तं तमेव च ॥ ५-९ ॥
 तं दृष्ट्वा सहसोत्थाय भर्तुर्न्यस्य शनैः शिरः ।
 कृताञ्जलिरुवाचार्ता हृदयेन प्रवेपता ॥ ५-१० ॥
 दैवतं त्वाभिजानामि वपुरेतद्धयमानुषम् ।
 कामया ब्रूहि मे देव कस्त्वं किं च चिकीर्षसि ॥ ५-११ ॥
 यम उवाच ।
 पतिव्रतासि सावित्रि तथैव च तपोन्विता ।
 अतस्त्वामभिभाषामि विद्धि मां त्वं शुभे यमम् ॥ ५-१२ ॥
 अयं ते सत्यवान्भर्ता क्षीणायुः पार्थिवात्मजः ।
 नेष्याम्येनमहं बद्धा विद्धयेतन्मे चिकीर्षितम् ॥ ५-१३ ॥
 मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 इत्युक्त्वा पितृराजस्तां भगवान्स्वं चिकीर्षितम् ।
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 न विज्ञास्यसि पन्थानं गन्तुं चैव न शक्यसि ॥ ५-७५ ॥
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 अस्मिन्नद्य वने दग्धे शुष्कवृक्षः स्थितो ज्वलन् ।
 वायुना धम्यमानो ऽग्निर्दृश्यते ऽत्र क्वचित्क्वचित् ॥ ५-७६ ॥
 ततो ऽग्निमानयित्वेह ज्वालयिष्यामि सर्वतः ।
 काष्ठानीमानि सन्तीह जहि संतापमात्मनः ॥ ५-७७ ॥
 यदि नोत्सहसे गन्तुं सरुजं त्वाभिलक्षये ।
 न च ज्ञास्यसि पन्थानं तमसा संवृते वने ॥ ५-७८ ॥
 श्वः प्रभाते वने दृश्ये यास्यावो ऽनुमते तव ।

वसावेह क्षपामेतां रुचितं यदि ते ऽनघ ॥ ५-७९ ॥
 सत्यवानुवाच ।
 शिरोरुजा निवृत्ता मे स्वस्थान्यङ्गानि लक्षये ।
 मातापितृभ्यामिच्छामि संगमं त्वत्प्रसादजम् ॥ ५-८० ॥
 न कदाचिद्विकाले हि गतपूर्वो मयाश्रमः ।
 अनागतायां संध्यायां माता मे प्ररुणद्धि माम् ॥ ५-८१ ॥
 दिवापि मयि निष्क्रान्ते संतप्येते गुरू मम ।
 विचिनोति च मां तातः सहैवाश्रमवासिभिः ॥ ५-८२ ॥
 मात्रा पित्रा च सुभृशं दुःखिताभ्यामहं पुरा ।
 उपालब्धः सुबहुशश्चिरेणागच्छसीति ह ॥ ५-८३ ॥
 का त्ववस्था तयोरद्य मदर्थमिति चिन्तये ।
 तयोरदृश्ये मयि च महद्दुःखं भविष्यति ॥ ५-८४ ॥
 पुरा मामूचतुश्चैव रात्रावस्त्रायमाणकौ ।
 भृशं सुदुःखितौ वृद्धौ बहुशः प्रीतिसंयुतौ ॥ ५-८५ ॥
 त्वया हीनौ न जीवाव मुहूर्तमपि पुत्रक ।
 यावद्धरिष्यसे पुत्र तावन्नौ जीवितं ध्रुवम् ॥ ५-८६ ॥
 वृद्धयोरन्धयोर्याष्टिस्त्वयि वंशः प्रतिष्ठितः ।
 त्वयि पिण्डश्च कीर्तिश्च संतानं चावयोरिति ॥ ५-८७ ॥
 माता वृद्धा पिता वृद्धस्तयोर्याष्टिरहं किल ।

तौ रात्रौ मामपश्यन्तौ कामवस्थां गमिष्यतः ॥ ५-८८ ॥
 निद्रायाश्चाभ्यसूयामि यस्या हेतोः पिता मम ।
 माता च संशयं प्राप्ता मत्कृते ऽनपकारिणी ॥ ५-८९ ॥
 अहं च संशयं प्राप्तः कृच्छ्रामापदमास्थितः ।
 मातापितृभ्यां हि विना नाहं जीवितुमुत्सहे ॥ ५-९० ॥
 व्यक्तमाकुलया बुद्ध्या प्रज्ञाचक्षुः पिता मम ।
 एकैकमस्यां वेलायां पृच्छत्याश्रमवासिनम् ॥ ५-९१ ॥
 नात्मानमनुशोचामि यथाहं पितरं शुभे ।
 भर्तारं चाप्यनुगतां मातरं परिदुर्बलाम् ॥ ५-९२ ॥
 मत्कृतेन हि तावद्य संतापं परमेष्यतः ।
 जीवन्तावनुजीवामि भर्तव्यौ तौ मयेति ह ।
 तयोः प्रियं मे कर्तव्यमिति जीवामि चाप्यहम् ॥ ५-९३ ॥
 मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 एवमुक्त्वा स धर्मात्मा गुरुवर्ती गुरुप्रियः ।
 उच्छ्रित्य बाहू दुःखार्तः सस्वरं प्ररुरोद ह ॥ ५-९४ ॥
 ततो ऽब्रवीत्तथा दृष्ट्वा भर्तारं शोककर्षितम् ।
 प्रमृज्याश्रूणि नेत्राभ्यां सावित्री धर्मचारिणी ॥ ५-९५ ॥
 यदि मे ऽस्ति तपस्तप्तं यदि दत्तं हुतं यदि ।
 श्वश्रूश्चशुरभर्तृणां मम पुण्यास्तु शर्वरी ॥ ५-९६ ॥

न स्मराम्युक्तपूर्वा वै स्वैरेष्वप्यनुतां गिरम् ।
 तेन सत्येन तावद्य ध्रियेतां श्वशुरौ मम ॥ ५-९७ ॥
 सत्यवानुवाच ।
 कामये दर्शनं पित्रोर्याहि सावित्रि माचिरम् ।
 पुरा मातुः पितुर्वापि यदि पश्यामि विप्रियम् ।
 न जीविष्ये वरारोहे सत्येनात्मानमालभे ॥ ५-९८ ॥
 यदि धर्मे च ते बुद्धिर्मा चेज्जीवन्तमिच्छसि ।
 मम प्रियं वा कर्तव्यं गच्छस्वाश्रममन्तिकात् ॥ ५-९९ ॥
 मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 सावित्री तत उत्थाय केशान्संयम्य भामिनी ।
 पतिमुत्थापयामास बाहुभ्यां परिगृह्य वै ॥ ५-१०० ॥
 उत्थाय सत्यवांश्चापि प्रमृज्याङ्गानि पाणिना ।
 दिशः सर्वाः समालोक्य कठिने दृष्टिमादधे ॥ ५-१०१ ॥
 तमुवाचाथ सावित्री श्वः फलानीह नेष्यसि ।
 योगक्षेमार्थमेतत्ते नेष्यामि परशुं त्वहम् ॥ ५-१०२ ॥
 कृत्वा कठिनभारं सा वृक्षशाखावलम्बिनम् ।
 गृहीत्वा परशुं भर्तुः सकाशं पुनरागमत् ॥ ५-१०३ ॥
 वामे स्कन्धे तु वामोरूर्भर्तुर्बाहुं निवेश्य सा ।
 दक्षिणेन परिष्वज्य जगाम मृदुगामिनी ॥ ५-१०४ ॥

सत्यवानुवाच ।
 अभ्यासगमनाद्भीरु पन्थानो विदिता मम ।
 वृक्षान्तरालोकिताया ज्योत्स्नया चापि लक्षये ॥ ५-१०५ ॥
 आगतौ स्वः पथा येन फलान्यवचितानि च ।
 यथागतं शुभे गच्छ पन्थानं मा विचारय ॥ ५-१०६ ॥
 पलाशषण्डे चैतस्मिन्पन्था व्यावर्तते द्विधा ।
 तस्योत्तरेण यः पन्थास्तेन गच्छ त्वरस्व च ।
 स्वस्थो ऽस्मि बलवानस्मि दिदृक्षुः पितरावुभौ ॥ ५-१०७ ॥
 मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 ब्रुवन्नेवं त्वरायुक्तः स प्रायादाश्रमं प्रति ॥ ५-१०८ ॥

Chapter 6

मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 एतस्मिन्नेव काले तु द्युमत्सेनो महावने ।
 लब्धचक्षुः प्रसन्नात्मा दृष्ट्या सर्वं ददर्श ह ॥ ६-१ ॥
 स सर्वानाश्रमान्गत्वा शैब्यया सह भार्यया ।
 पुत्रहेतोः परामार्तिं जगाम मनुजर्षभ ॥ ६-२ ॥
 तावाश्रमान्नदीश्रैव वनानि च सरांसि च ।
 तांस्तान्देशान्विचिन्वन्तौ दम्पती परिजग्मतुः ॥ ६-३ ॥
 श्रुत्वा शब्दं तु यत्किञ्चिदुन्मुखौ सुतशङ्कया ।

सावित्रीसहितो ऽभ्येति सत्यवानित्यधावताम् ॥ ६-४ ॥
 भिन्नैश्च परुषैः पादैः सव्रणैः शोणितोक्षितैः ।
 कुशकण्टकविद्धाङ्गावुन्मत्ताविव धावतः ॥ ६-५ ॥
 ततो ऽभिसृत्य तैर्विप्रैः सर्वैराश्रमवासिभिः ।
 परिवार्य समाश्रास्य समानीतौ स्वमाश्रमम् ॥ ६-६ ॥
 तत्र भार्यासहायः स वृतो वृद्धैस्तपोधनैः ।
 आश्रासितो विचित्रार्थैः पूर्वरज्ञां कथाश्रयैः ॥ ६-७ ॥
 ततस्तौ पुनराश्वस्तौ वृद्धौ पुत्रदिदृक्षया ।
 बाल्ये वृत्तानि पुत्रस्य स्मरन्तौ भृशदुःखितौ ॥ ६-८ ॥
 पुनरुत्तवा च करुणां वाचं तौ शोककर्षितौ ।
 हा पुत्र हा साधिव वधूः क्वासि क्वासीत्यरोदताम् ॥ ६-९ ॥
 सुवर्चा उवाच ।
 यथास्य भार्या सावित्री तपसा च दमेन च ।
 आचारेण च संयुक्ता तथा जीवति सत्यवान् ॥ ६-१० ॥
 गौतम उवाच ।
 वेदाः साङ्गा मयाधीतास्तपो मे संचितं महत् ।
 कौमारं ब्रह्मचर्यं मे गुरवो ऽग्निश्च तोषिताः ॥ ६-११ ॥
 समाहितेन चीर्णानि सर्वाण्येव व्रतानि मे ।
 वायुभक्षोपवासश्च कुशलानि च यानि मे ॥ ६-१२ ॥

अनेन तपसा वेद्मि सर्वं परिचिकीर्षितम् ।
 सत्यमेतन्निबोध त्वं ध्रियते सत्यवानिति ॥ ६-१३ ॥
 शिष्य उवाच ।
 उपाध्यायस्य मे वक्राद्यथा वाक्यं विनिःसृतम् ।
 नैतज्जातु भवेन्मिथ्या तथा जीवति सत्यवान् ॥ ६-१४ ॥
 ऋषय ऊचुः ।
 यथास्य भार्या सावित्री सर्वैरेव सुलक्षणैः ।
 अवैधव्यकरैर्युक्ता तथा जीवति सत्यवान् ॥ ६-१५ ॥
 भारद्वाज उवाच ।
 यथास्य भार्या सावित्री तपसा च दमेन च ।
 आचारेण च संयुक्ता तथा जीवति सत्यवान् ॥ ६-१६ ॥
 दाल्भ्य उवाच ।
 यथा दृष्टिः प्रवृत्ता ते सावित्र्याश्च यथा व्रतम् ।
 गताहारमकृत्वा च तथा जीवति सत्यवान् ॥ ६-१७ ॥
 माण्डव्य उवाच ।
 यथा वदन्ति शान्तायां दिशि वै मृगपक्षिणः ।
 पार्थिवी च प्रवृत्तिस्ते तथा जीवति सत्यवान् ॥ ६-१८ ॥
 धौम्य उवाच ।
 सर्वैर्गुणैरुपेतस्ते यथा पुत्रो जनप्रियः ।

दीर्घायुर्लक्षणोपेतस्तथा जीवति सत्यवान् ॥ ६-१९ ॥
 मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 एवमाश्वासितस्तैस्तु सत्यवाग्भिस्तपस्विभिः ।
 तांस्तान्विगणयन्नर्थानवस्थित इवाभवत् ॥ ६-२० ॥
 ततो मुहूर्तात्सावित्री भर्त्रा सत्यवता सह ।
 आजगामाश्रमं रात्रौ प्रहृष्टा प्रविवेश ह ॥ ६-२१ ॥
 ब्राह्मणा ऊचुः ।
 पुत्रेण संगतं त्वाद्य चक्षुष्मन्तं निरीक्ष्य च ।
 सर्वे वयं वै पृच्छामो वृद्धिं ते पृथिवीपते ॥ ६-२२ ॥
 समागमेन पुत्रस्य सावित्र्या दशनिन च ।
 चक्षुषश्चात्मनो लाभात्त्रिभिर्दिष्ट्या विवर्धसे ॥ ६-२३ ॥
 सर्वैरस्माभिरुक्तं यत्तथा तन्नात्र संशयः ।
 भूयो भूयश्च वृद्धिस्ते क्षिप्रमेव भविष्यति ॥ ६-२४ ॥
 मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 ततो ऽग्निं तत्र संज्वालय द्विजास्ते सर्व एव हि ।
 उपासां चक्रिरे पार्थ द्युमत्सेनं महीपतिम् ॥ ६-२५ ॥
 शैल्या च सत्यवांश्चैव सावित्री चैकतः स्थिताः ।
 सर्वैस्तैरभ्यनुज्ञाता विशोकाः समुपाविशन् ॥ ६-२६ ॥
 ततो राज्ञा सहासीनाः सर्वे ते वनवासिनः ।

जातकौतूहलाः पार्थ पप्रच्छुर्नृपतेः सुतम् ॥ ६-२७ ॥
 प्रागेव नागतं कस्मात्सभार्येण त्वया विभो ।
 विरात्रे चागतं कस्मात्को ऽनुबन्धश्च ते ऽभवत् ॥ ६-२८ ॥
 संतापितः पिता माता वयं चैव नृपात्मज ।
 नाकस्मादिति जानीमस्तत्सर्वं वक्तुमर्हसि ॥ ६-२९ ॥
 सत्यवानुवाच ।
 पित्राहमभ्यनुज्ञातः सावित्रीसहितो गतः ।
 अथ मे ऽभूच्छिरोदुःखं वने काष्ठानि भिन्दतः ॥ ६-३० ॥
 सुप्तश्चाहं वेदनया चिरमित्युपलक्षये ।
 तावत्कालं च न मया सुप्तपूर्वं कदा चन ॥ ६-३१ ॥
 सर्वेषामेव भवतां संतापो मा भवेदिति ।
 अतो विरात्रागमनं नान्यदस्तीह कारणम् ॥ ६-३२ ॥
 गौतम उवाच ।
 अकस्माच्चक्षुषः प्राप्तिर्द्युमत्सेनस्य ते पितुः ।
 नास्य त्वं कारणं वेत्थ सावित्री वक्तुमर्हति ॥ ६-३३ ॥
 श्रोतुमिच्छामि सावित्रि त्वं हि वेत्थ परावरम् ।
 त्वां हि जानामि सावित्रि सावित्रीमिव तेजसा ॥ ६-३४ ॥
 त्वमत्र हेतुं जानीषे तस्मात्सत्यं निरुच्यताम् ।
 रहस्यं यदि ते नास्ति किञ्चिदत्र वदस्व नः ॥ ६-३५ ॥

सावित्र्युवाच ।
 एवमेतद्यथा वेत्थ संकल्पो नान्यथा हि वः ।
 न च किञ्चिद्रहस्यं मे श्रूयतां तथ्यमत्र यत् ॥ ६-३६ ॥
 मृत्युर्मे भर्तुराख्यातो नारदेन महात्मना ।
 स चाद्य दिवसः प्राप्तस्ततो नैनं जहाम्यहम् ॥ ६-३७ ॥
 सुप्तं चैनं यमः साक्षादुपागच्छत्सकिंकरः ।
 स एनमनयद्वद्धा दिशं पितृनिषेविताम् ॥ ६-३८ ॥
 अस्तौषं तमहं देवं सत्येन वचसा विभुम् ।
 पञ्च वै तेन मे दत्ता वराः शृणुत तान्मम ॥ ६-३९ ॥
 चक्षुषी च स्वराज्यं च द्वौ वरौ श्वशुरस्य मे ।
 लब्धं पितुः पुत्रशतं पुत्राणामात्मनः शतम् ॥ ६-४० ॥
 चतुर्वर्षशतायुर्मे भर्ता लब्धश्च सत्यवान् ।
 भर्तुर्हि जीवितार्थं तु मया चीर्णं स्थिरं व्रतम् ॥ ६-४१ ॥
 एतत्सत्यं मयाख्यातं कारणं विस्तरेण वः ।
 यथा वृत्तं सुखोदर्कामिदं दुःखं महन्मम ॥ ६-४२ ॥
 ऋषय ऊचुः ।
 निमज्जमानं व्यसनैरभिद्रुतं
 कुलं नरेन्द्रस्य तमोमये हृदे ।
 त्वया सुशीले धृतधर्मपुण्यया

समुद्धृतं साध्वि पुनः कुलीनया ॥ ६-४३ ॥
 मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 तथा प्रशस्य ह्यभिपूज्य चैव ते
 वरस्त्रियं तामृषयः समागताः ।
 नरेन्द्रमामन्त्रय सपुत्रमञ्जसा
 शिवेन जग्मुर्मुदिताः स्वमालयम् ॥ ६-४४ ॥

Chapter 7

मार्कण्डेय उवाच ।
 तस्यां रात्र्यां व्यतीतायामुदिते सूर्यमण्डले ।
 कृतपूर्वाह्निकाः सर्वे समेयुस्ते तपोधनाः ॥ ७-१ ॥
 तदेव सर्वं सावित्र्या महाभाग्यं महर्षयः ।
 द्युमत्सेनाय नातृप्यन्कथयन्तः पुनः पुनः ॥ ७-२ ॥
 ततः प्रकृतयः सर्वाः शाल्वेभ्यो ऽभ्यागता नृप ।
 आचल्युर्निहतं चैव स्वेनामात्येन तं नृपम् ॥ ७-३ ॥
 तं मन्त्रिणा हतं श्रुत्वा ससहायं सबान्धवम् ।
 न्यवेदयन्त्यथातत्त्वं विद्रुतं च द्विषद्वलम् ॥ ७-४ ॥
 ऐकमत्यं च सर्वस्य जनस्याथ नृपं प्रति ।
 सचक्षुर्वाप्यचक्षुर्वा स नो राजा भवत्विति ॥ ७-५ ॥
 अनेन निश्चयेनेह वयं प्रस्थापिता नृप ।

प्राप्तानीमानि यानानि चतुरङ्गं च ते बलम् ॥ ७-६ ॥
 प्रयाहि राजन्भद्रं ते घुष्टस्ते नगरे जयः ।
 अध्यास्स्व चिररात्राय पितृपैतामहं पदम् ॥ ७-७ ॥
 चक्षुष्मन्तं च तं दृष्ट्वा राजानं वपुषान्वितम् ।
 मूर्धाभिः पतिताः सर्वे विस्मयोत्फुल्ललोचनाः ॥ ७-८ ॥
 ततो ऽभिवाद्य तान्वृद्धान्द्विजानाश्रमवासिनः ।
 तैश्चाभिपूजितः सर्वैः प्रययौ नगरं प्रति ॥ ७-९ ॥
 शैब्या च सह सावित्र्या स्वास्तीर्णेन सुवर्चसा ।
 नरयुक्तेन यानेन प्रययौ सेनया वृता ॥ ७-१० ॥
 ततो ऽभिषिषिचुः प्रीत्या द्युमत्सेनं पुरोहिताः ।
 पुत्रं चास्य महात्मानं यौवराज्ये ऽभ्यषेचयन् ॥ ७-११ ॥
 ततः कालेन महता सावित्र्याः कीर्तिवर्धनम् ।

तद्वै पुत्रशतं जज्ञे शूराणामनिवर्तिनाम् ॥ ७-१२ ॥
 भ्रातृणां सोदराणां च तथैवास्याभवच्छतम् ।
 मद्राधिपस्याश्वपतेर्मालव्यां सुमहाबलम् ॥ ७-१३ ॥
 एवमात्मा पिता माता श्वश्रूः श्वशुर एव च ।
 भर्तुः कुलं च सावित्र्या सर्वं कृच्छ्रात्समुद्धृतम् ॥ ७-१४ ॥
 तथैवैषापि कल्याणी द्रौपदी शीलसंमता ।
 तारयिष्यति वः सर्वान्सावित्रीव कुलाङ्गना ॥ ७-१५ ॥
 वैशंपायन उवाच ।
 एवं स पाण्डवस्तेन अनुनीतो महात्मना ।
 विशोको विज्वरो राजन्काम्यके न्यवसत्तदा ॥ ७-१६ ॥
 यश्चेदं शृणुयाद्भक्त्या सावित्र्याख्यानमुत्तमन् ।
 स सुखी सर्वसिद्धार्थो न दुःखं प्राप्नुयान्नरः ॥ ७-१७ ॥

This Devanagari text was typeset with "Sanskrit 99c". This font for Classical Sanskrit contains additional ligatures which were manually inserted, e.g.

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For technical details please read the document <http://www.sanskritweb.net/itrans/sans99c.pdf>

2. English Translation

Chapter 1

Yudhishthira said, 'O mighty sage, I do not so much grieve for myself or these my brothers or the loss of my kingdom as I do for this daughter of Drupada. When we were afflicted at the game of the dice by those wicked-souled ones, it was Krishna that delivered us. And she was forcibly carried off from the forest by Jayadratha. Hast thou ever seen or heard of any chaste and exalted lady that resembleth this daughter of Drupada?'

Markandeya said, 'Listen, O king, how the exalted merit of chaste ladies, O Yudhishthira, was completely obtained by a princess named Savitri.

There was a king among the Madras, who was virtuous and highly pious. And he always ministered unto the Brahmanas, and was high-souled and firm in promise. And he was of subdued senses and given to sacrifices. And he was the foremost of givers, and was able, and beloved by both the citizens and the rural population. And the name of that lord of Earth was Ashvapati. And he was intent on the welfare of all beings.

And that forgiving (monarch) of truthful speech and subdued senses was without issue. And when he got old, he was stricken with grief at this. And with the object of raising offspring, he observed rigid vows and began to live upon frugal fare, having recourse to the Brahmacharya mode of life, and restraining his senses. And that best of kings, (daily) offering ten thousand oblations to the fire, recited Mantras in honour of Savitri and ate temperately at the sixth hour. And he passed eighteen years, practising such vows.

Then when the eighteen years were full, Savitri was pleased (with him). And O king, issuing with great delight, in embodied form, from the *Agnihotra* fire, the goddess showed herself to that king. And intent on conferring boons, she spoke these words unto the monarch, 'I have been

gratified, O king, with thy *Brahmacharya* practices, thy purity and self-restraint and observance of vows, and all thy endeavours and veneration! Do thou, O mighty king, O Ashvapati, ask for the boon that thou desirest! Thou ought, however, by no means show any disregard for virtue.'

Thereat Ashvapati said, 'It is with the desire of attaining virtue that I have been engaged in this task. O goddess, may many sons be born unto me worthy of my race! If thou art pleased with me, O goddess, I ask for this boon. The twice-born ones have assured me that great merit lieth in having offspring!'

Savitri replied, 'O king, having already learnt this thy intention, I had spoken unto that lord, the Grandsire, about thy sons. Through the favour granted by the Self-create, there shall speedily be born unto thee on earth a daughter of great energy. It behoveth thee not to make any reply. Well-pleased, I tell thee this at the command of the Grandsire.'

Markandeya said, 'Having accepted Savitri's words and saying, '*So be it!*' the king again gratified her and said, 'May this happen soon!' On Savitri vanishing away, the monarch entered his own city. And that hero began to live in his kingdom, ruling his subjects righteously. And when some time had elapsed, that king, observant of vows, begat offspring on his eldest queen engaged in the practice of virtue. And then, O bull of the Bharata race, the embryo in the womb of the princess of Malava increased like the lord of stars in the heavens during the lighted fortnight. And when the time came, she brought forth a daughter furnished with lotus-like eyes. And that best of monarchs, joyfully performed the usual ceremonies on her behalf. And as she had been bestowed with delight by the goddess Savitri by virtue of the oblations offered in honour of that goddess, both her father, and the Brahmanas named her Savitri. And the king's daughter grew like unto *Shree* herself in an embodied form. And in due time, that damsel attained her puberty.

And beholding that graceful maiden of slender waist and ample hips, and resembling a golden image, people thought, 'We have received a goddess.' And overpowered by her energy, none could wed that girl of eyes like lotus-leaves, and possessed of a burning splendour.'

'And it came to pass that once on the occasion of a *Parvan*, having fasted and bathed her head, she presented herself before the (family) deity and caused the Brahmanas to offer oblations with due rites to the sacrificial fire. And taking the flowers that had been offered to the god, that lady, beautiful as *Shree* herself, went to her high-souled sire. And having revered the feet of her father and offering him the flowers she had brought, that maiden of exceeding grace, with joined hands, stood at the side of the king. And seeing his own daughter resembling a celestial damsel arrived at puberty, and unsought by people, the king became sad. And the king said, 'Daughter, the time for bestowing thee is come! Yet none asketh thee. Do thou (therefore) thyself seek for a husband equal to thee in qualities! That person who may be desired by thee should be notified to me. Do thou choose for thy husband as thou listest. I shall bestow thee with deliberation. Do thou, O auspicious one, listen to me as I tell thee the words which I heard recited by the twice-born ones. The father that doth not bestow his daughter cometh by disgrace. And the husband that knoweth not his wife in her season meeteth with disgrace. And the son that doth not protect his mother when her husband is dead, also suffereth disgrace. Hearing these words of mine, do thou engage thyself in search of a husband. Do thou act in such a way that we may not be censured by the gods!'

Markandeya said, 'Having said these words to his daughter and his old counsellors, he instructed the attendants to follow her, saying,--*Go!* Thereat, bashfully bowing down unto her father's feet, the meek maid went out without hesitation, in compliance with the words of her sire. And ascending a golden car, she went to the delightful asylum of the royal sages, accompanied by her father's aged counsellors. There, O son, worshipping the feet of the aged ones, she gradually began to roam over all the woods. Thus the king's daughter distributing wealth in all sacred regions, ranged the various places belonging to the foremost of the twice-born ones.'

Chapter 2

Markandeya continued, 'On one occasion, O Bharata, when that king, the lord of the Madras, was seated with Narada in the midst of his court, engaged in conversation, Savitri, accompanied by the king's counsellors, came to her father's abode after having visited various sacred regions and asylums. And beholding her father seated with Narada, she worshipped the feet of both by bending down her head. And Narada then said, 'Whither had this thy daughter gone? And, O king, whence also doth she come? Why also dost thou not bestow her on a husband, now that she hath arrived at the age of puberty?' Ashvapati answered, saying, 'Surely it was on this very business that she had been sent, and she returneth now (from her search). Do thou, O celestial sage, listen, even from her as to the husband she hath chosen herself!'

Markandeya continued, 'Then the blessed maid, commanded by her father with the words,--*Relate everything in detail!*,--regarded those words of her sire as if they were those of a god, and spoke unto him thus, 'There was, amongst the Shalvas, a virtuous Kshatriya king known by the name of Dyumatsena. And it came to pass that in course of time he became blind. And that blind king possessed of wisdom had an only son. And it so happened that an old enemy dwelling in the vicinity, taking advantage of the king's mishap, deprived him of his kingdom. And thereupon the monarch, accompanied by his wife bearing a child on her breast, went into the woods. And having retired into the forests, he adopted great vows and began to practise ascetic austerities. And his son, born in the city, began to grow in the hermitage. That youth, fit to be my husband, I have accepted in my heart for my lord!'

At these words of hers, Narada said, 'Alas, O king, Savitri hath committed a great wrong, since, not knowing, she hath accepted for her lord this Satyavan of excellent qualities! His father speaketh the truth and his mother also is truthful in her speech. And it is for this that the Brahmanas have named the son Satyavan. In his childhood he took great delight in horses, and used to make horses of clay. And he used also to draw pictures of horses. And for this that youth is sometimes called by the name of *Citrashva*.'

The king then asked, 'And is prince Satyavan, who is devoted to his father, endued with energy and intelligence and forgiveness and courage?' Narada replied, saying, 'In energy Satyavan is like unto the sun, and in wisdom like unto Brihaspati! And he is brave like unto the lord of the celestials and forgiving like unto the Earth herself!'

Ashvapati then said, 'And is the prince Satyavan liberal in gifts and devoted to the Brahmanas? Is he handsome and magnanimous and lovely to behold?' Narada said, 'In bestowal of gifts according to his power, the mighty son of Dyumatsena is like unto Sankriti's son Rantideva. In truthfulness of speech and devotion unto Brahmanas, he is like Shibi, the son of Ushinara. And he is magnanimous like Yayati, and beautiful like the Moon. And in beauty of person he is like either of the twin Ashwins. And with senses under control, he is meek, and brave, and truthful! And with passion in subjection he is devoted to his friends, and free from malice and modest and patient. Indeed, briefly speaking, they that are possessed of great ascetic merit and are of exalted character say that he is always correct in his conduct and that honour is firmly seated on his brow.'

Hearing this, Ashvapati said, 'O reverend sage, thou tellest me that he is possessed of every virtue! Do thou now tell me his defects if, indeed, he hath any!' Narada then said, 'He hath one only defect that hath overwhelmed all his virtues. That defect is incapable of being conquered by even the greatest efforts. He hath only one defect, and no other. Within a year from this day, Satyavan, endued with a short life will cast off his body!'

Hearing these words of the sage, the king said, 'Come, O Savitri, go thou and choose another for thy lord, O beautiful damsel! That one great defect (in this youth) existeth, covering all his merits. The illustrious Narada honoured by even the gods, sayeth, that Satyavan will have to cast off his body within a year, his days being numbered!'

At these words of her father, Savitri said, 'The death can fall but once; a daughter can be given away but one; and once only can a person say, *I give away!* These three things can take place only once. Indeed, with a life short or long, possessed of virtues or bereft of them, I have, for once, selected my husband. Twice I shall not select. Having first settled

a thing mentally, it is expressed in words, and then it is carried out into practice. Of this my mind is an example!'

Narada then said, 'O best of men, the heart of thy daughter Savitri wavereth not! It is not possible by any means to make her swerve from this path of virtue! In no other person are those virtues that dwell in Satyavan. The bestowal of thy daughter, therefore, is approved by me!' The king said, 'What thou hast said, O illustrious one, should never be disobeyed, for thy words are true! And I shall act as thou hast said, since thou art my preceptor!'

Narada said, 'May the bestowal of thy daughter Savitri be attended with peace! I shall now depart. Blessed be all of ye!'

Markandeya continued, 'Having said this, Narada rose up into the sky and went to heaven. On the other hand, the king began to make preparations for his daughter's wedding!'

Chapter 3

Markandeya said, 'Having pondered over these words (of Narada) about his daughter's marriage, the king began to make arrangements about the nuptials. And summoning all the old Brahmanas, and *Ritwijas* together with the priests, he set out with his daughter on an auspicious day. And arriving at the asylum of Dyumatsena in the sacred forest, the king approached the royal sage on foot, accompanied by the twice-born ones. And there he beheld the blind monarch of great wisdom seated on a cushion of *Kusha* grass spread under *Shala* tree. And after duly reverencing the royal sage, the king in an humble speech introduced himself.

Thereupon, offering him the *Arghya*, a seat, and a cow, the monarch asked his royal guest,--*Wherefore is this visit?*--Thus addressed the king disclosed everything about his intentions and purpose with reference to Satyavan. And Ashvapati said, 'O royal sage, this beautiful girl is my daughter named Savitri. O thou versed in morality, do thou, agreeably to the customs of our order, take her from me as thy daughter-in-law!' Hearing these words, Dyumatsena said, 'Deprived of kingdom, and

taking up our abode in the woods, we are engaged in the practice of virtue as ascetics with regulated lives. Unworthy of a forest life, how will thy daughter, living in the sylvan asylum, bear this hardship?' Ashvapati said, 'When my daughter knoweth, as well as myself, that happiness and misery come and go (without either being stationary), such words as these are not fit to be used towards one like me! O king, I have come hither, having made up my mind! I have bowed to thee from friendship; it behoveth thee not, therefore, to destroy my hope! It behoveth thee not, also, to disregard me who, moved by love, have come to thee! Thou art my equal and fit for an alliance with me, as indeed, I am thy equal and fit for alliance with thee! Do thou, therefore, accept my daughter for thy daughter-in-law and the wife of the good Satyavan!' Hearing these words Dyumatsena said, 'Formerly I had desired an alliance with thee. But I hesitated, being subsequently deprived of my kingdom. Let this wish, therefore, that I had formerly entertained, be accomplished this very day. Thou art, indeed, a welcome guest to me!'

Then summoning all the twice-born ones residing in the hermitages of that forest, the two kings caused the union to take place with due rites. And having bestowed his daughter with suitable robes and ornaments, Ashvapati went back to his abode in great joy. And Satyavan, having obtained a wife possessed of every accomplishment, became highly glad, while she also rejoiced exceedingly upon having gained the husband after her own heart. And when her father had departed, she put off all her ornaments, and clad herself in barks and cloths dyed in red. And by her services and virtues, her tenderness and self-denial, and by her agreeable offices unto all, she pleased everybody. And she gratified her mother-in-law by attending to her person and by covering her with robes and ornaments. And she gratified her father-in-law by worshipping him as a god and controlling her speech. And she pleased her husband by her honeyed speeches, her skill in every kind of work, the evenness of her temper, and by the indications of her love in private. And thus, O Bharata, living in the asylum of those pious dwellers of the forest, they continued for some time to practise ascetic austerities. But the words spoken by Narada were present night and day in the mind of the sorrowful Savitri.'

Chapter 4

Markandeya said, 'At length, O king, after a long time had passed away, the hour that had been appointed for the death of Satyavan arrived. And as the words that had been spoken by Narada were ever present in the mind of Savitri, she had counted the days as they passed. And having ascertained that her husband would die on the fourth day following, the damsel fasted day and night, observing the *Triratna* vow. And hearing of her vow, the king became exceedingly sorrow and rising up soothed Savitri and said these words, 'This vow that thou hast begun to observe, O daughter of a king, is exceedingly hard; for it is extremely difficult to fast for three nights together!' And hearing these words, Savitri said, 'Thou needst not be sorry, O father! This vow I shall be able to observe! I have for certain undertaken this task with perseverance; and perseverance is the cause of the successful observance of vows.' And having listened to her, Dyumatsena said, 'I can by no means say unto thee, *Do thou break thy vow*. One like me should, on the contrary, say,-- *Do thou complete thy vow!*' And having said this to her, the high-minded Dyumatsena stopped.

And Savitri continuing to fast began to look (lean) like a wooden doll. And, O bull of the Bharata race, thinking that her husband would die on the morrow, the woe-stricken Savitri, observing a fast, spent that night in extreme anguish. And when the Sun had risen about a couple of hand Savitri thinking within herself--*To-day is that day*, finished her morning rites, and offered oblations to the flaming fire. And bowing down unto the aged Brahmanas, and her father-in-law, and mother-in-law, she stood before them with joined hands, concentrating her senses. And for the welfare of Savitri, all the ascetics dwelling in that hermitage, uttered the auspicious benediction that she should never suffer widowhood. And Savitri immersed in contemplation accepted those words of the ascetics, mentally saying,--*So be it!*--And the king's daughter, reflecting on those words of Narada, remained, expecting the hour and the moment.

Then, O best of the Bharatas, well-pleased, her father-in-law and mother-in-law said these words unto the princess seated in a corner, 'Thou hast completed the vow as prescribed. The time for thy meal hath now arrived; therefore, do thou what is proper!' Thereat Savitri said,

'Now that I have completed the purposed vow, I will eat when the Sun goes down. Even this is my heart's resolve and this my vow!'

Markandeya continued, 'And when Savitri had spoken thus about her meal, Satyavan, taking his axe upon his shoulders, set out for the woods. And at this, Savitri said unto her husband, 'It behoveth thee not to go alone! I will accompany thee. I cannot bear to be separated from thee!' Hearing these words of hers, Satyavan said, 'Thou hast never before repaired to the forest. And, O lady, the forest-paths are hard to pass! Besides thou hast been reduced by fast on account of thy vow. How wouldst thou, therefore, be able to walk on foot?' Thus addressed, Savitri said, 'I do not feel langour because of the fast, nor do I feel exhaustion. And I have made up my mind to go. It behoveth thee not, therefore, to prevent me!' At this, Satyavan said, 'If thou desirest to go, I will gratify that desire of thine. Do thou, however, take the permission of my parents, so that I may be guilty of no fault!'

Markandeya continued, 'Thus addressed by her lord, Savitri of high vows saluted her father-in-law and mother-in-law and addressed them, saying, 'This my husband goeth to the forest for procuring fruits. Permitted by my revered lady-mother and father-in-law, I will accompany him. For to-day I cannot bear to be separated from him. Thy son goeth out for the sake of the sacrificial fire and for his reverend superiors. He ought not, therefore, to be dissuaded. Indeed, he could be dissuaded if he went into the forest on any other errand. Do ye not prevent me! I will go into the forest with him. It is a little less than a year that I have not gone out of the asylum. Indeed, I am extremely desirous of beholding the blossoming woods!' Hearing these words Dyumatsena said, 'Since Savitri hath been bestowed by her father as my daughter-in-law, I do not remember that she hath ever spoken any words couching a request. Let my daughter-in-law, therefore, have her will in this matter. Do thou, however, O daughter, act in such a way that Satyavan's work may not be neglected!'

Markandeya continued, 'Having received the permission of both, the illustrious Savitri, departed with her lord, in seeming smiles although her heart was racked with grief. And that lady of large eyes went on, beholding picturesque and delightful woods inhabited by swarms of

peacocks. And Satyavan sweetly said unto Savitri, 'Behold these rivers of sacred currents and these excellent trees decked with flowers!' But the faultless Savitri continued to watch her lord in all his moods, and recollecting the words of the celestial sage, she considered her husband as already dead. And with heart cleft in twain, that damsel, replying to her lord, softly followed him expecting that hour.

Chapter 5

Markandeya said, 'The powerful Satyavan then, accompanied by his wife, plucked fruits and filled his wallet with them. And he then began to fell branches of trees. And as he was hewing them, he began to perspire. And in consequence of that exercise his head began to ache. And afflicted with toil, he approached his beloved wife, and addressed her, saying, 'O Savitri, owing to this hard exercise my head acheth, and all my limbs and my heart also are afflicted sorely! O thou of restrained speech, I think myself unwell, I feel as if my head is being pierced with numerous darts. Therefore, O auspicious lady, I wish to sleep, for I have not the power to stand.'

Hearing these words, Savitri quickly advancing, approached her husband, and sat down upon the ground, placing his head upon her lap. And that helpless lady, thinking of Narada's words, began to calculate the (appointed) division of the day, the hour, and the moment.

The next moment she saw a person clad in red attire with his head decked with a diadem. And his body was of large proportions and effulgent as the Sun. And he was of a darkish hue, had red eyes, carried a noose in his hand, and was dreadful to behold. And he was standing beside Satyavan and was steadfastly gazing at him. And seeing him, Savitri gently placed her husband's head on the ground, and rising suddenly, with a trembling heart, spake these words in distressful accents, 'Seeing this thy superhuman form, I take thee to be a deity. If thou will, tell me, O chief of the gods, who thou art and what also thou intendst to do!' Thereat, Yama replied, 'O Savitri, thou art ever devoted to thy husband, and thou art also endued with ascetic merit. It is for this reason that I hold converse with thee. Do thou, O auspicious one, know

me for Yama. This thy lord Satyavan, the son of a king, hath his days run out. I shall, therefore, take him away binding him in this noose. Know this to be my errand!' At these words Savitri said, 'I had heard that thy emissaries come to take away mortals, O worshipful one! Why then, O lord, hast thou come in person?'

Markandeya continued, 'Thus addressed by her, the illustrious lord of *Pitris*, with a view to oblige her, began to unfold to her truly all about his intentions. And Yama said, 'This prince is endued with virtues and beauty of person, and is a sea of accomplishments. He deserveth not to be borne away by my emissaries. Therefore is it that I have come personally.' Saying this, Yama by main force pulled out of the body of Satyavan, a person of the measure of the thumb, bound in noose and completely under subjection. And when Satyavan's life had thus been taken out, the body, deprived of breath, and shorn of lustre, and destitute of motion, became unsightly to behold. And binding Satyavan's vital essence, Yama proceeded in a southerly direction.

Thereupon, with heart overwhelmed in grief, the exalted Savitri, ever devoted to her lord and crowned with success in respect of her vows, began to follow Yama. And at this, Yama said, 'Desist, O Savitri! Go back, and perform the funeral obsequies of thy lord! Thou art freed from all thy obligations to thy lord. Thou hast come as far as it is possible to come'.

Savitri replied, 'Whither my husband is being carried, or whither he goeth of his own accord, I will follow him thither. This is the eternal custom. By virtue of my asceticism, of my regard for my superiors, of my affection for my lord, of my observance of vows, as well as of thy favour, my course is unimpeded. It hath been declared by wise men endued with true knowledge that by walking only seven paces with another, one contracteth a friendship with one's companion. Keeping that friendship (which I have contracted with thee) in view, I shall speak to thee something. Do thou listen to it. They that have not their souls under control, acquire not merit by leading the four successive modes of life, viz.,-- celibacy with study, domesticity, retirement into the woods, and renunciation of the world. That which is called religious merit is said to consist of true knowledge. The wise, therefore, have declared

religious merit to be the foremost of all things and not the passage through the four successive modes. By practising the duties of even one of these four modes agreeable to the directions of the wise, we have attained to true merit, and, therefore, we do not desire the second or the third mode, viz., celibacy with study or renunciation. It is for this again that the wise have declared religious merit to be the foremost of all things!'

Hearing these words of hers, Yama said, 'Do thou desist! I have been pleased with these words of thine couched in proper letters and accents, and based on reason. Do thou ask for a boon! Except the life of thy husband, O thou of faultless features, I will bestow on thee any boon that thou mayst solicit!'

Hearing these words, Savitri said, 'Deprived of his kingdom and bereft also of sight, my father-in-law leadeth a life of retirement in our sylvan asylum. Let that king through thy favour attain his eye-sight, and become strong 'like either fire or the Sun!'

Yama said, 'O thou of faultless features, I grant thee this boon! It will even be as thou hast said! It seems that thou art fatigued with thy journey. Do thou desist, therefore, and return! Suffer not thyself to be weary any longer!'

Savitri said, 'What weariness can I feel in the presence of my husband? The lot that is my husband's is certainly mine also. Whither thou carriest my husband, thither will I also repair! O chief of the celestials, do thou again listen to me! Even a single interview with the pious is highly desirable; friendship with them is still more so. And intercourse with the virtuous can never be fruitless. Therefore, one should live in the company of the righteous!'

Yama said, 'These words that thou hast spoken, so fraught with useful instruction, delight the heart and enhance the wisdom of even the learned. Therefore, O lady, solicit thou a second boon, except the life of Satyavan!'

Savitri said, 'Sometime before, my wise and intelligent father-in-law was deprived of his kingdom. May that monarch regain his kingdom.

And may that superior of mine never renounce his duties! Even this is the second boon that I solicit!

Then Yama said,--'The king shall soon regain his kingdom. Nor shall he ever fall off from his duties. Thus, O daughter of a king have I fulfilled thy desire. Do thou now desist! Return! Do not take any future trouble!'

Savitri said, 'Thou hast restrained all creatures by thy decrees, and it is by thy decrees that thou takest them away, not according to thy will. Therefore it is, O god, O divine one, that people call thee *Yama*! Do thou listen to the words that I say! The eternal duty of the good towards all creatures is never to injure them in thought, word, and deed, but to bear them love and give them their due. As regards this world, everything here is like this (husband of mine). Men are destitute of both devotion and skill. The good, however, show mercy to even their foes when these seek their protection.

Yama said, 'As water to the thirsty soul, so are these words uttered by thee to me! Therefore, do thou, O fair lady, if thou will, once again ask for any boon except Satyavan's life!'

At these words Savitri replied, 'That lord of earth, my father, is without sons. That he may have a hundred sons begotten of his loins, so that his line may be perpetuated, is the third boon I would ask of thee!'

Yama said, 'Thy sire, O auspicious lady, shall obtain a hundred illustrious sons, who will perpetuate and increase their father's race! Now, O daughter of a king, thou hast obtained thy wish. Do thou desist! Thou hast come far enough.'

Savitri said, 'Staying by the side of my husband, I am not conscious of the length of the way I have walked. Indeed, my mind rusheth to yet a longer way of. Do thou again, as thou goest on, listen to the words that I will presently utter! Thou art the powerful son of Vivasvat. It is for this that thou art called *Vaivasvata by the wise*. And, O lord, since thou dealest out equal law unto all created things, thou hast been designated the *Lord of justice*! One reposeth not, even in one's own self, the confidence that one doth in the righteous. Therefore, every one wisheth particularly for intimacy with the righteous. It is goodness of heart alone

that inspireth the confidence of all creatures. And it is for this that people rely particularly on the righteous.'

And hearing these words, Yama said, 'The words that thou utterest, O fair lady, I have not heard from any one save thee; I am highly pleased with this speech of thine. Except the life of Satyavan, solicit thou, therefore, a fourth boon, and then go thy way!'

Savitri then said, 'Both of me and Satyavan's loins, begotten by both of us, let there be a century of sons possessed of strength and prowess and capable of perpetuating our race! Even this is the fourth boon that I would beg of thee!'

Hearing these words of hers, Yama replied, 'Thou shalt, O lady, obtain a century of sons, possessed of strength and prowess, and causing thee great delight, O daughter of a king, let no more weariness be thine! Do thou desist! Thou hast already come too far!'

Thus addressed, Savitri said, 'They that are righteous always practise eternal morality! And the communion of the pious with the pious is never fruitless! Nor is there any danger to the pious from those that are pious. And verily it is the righteous who by their truth make the Sun move in the heaven. And it is the righteous that support the earth by their austerities! And, O king, it is the righteous upon whom both the past and the future depend! Therefore, they that are righteous, are never cheerless in the company of the righteous. Knowing this to be the eternal practice of the good and righteous, they that are righteous continue to do good to others without expecting any benefit in return. A good office is never thrown away on the good and virtuous. Neither interest nor dignity suffereth any injury by such an act. And since such conduct ever adheres to the righteous, the righteous often become the protectors of all.'

Hearing these words of hers, Yama replied, 'The more thou utterest such speeches that are pregnant with great import, full of honeyed phrases, instinct with morality, and agreeable to mind, the more is the respect that I feel for thee! O thou that art so devoted to thy lord, ask for some incomparable boon!'

Thus addressed, Savitri said, 'O bestower of honours, the boon thou hast already given me is incapable of accomplishment without union with my husband. Therefore, among other boons, I ask for this, may this Satyavan be restored to life! Deprived of my husband, I am as one dead! Without my husband, I do not wish for happiness. Without my husband, I do not wish for heaven itself. Without my husband, I do not wish for prosperity. Without my husband, I cannot make up my mind to live! Thou thyself hast bestowed on me the boon, namely, of a century of sons; yet thou takest away my husband! I ask for this boon, 'May Satyavan be restored to life, for by that thy words will be made true.'

Markandeya continued, 'Thereupon saying,--*So be it*,--Vivasvat's son, Yama, the dispenser of justice, untied his noose, and with cheerful heart said these words to Savitri, 'Thus, O auspicious and chaste lady, is thy husband freed by me! Thou wilt be able to take him back free from disease. And he will attain to success! And along with thee, he will attain a life of four hundred years. And celebrating sacrifices with due rites, he will achieve great fame in this world. And upon thee Satyavan will also beget a century of sons. And these Kshatriyas with their sons and grandsons will all be kings, and will always be famous in connection with thy name. And thy father also will beget a hundred sons on thy mother Malavi. And under the name of the *Malavas*, thy Kshatriya brothers, resembling the celestials, will be widely known along with their sons and daughters!'

And having bestowed these boons on Savitri and having thus made her desist, Yama departed for his abode. Savitri, after Yama had gone away, went back to the spot where her husband's ash-coloured corpse lay, and seeing her lord on the ground, she approached him, and taking hold of him, she placed his head on her lap and herself sat down on the ground. Then Satyavan regained his consciousness, and affectionately eyeing Savitri again and again, like one come home after a sojourn in a strange land, he addressed her thus, 'Alas, I have slept long! Wherefore didst thou not awake me? And where is that same sable person that was dragging me away?' At these words of his, Savitri said, 'Thou hast, O bull among men, slept long on my lap! That restrainer of creatures, the worshipful Yama, had gone away. Thou art refreshed, O blessed one,

and sleep hath forsaken thee, O son of a king! If thou art able, rise thou up! Behold, the night is deep!'

Markandeya continued, 'Having regained consciousness, Satyavan rose up like one who had enjoyed a sweet sleep, and seeing every side covered with woods, said, 'O girl of slender waist, I came with thee for procuring fruits. Then while I was cutting wood I felt a pain in my head. And on account of that intense pain about my head I was unable to stand for any length of time, and, therefore, I lay on thy lap and slept. All this, O auspicious lady, I remember. Then, as thou didst embrace me, sleep stole away my senses. I then saw that it was dark all around. In the midst of it I saw a person of exceeding effulgence. If thou knowest everything, do thou then, O girl of slender waist, tell me whether what I saw was only a dream or a reality!'

Thereupon, Savitri addressed him, saying, 'The night deepens. I shall, O prince, relate everything unto thee on the morrow. Arise, arise, may good betide thee! And, O thou of excellent vows, come and behold thy parents! The sun hath set a long while ago and the night deepens. Those rangers of the night, having frightful voices, are walking about in glee. And sounds are heard, proceeding from the denizens of the forest treading through the woods. These terrible shrieks of jackals that are issuing from the south and the east make my heart tremble (in fear)!'

Satyavan then said, 'Covered with deep darkness, the wilderness hath worn a dreadful aspect. Thou wilt, therefore, not be able to discern the tract, and consequently wilt not be able to go!' Then Savitri replied, 'In consequence of a conflagration having taken place in the forest today a withered tree standeth aflame, and the flames being stirred by the wind are discerned now and then. I shall fetch some fire and light these faggots around. Do thou dispel all anxiety. I will do all (this) if thou darest not go, for I find thee unwell. Nor wilt thou be able to discover the way through this forest enveloped in darkness. Tomorrow when the woods become visible, we will go hence, if thou please! If, O sinless one, it is thy wish, we shall pass this night even here!'

At these words of hers, Satyavan replied, 'The pain in my head is off; and I feel well in my limbs. With thy favour I wish to behold my father and mother. Never before did I return to the hermitage after the proper

time had passed away. Even before it is twilight my mother confineth me within the asylum. Even when I come out during the day, my parents become anxious on my account, and my father searcheth for me, together with all the inhabitants of the sylvan asylums. Before this, moved by deep grief, my father and mother had rebuked me many times and often, saying,--*Thou comest having tarried long!* I am thinking of the pass they have today come to on my account, for, surely, great grief will be theirs when they miss me. One night before this, the old couple, who love me dearly, wept from deep sorrow and said into me, 'Deprived of thee, O son, we cannot live for even a moment. As long as thou livest, so long, surely, we also will live. Thou art the crutch of these blind ones; on thee doth perpetuity of our race depend. On thee also depend our funeral cake, our fame and our descendants! My mother is old, and my father also is so. I am surely their crutch. If they see me not in the night, what, oh, will be their plight! I hate that slumber of mine for the sake of which my unoffending mother and my father have both been in trouble, and I myself also, am placed in such rending distress! Without my father and mother, I cannot bear to live. It is certain that by this time my blind father, his mind disconsolate with grief, is asking everyone of the inhabitants of the hermitage about me! I do not, O fair girl, grieve so much for myself as I do for my sire, and for my weak mother ever obedient to her lord! Surely, they will be afflicted with extreme anguish on account of me. I hold my life so long as they live. And I know that they should be maintained by me and that I should do only what is agreeable to them!'

Markandeya continued, 'Having said this, that virtuous youth who loved and revered his parents, afflicted with grief held up his arms and began to lament in accents of woe. And seeing her lord overwhelmed with sorrow the virtuous Savitri wiped away the tears from his eyes and said, 'If I have observed austerities, and have given away in charity, and have performed sacrifice, may this night be for the good of my father-in-law, mother-in-law and husband! I do not remember having told a single falsehood, even in jest. Let my father-in-law and mother-in-law hold their lives by virtue of the truth!' Satyavan said, 'I long for the sight of my father and mother! Therefore, O Savitri, proceed without delay. O beautiful damsel, I swear by my own self that if I find any evil to have

befallen my father and mother, I will not live. If thou hast any regard for virtue, if thou wishest me to live, if it is thy duty to do what is agreeable to me, proceed thou to the hermitage!' The beautiful Savitri then rose and tying up her hair, raised her husband in her arms. And Satyavan having risen, rubbed his limbs with his hands. And as he surveyed all around, his eyes fell upon his wallet. Then Savitri said unto him, 'Tomorrow thou mayst gather fruits. And I shall carry thy axe for thy ease.' Then hanging up the wallet upon the bough of a tree, and taking up the axe, she re-approached her husband. And that lady of beautiful thighs, placing her husband's left arm upon her left shoulder, and embracing him with her right arms, proceeded with elephantine gait. Then Satyavan said, 'O timid one, by virtue of habit, the (forest) paths are known to me. And further, by the light of the moon between the trees, I can see them. We have now reached the same path that we took in the morning for gathering fruits. Do thou, O auspicious one, proceed by the way that we had come: thou needst not any longer feel dubious about our path. Near that tract overgrown with *Palasha* tree, the way diverges into two. Do thou proceed along the path that lies to the north of it. I am now well and have got back my strength. I long to see my father and mother!' Saying this Satyavan hastily proceeded towards the hermitage.'

Chapter 6

Markandeya said, 'Meanwhile the mighty Dyumatsena, having regained his sight, could see everything. And when his vision grew clear he saw everything around him. And, O bull of the Bharata race, proceeding with his wife Shaibya to all the (neighbouring) asylums in search of his son, he became extremely distressed on his account. And that night the old couple went about searching in asylums, and rivers, and woods, and floods. And whenever they heard any sound, they stood rising their heads, anxiously thinking that their son was coming, and said, 'O yonder cometh Satyavan with Savitri!' And they rushed hither and thither like maniacs, their feet torn, cracked, wounded, and bleeding, pierced with thorns and *Kusha* blades.

Then all the Brahmanas dwelling in that hermitage came unto them, and surrounding them on all sides, comforted them, and brought them back to their own asylum. And there Dyumatsena with his wife surrounded by aged ascetics, was entertained with stories of monarchs of former times. And although that old couple desirous of seeing their son, was comforted, yet recollecting the youthful days of their son, they became exceedingly sorry. And afflicted with grief, they began to lament in piteous accents, saying, 'Alas, O son, alas, O chaste daughter-in-law, where are you?'

Then a truthful Brahmana of the name of Suvarcas spake unto them, saying, 'Considering the austerities, self-restraint, and behaviour of his wife Savitri, there can be no doubt that Satyavan liveth!'

And Gautama said, 'I have studied all the *Vedas* with their branches, and I have acquired great ascetic merit. And I have led a celibate existence, practising also the *Brahmacharya* mode of life. I have gratified Agni and my superiors. With rapt soul I have also observed all the vows: and I have according to the ordinance, frequently lived upon air alone. By virtue of this ascetic merit, I am cognisant of all the doings of others. Therefore, do thou take it for certain that Satyavan liveth.'

Thereupon his disciple said, 'The words that have fallen from the lips of my preceptor can never be false. Therefore, Satyavan surely liveth.'

And the *Rishi* said, 'Considering the auspicious marks that his wife Savitri beareth and all of which indicate immunity from widowhood, there can be no doubt that Satyavan liveth!'

And Bharadvaja said, 'Having regard to the ascetic merit, self-restraint, and conduct of his wife Savitri, there can be no doubt that Satyavan liveth.'

And Dalbhya said, 'Since thou hast regained thy sight, and since Savitri hath gone away after completion of the vow, without taking any food, there can be no doubt that Satyavan liveth.'

And Apastamba said, 'From the manner in which the voices of birds and wild animals are being heard through the stillness of the atmosphere on all sides, and from the fact also of thy having regained the use of thy

eyes, indicating thy usefulness for earthly purposes once more, there can be no doubt that Satyavan liveth.'

And Dhauma said, 'As thy son is graced with every virtue, and as he is the beloved of all, and as he is possessed of marks betokening a long life, there can be no doubt that Satyavan liveth.'

Markandeya continued, 'Thus cheered by those ascetics of truthful speech, Dyumatsena pondering over those points, attained a little ease. A little while after, Savitri with her husband Satyavan reached the hermitage during the night and entered it with a glad heart. The Brahmanas then said, 'Beholding this meeting with thy son, and thy restoration to eye-sight, we all wish thee well, O lord of earth. Thy meeting with thy son, the sight of thy daughter-in-law, and thy restoration to sight--constitute a threefold prosperity which thou hast gained. What we all have said must come to pass: there can be no doubt of this. Henceforth thou shalt rapidly grow in prosperity.'

Then, O Pritha's son, the twice-born ones lighted a fire and sat themselves down before king Dyumatsena. And Shaibya, and Satyavan, and Savitri who stood apart, their hearts free from grief, sat down with the permission of them all. Then, O Partha, seated with the monarch those dwellers of the woods, actuated by curiosity, asked the king's son, saying, 'Why didst thou not, O illustrious one, come back earlier with thy wife? Why hast thou come so late in the night? What obstacle prevented thee! We do not know, O son of a king, why thou hast caused such alarm to us, and to thy father and mother. It behoveth thee to tell us all about this.'

Thereupon, Satyavan said, 'With the permission of my father, I went to the woods with Savitri. There, as I was hewing wood in the forest, I felt a pain in my head. And in consequence of the pain, I fell into a deep sleep.--This is all that I remember. I had never slept so long before I have come so late at night, in order that ye might not grieve (on my account). There is no other reason for this.' Gautama then said, 'Thou knowest not then the cause of thy father's sudden restoration to sight. It, therefore, behoveth Savitri to relate it. I wish to hear it (from thee), for surely thou art conversant with the mysteries of good and evil. And, O Savitri, I know thee to be like the goddess Savitri herself in splendour.'

Thou must know the cause of this. Therefore, do thou relate it truly! If it should not be kept a secret, do thou unfold it unto us!

At these words of Gautama Savitri said, 'It is as ye surmise. Your desire shall surely not be unfulfilled. I have no secret to keep. Listen to the truth then! The high-souled Narada had predicted the death of my husband. To-day was the appointed time. I could not, therefore, bear to be separated from my husband's company. And after he had fallen asleep, Yama, accompanied by his messengers, presented himself before him, and tying him, began to take him away towards the region inhabited by the *Pitris*. Thereupon I began to praise that august god, with truthful words. And he granted me five boons, of which do ye hear from me! For my father-in-law I have obtained these two boons, viz., his restoration to sight as also to his kingdom. My father also hath obtained a hundred sons. And I myself have obtained a hundred sons. And my husband Satyavan hath obtained a life of four hundred years. It was for the sake of my husband's life that I had observed that vow. Thus have I narrated unto you in detail the cause by which this mighty misfortune of mine was afterwards turned into happiness.'

The *Rishis* said, 'O chaste lady of excellent disposition, observant of vows and endued with virtue, and sprung from an illustrious line, by thee hath the race of this foremost of kings, which was overwhelmed with calamities, and was sinking in an ocean of darkness, been rescued.'

Markandeya continued, 'Then having applauded and revered that best of women, those *Rishis* there assembled bade farewell to that foremost of kings as well as to his son. And having saluted them thus, they speedily went, in peace with cheerful hearts, to their respective abodes.'

Chapter 7

Markandeya continued, 'When the night had passed away, and the solar orb had risen, those ascetics, having performed their morning rites, assembled together. And although those mighty sages again and again spake unto Dyumatsena of the high fortune of Savitri, yet they were never satisfied. And it so happened, O king, that there came to that

hermitage a large body of people from Shalva. And they brought tidings of the enemy of Dyumatsena having been slain by his own minister. And they related unto him all that had happened, viz., how having heard that the usurper had been slain with all his friends and allies by his minister, his troops had all fled, and how all the subjects had become unanimous (on behalf of their legitimate king), saying, 'Whether possessed of sight or not, even he shall be our king!' And they said, 'We have been sent to thee in consequence of that resolve. This car of thine, and this army also consisting of four kinds of forces, have arrived for thee! Good betide thee, O King! Do thou come! Thou hast been proclaimed in the city. Do thou for ever occupy the station belonging to thy father and grand-father!'

And beholding the king possessed of sight and able-bodied, they bowed down their heads, their eyes expanded with wonder. Then having worshipped those old and Brahmanas dwelling in the hermitage and honoured by them in return, the king set out for his city. And surrounded by the soldiers, Shaibya also accompanied by Savitri, went in a vehicle furnished with shining sheets and borne on the shoulders of men. Then the priests with joyful hearts installed Dyumatsena on the throne with his high-souled son as prince-regent.

And after the lapse of a long time, Savitri gave birth to a century of sons, all warlike and unretreating from battle, and enhancing the fame of Shalva's race. And she also had a century of highly powerful uterine brothers born unto Ashvapati, the lord of the Madras, by Malavi. Thus, O son of Pritha, did Savitri raise from pitiable plight to high fortune, herself, and her father and mother, her father-in-law and mother-in-law, as also the race of her husband.

And like that gentle lady Savitri, the auspicious daughter of Drupada, endued with excellent character, will rescue you all.

Vaishampayana said, 'Thus exhorted by that high-souled sage, the son of Pandu, O king, with his mind free from anxiety, continued to live in the forest of Kamyaka. The man that listeneth with reverence to the excellent story of Savitri, attaineth to happiness, and success in everything, and never meeteth with misery!'