

The World Game

Sri Aurobindo, c.1934

(The Ishwara to the Ishwari)

In god-years yet unmeasured by a man's thought or by the earth's dance or the moon's spin
I have guarded the law of the Invisible for the sake of thy smile, O sweet;
While lives followed innumerable winged lives, as if birds crossing a wide sea,
I have watched on the path of the centuries for the light of thy running feet.

The earth's dancing with the sun in his fire-ropes, was it not thou circling my flame-soul,
The gazings of the moon in its nectar-joy were my look questing for thee through Space?
The world's haste and the racing of the tense mind and the long gallop of fleet years
Were my speed to arrive through the flux of things and to neighbour at last thy face.

The earth's seeking is mine and the immense scope of the slow aeons my heart's way;
For I follow a secret and sublime Will and the steps of thy Mother-might.
In the dim brute and the peering of man's brain and the calm sight in a god's eyes
It is I questing in Life's broken ways for thy laughter and love and light.

When Time moved not nor yet Space was unrolled wide, for thy game of the worlds I gave
Myself to thy delightful hands of power to govern me and move and drive;
To earth's dumbness I fell for thy desire's sport weaving my spirit stuff
In a million pattern-shapes of souls made with me alive.

The worlds are only a playfield of Thou-I and a hued masque of the Two-One,
I am in thee as thou art in me, O Love; we are closer than heart and breast;
From thee I leaped forth struck to a spirit spark, I mount back in the soul's fire;
To our motion the stars whirl in the swing of Time, our oneness is Nature's rest.

When Light first from the unconscious Immense burst to create nebula and sun
'Twas the meeting of our hands through the empty Night that enkindled the fateful blaze;
The huge systems abandoned their inert trance and this green crater of life rose
That we might look on each other form on form from the depths of a living gaze.

The mind travelled in its ranges tier on tier with its wide-eyed or its rapt thought,
My thought toiling laboured to know all myself in thee to our atoms and widths and deeps,
My all yearns to thy all to be held close, to the heart heart and to self self,
As a sea with a sea joins or limbs with limbs, and as waking's delight with sleep's.

When mind pinnaled is lost in thy Light-Vasts and the man drowns in the wide god,
Thy Truth shall ungirdle its golden flames and thy diamond whiteness blaze;
My souls lumined shall discover their joy-self, they shall clasp all in the near One,
And the sorrow of the heart shall turn to bliss and thy sweetness possess earth's days.

Then shall Life be thy arms drawing thy own clasped to thy breast's rapture or calm peace,
With thy joy for the spirit's immortal flame and thy peace for its deathless base.
Our eyes meeting the long love shut in deep eyes and our beings held fast and one,
I shall know that the game was well worth the toil whose end is thy divine embrace.