

EVAM INDRAJIT

By Badal Sircar

(PART-2)

SUMMARY :

The first act of the play begins with a frustrated writer, without any content to write his story. His mother appears on the stage, asking him to eat dinner, unable to understand the intensity of his struggle. He is inspired by Manasi and decides to write about four people among the audience- Amal Kumar Bose, Vimal Kumar Ghosh, Kamal Kumar Sen, and Nirmal Kumar. The name of the fourth person is not acceptable to the writer who asks him to disclose his real name. After urging a little, he reveals his name to be Indrajit and when inquired about him, hiding his identity, he states he is afraid. He expresses that he is scared to bring unrest by breaking the norm. Earlier that was not the case, but the loss of childhood and coming of age changed his priorities from happiness to peace. As the narration moves on he is revealed to be a common man, born, schooling, work, every aspect of his life reoccurs in the same place. A scene is depicted where the same conversation is repeated, but only Indrajit realizes. Indrajit talks to the writer and reveals his anguish towards the norms of the society and his desperate dreams to go away from this world. But he is stopped and bound by the thought of his mother, relationships and emotions. The narration then moves to the writer, who is an invariable part of his plot and he desires to write about the lives of these character with a heroine Manasi. Then he asks Indrajit about his interest in Manasi. He tries to correct the name initially, then accepts it to be Manasi. Indrajit starts to talk about his relation with Manasi, with whom he could talk and find meaning in those talks. Their relation is like every other relation. At a point they talk about the rules that stop women and give freedom to men. Indrajit's rebel character asks her to disobey the rules and when she refuses, he questions the nature of the people to worship the rules. His anger towards the rules gives a context to the Biblical reference to the forbidden Fruit of Knowledge, which reveals the absurdity behind these rules to him. The next scene shows the four original characters, waiting to go for an interview. They were asked to be there at eleven, while the interviewer came one hour late. A few minutes later they are joined by the writer, who had two interviews that clashed. He tells them his problems, after his marriage and his urgency to get a job because he married against his father's wishes and has also bought a flat. Every scene breaks off with Indrajit's mother asking him to eat, which shows the connection of the writer to his character.

The second act of the play occurs after a break of seven years. The characters Amal, Vimal and Kamal have settled down to the middle class life, with a job and family. All of them have a life where they perform the same task in the office, filing papers, stamping files and organizing files. They do not have a break from this routine. Here again this steady and futile lifestyle suffocates Indrajit who wants something outside all these customs. He is searching for something outside the real world. Also he has not married yet because Manasi wants more time and later he decides to go abroad. Realization of his futile search exhausts him. He decides to accept his fate and walks away from his dreams once again.

The third act of the play clearly reveals Indrajit's vision through a letter the writer receives. Indrajit writes about the life that goes in circles wherever he is and the worst part is that he knows about the world that goes round and round. At certain point in his life he pulls at the rope of hope to find a meaning to life but ends with a rope that is bitten off. He is then presented on stage with an idealistic approach to life. He cannot make any sense to things he has achieved in life and have thoughts of dying unable to find faith in life. When Manasi asks the writer about his story, he says he is at a point where the writer cannot continue, neither can he kill him nor can he put Indrajit into a plot that matters. The writer is again stuck, like he was at the beginning without a story. Indrajit comes to the stage and tells the writer that he married Manasi, but the writer does not agree. But it is true in his concept of life, because life has taught him, that there is not just one Manasi but many. It has made Indrajit one among Amal, Vimal and Kamal, just an ordinary man. He does meet his old friend Manasi, and tells her how there is no escape from this life of sorrow. Finally he accepts the shackles of the society and names himself 'Nirmal Kumar Rey' - an ordinary man with ordinary ambitions and an ordinary life. Recall that this is the exact name the writer does not accept at the beginning of the play.

Moving towards the end, we witness Indrajit and Manasi (his childhood friend and cousin) at their designated spot - near a tree in an empty plot of land. Indrajit is now mature, but the irksome question "why" still keeps him worried. He wants to know why we do the things we do and the way we do them. He wonders at the ineffectiveness of walking a path which does not have a beginning, end, or meaning. The Myth of Sisyphus is then invoked in the storyline, with the writer explaining to Indrajit the pointlessness of Sisyphus's condition. It is here that both - The reader and Indrajit - finally have a solution to the problem of life. The solution is to accept the pointlessness and the absurdity of life, and yet carry on with it. When there is a path, you have to walk on it. According to the writer, that is the meaning of life.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE SUMMARY :

The story of *Evam Indrajit* focuses on a writer, who narrates the story without ever being given a firm identity of his own. He struggles with writer's block, striving to write his play but falling short and unaware of the root causes. He has never experienced life in its most primal way, instead being focused on his own experience as a writer. As such, he doesn't have the material to write about, and instead focuses on the audience of the play. He attempts to write about them, but is frustrated there as well. He frequently becomes enraged and tears up his manuscripts. He finally finds inspiration in a woman named Manasi.

Like the writer, Manasi is not a character with her own characterization, but a representation. She represents the Indian counterpart of Carl Jung's concept of Anima. This refers to an entity that serves as a pointer to the collective consciousness. Both the main characters and their concept of identity is frequently questioned, especially the writer Indrajit. He changes his preferred name multiple times in the play, and frequently expresses discontent with his identity. His persona splits between three names, Amal, Kamal, and Vimal.

He feels compelled to write, even at the cost of neglecting important bodily functions that he needs to live. He is obsessed with seeking a purpose in life. The play focuses on his life, his love and obsession with Manasi, and his growing revolutionary leanings against society. However, soon the ruling class and their attempt to impose order on his life begin to crush his spirit. His three personalities, Amal, Kamal, and Vimal each play different roles in society and are played for laughter as they struggle against society. Indrajit, in his persona as the writer, continues to resist, but eventually he becomes convinced that there is no escape from society's clutches.

As the play reaches its final act, Indrajit attempts to seek meaning in exploring the world. He travels to London, but finds that world just as unsatisfying as the life he left behind. He soon finds himself contemplating suicide but decides he is incapable of this as well. The play ends without bringing his story to any sort of conclusion, as Indrajit comes to the realization that the past and present are two ends of a single rope. The play is ultimately about the futility of life and the roles we all play in society.