

Dichotomy of Freedom and Love

Story One

"Does, me being in love, corrupt my strife to be free? Or is my understanding any flawed?" - Bhagat singh mulled over his thoughts and his face lit up with excitement.

Then completed his sentence with an example like he found the key to his friend's heart. "*Amico! Amico!*" he mumbled as he wrote down rest of his letter. He had been playing his thoughts over and over questioning himself as he tried answering his friend, Sukhdev.

Exclaimed to himself, "*Giuseppe Mazzini!!, Amico, tu ci insegni ad amare!!*" - In tattered Italian.

Sukhdev had questioned his friend, Singh's commitment to revolution, since the suspicion brewed that Singh was in love with a woman in their circles. Sukhdev firmly believed, that nothing - not family, not love interest, not bad habits should hurdle the quest for freedom and the long awaited revolution.

The question starkly put - "What good was love to anyone before??"

Bhagat read to himself,

"To Mazzini it was. You must have read that after the utter failure and crushing defeat of his first rising he could not bear the misery and haunting ideas of his dead comrades. He would have gone mad or committed suicide but for one letter of a girl he loved. He would as strong as any one, nay stronger than all. As regards the moral status of love I may say that it in itself is nothing BUT PASSION, not an animal passion but a human one, and very sweet too. Love in itself can never be an animal passion. Love always elevates the character of man."

The question was not merely about love being a hurdle to revolution that HSRA was seeking. It is and was a question on the philosophy of life.

Story Two

There is a movie by name '*Ala Vaikunthapuram Lo*', two fellow commoners start working in a company that makes plastic boxes. Mr. Ramachandra steadily progresses into, a successful employee who is offered a chair on company's board. He is also offered the owner, Mr ARK's daughter's hand in marriage. Mr. Valmiki sees his career has become stagnant.

Incidentally, both of their wives are pregnant at the same time and are joined in the same hospital. Valmiki has grown steadily frustrated with Ramachandra's rise. He has, always pointed at Ramachandra's better financial background (which is never justified), as a reason for his rise. So Valmiki hatches a plan to swap the two children. That way, Ramachandra's real son, will grow in unprivileged household of Valmiki and his own son, will grow in an affluent environment and thus will have a great life that he himself missed.

As it turns out, Ramachandra's real son, Bantu - who thinks he is Valmiki son has always been trying to impress his father(Valmiki) but failed every time. Valmiki's real son, has received a generous amount attention and love from Ramachandra couple and Valmiki, who is now a Personal Manager to Ramachandra.

Some 25 years later, as it always happens in Indian movies, pass by (with all the disappointment and pain to Bantu). This is when Bantu discovers his real father is Ramachandra and not Valmiki. This is somehow the central theme of the movie for me. The conversation between Bantu and Valmiki.

Bantu is staring at Valmiki not hearing what he is telling him about how bad a son bantu has been all along, and how unfortunate not-so-special people are. Valmiki still does NOT know that Bantu already knows that he is not Valmiki's son. Valmiki keeps blabbering something about how unfortunate people are just destined to face unfortunate future.

Valmiki : "Will god stay silent looking at all this?" ... Looking at Bantu, who is just staring at Valmiki without a word asks : "Why this silence?"

To which Bantu slaps Valmiki hard!!.. Although Valmiki is fuming with ire, for this sudden reaction from Bantu, is not immediately shocked as a father would be. Valmiki is consumed by the anger and guilt. The guilt that he has knowingly denied an innocent child's need for his father's attention.

Bantu : "I am tired of listening to lies since childhood. Arent you tired of them? Actually you take a break.. Relax!!!"

Valmiki doesn't say a word, thinking through a myriad of possibilities that could have happened or that could happen. Finally begs Bantu to not reveal this to anyone. Bantu promises Valmiki, he wont sabotage Valmiki's real son's life. Then, Bantu stands up straight and happy with a glow on his face and a smile that never surfaced before.

Valmiki asks : "If you are not going to reveal any of this to anyone, why did you confront me? Why even let me know that you do your truth?"

To which, Bantu says : "I don't have to impress you! I have struggled hard to see a slight sign of love in your eyes towards me. Never understood why i couldn't!!"

"Now i am free Valmiki!! Free!! Free!!"

The story has many plot holes in its build, but the idea that is spot on is, the freedom that Bantu experiences and the bondage that his unreflected love has kept him in.

Conclusion

In both the stories, the protagonists or the inspiration for the protagonists have constantly sought for freedom. While they have defined their freedom, they have an acute understanding of love and have an unquestionable commitment to both their freedom and their version of love.

Addendum

For the ones who is interested in what happens of Bantu, he goes on to stay as Valmiki's son, but also works hard to earn his fortune(Chair in ARK's company), and also wins his lady love's hand.

If you are interested in who Giuseppe Mazzini was and why Indian revolutionaries were quoting him and thinking in terms of Italian revolution. Veer Savarkar, who was one of the first revolutionaries to have written a book on First war of Indian Independence of 1857. He uses he example of fight put up by Shivaji Maharaj and Giuseppe Mazzini for their own causes. Giuseppe Mazzini was later appropriated by Benito Mussolini, just like Dr. B. R. Ambedkar is by the political left in India.