

and a sudden pause, as if to gather an inward power. The voice would rise tremulously at first; the legs bowing outward and forward, the chest thrust out. Then it would come with all the explosive force of the compressed air in his lungs. The word "perish" would be drawn out so long it seemed it would never perish, or only with the collapse of his lungs. The people took to their eyes from the lustre in the singer's eyes, and the drops of tears that welled up from within; for they were dramatically moved. And they were abashed, and fluttered those white things in front of their faces, at the same time dabbing an eye and blowing softly in their noses in the stealth of semi-darkness, and in the dream of that other epoch of another world. And they were happy in the ooze of their wet eyes and in the dreaminess that was the other world.

CHAPTER VI

Kinships

There is a kinship between George and Solomon which lies in the past, which is fate. Fate that caused George's father to be a witness to the tragic death of Solomon's mother. Solomon wants to forget the past and live in the future. But Fate is not finite, it has no future and no past, no beginning and no end. The earth and man on the earth came after millions of years, and it'll be more untold millions before Man has changed his earthly form - in earthly death! It is the before-life, the after-life - the soul - which is Eternity. Fate! There are moments in our conscious existence which are purely of the physical world, and are finite; but even these ^{brief} moments add up to infinity. A house, a cat, a dog, are in themselves finite possessions, but taken in the aggregate they are infinite: from the smallest unit of existence - offshoot of the atom; to the biggest - the star!

And so with Time: From the smallest imperceptible unit, to the all absorbing one - the past and the future integrated in one unit of existence. The affinity and kinship between George and Solomon. Time and Fate! Time and fate are always with us. Thus spake Jehovah: I AM THAT I AM--The Past Present and Future.

In Solomon's little office late that night, after the last show, it was as if George had struck an intimate spring in ^{him} that dug the tip of the root that lay deep in the earth. Solomon lifted root and all until the whole tree - his life - lay exposed to George's eye. The spring that had been wound up and taut within him all these years, had suddenly snapped. The air was charged and heavy long after Solomon had ceased to speak. The silence of true kinship brooding between the two friends!

The short span of ten years that separates them is in Time no more than a wink of the eye, a mere flap of the eyelash. And as to their kinship with the numberless generations since cosmic dust gelled into stars and gave birth to them, this space in time for the two of them isn't much more than a wink.

A kinship that's ageless, George thought.