

This is a fictionalized story of Moreshwar Damle's account from Savarkar Smruti (Memories of Savarkar); Lakshmi Process Studio, Kolhapur; pages 10-11.

Considerate and Caring Savarkar

Savarkar had settled well into the Damle household. Generally, he retired to his room after dinner and did some writing for a couple of hours. Unfailingly, at about ten-thirty he strolled in the yard before retiring to bed. More often than not Moreshwar accompanied him.

There was lush greenery everywhere. The crickets chirruped; the trees rustled in the gentle breeze; running rain water tinkled over the rocks nearby—peaceful, so very peaceful. Savarkar breathed in deeply, enjoying his stroll. Mingling in this peace of nature were occasional shouts and laughter from the women.

“Arre Moreshwar,” asked Savarkar, “what’s going on there?”

“Where, Tatyarao?” Moreshwar looked around, puzzled.

“You don’t hear the laughter and shouts?”

“Oh, *that!*” said Moreshwar, light dawning upon him. “That’s the womenfolk filling the rainwater from the springs beyond. Can you hear the water tinkling?”—he cupped his ears. Savarkar nodded—“the next couple of months they’ll do that.”

“Oh, it’s hard work!”

“They’re used to it, Tatyarao,” replied Moreshwar breezily. “We need a lot of water for the house. Sometimes they are at it till midnight.”

“Hmm.”

Savarkar turned the corner of the house and followed the path to the springs. Lanterns hanging on posts gave dim light. Suddenly he peered in the gloom.

“Arre Moreshwar,” he exclaimed, “isn’t that Baya I see ahead?”

Baya was a seventy-year old relative of the Damle’s living with them.

Moreshwar peered, too. “Yes, yes it is!” he agreed.

“Good heavens! She is carrying that heavy pot full of water, and at her age!”

“She is used to it, Tatyarao.”

“Moreshwar,” commanded Savarkar, “hurry up and take the pot from her!”

“*Me . . . ?*” cried Moreshwar incredulously, pointing to his chest.

“Of course, you! There’s the poor old lady struggling with her heavy load, and here you are whiling away your time strolling—a big, strong boy like you!”

“But . . . but . . . that’s women’s wo—”

A look from Savarkar, and Moreshwar's sputtering came to a halt. The next minute, he was taking the load from Baya ignoring all her "No, no, Moroba" and "No, Bala, I can do it."

"Moreshwar," Savarkar called out, "make sure you do all her job. If you get tired, call me for help."

Poor Moreshwar, not only did he fill all the pots this night, but he did so on many other nights as well—and most certainly without asking Savarkar to help!

- Anurupa Cinar