An offering in the freedom pyre . . . !

Hi, Everyone! In the readers' journey through the *Burning for Freedom*, I want them to go through the same myriad of emotions as I did, as Savarkar's larger-than-life personality, his staunch principles, his amazing deeds, and the gross injustice, all unfold before their eyes.

Do forgive me, for I shall digress here for a moment. Talking of Savarkar's amazing deeds, do check out the link below. It gives an account I have written (Part I and II) of Savarkar's unbelievable escape from the porthole of the SS *Morea* on the morning of July 8, 1910.

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http://www.savarkar.org/en/armed-revolution/historic-leap-marseilles/savarkar-great-escape-recreated

Among what moved me terribly was Savarkar's breakdown in 1946, right from the first biography I read. It is mostly hushed up (I had my work cut out to collect the meager facts that are available.) I can understand why perfectly. There is so much undeserved and unwarranted mud-slinging—which I shall address one by one, in future posts—going on re Savarkar that those devoted to him do not want to add to the pot.

A mental breakdown—certainly in the years gone by and even, perhaps, today—is looked upon as a stigma by Indians in general. Which Savarkarite will want that period of Savarkar's life to be highlighted?

And *yet* I chose to do just that! For me Savarkar's breakdown is not a stigma. Never!

It was his ultimate offering on the freedom-pyre.

He ground himself to dust for love of his country, fighting for her (and then the country or rather her free Government burnt him to ashes . . . !) Not writing about it, would be belittling that, I felt. Given certain circumstances—and Savarkar's were certainly excruciatingly horrendous—*anyone's* mind can cave in. Let no one think they are immune!

The depth and strength of Savarkar's character lies in the fact that he pulled himself out of it—in a short three months period or so! *That* is very, *very* difficult to do.

That I was going to highlight it in my novel was definite.

But *how*?

Fortunately (if I may put it like that), I have personal experience of a very deeply hurting mind. I had to pluck out those emotions from my heart and soul to write the scenes.

A mental breakdown *cannot* be a pretty thing—to write about *Savarkar's* was a harrowing experience for me. I cried through the writing of it. I was quite an emotional wreck after it was written.

Some may think it was presumptuous of me to dare to peek into and write of Savarkar's mind, but as the writer of *Burning for Freedom*—a novel written to showcase Savarkar to the world—it was unavoidable.

Anurupa