



**LITERATURE: AN EARNEST ESCAPE INTO LIFE AND
NOT AN ESCAPE FROM LIFE**

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ABSTRACT

Literature being an art has been always questioned and requisitioned by innumerable and infinite scholars that have been constantly resulted into acquiring real realm of art generically and of literature specifically. It has been constantly compelled to go through the fire test and come out with more shining unlike earlier it had. Due to stained suspicions raised against it the stuff of art going through various tests has come out as a product useful to all and harmful to none. Consequently if art has become great, earned any esteem acquired any acuteness the credit goes to the unlimited and doubtful questions raised by the critics and more effectively to the fine constructive answers given by the friends and companions of art in order to acquire the real strength of it. The studied statement that 'Literature is not an escape from life but an escape into life' is in itself both a question and an answer too. Right from the days of Aristotle, Sidney, and Shelley till the modern men of mails each and every sensitive scholar has always tried to considerably visualize the genuine greatness of the godly creation called art and in underlining the use of it in our mortal life. It has been an escape into life being it tirelessly tried to unfetter life from the various shackles surrounded around it by the art haters. Due to its basic function of to dulce and to utile literature has been always proved to be an intimate and bosom associate of life. It has catered to all the needs of us aspiring to transform the earth into heaven, affliction into affluence, devil into deity, and dim into day light.

Keywords: Art, Literature, Dulce, Utile, Speaking Picture, Quest.

Art is an imaginative reconstruction of life by an artful artist who has always an eye for nature that visualizes beauty and truth in the violet beneath the mossy stone, loveliness in the clusters of daffodils and an ear for sound which listens to the small sound of innumerate infants of all the species, the beautiful buzzing of bees, the ruthless roaring of lions equally. Having sixth sense as gifted by God he is more equal in all the equals on the earth. He is a greatly gifted guide, a fine friend and pantheistic philosopher for regular reader. He in his gainful guise regularly and relentlessly reveals the inner state and desire of reader who is ashamed of to express it in reality by showing the mirror of life and thereby honestly heals



him of his severe syndrome. He innovatively and ingeniously assists each and every aspiration of his reader pertaining to the understanding and enjoyment of the text and gives blissful bliss to each mortal on the earth. The artist is always a skylark who always brings melody in life as acutely affirmed by a nineteenth century Romantic poet P. B. Shelley as:

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire
The blue deep thou wingest
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest (01)

The man of letters is always free and frank, innate and innocent, sensible and sensitive lucky and lovable. Though he soars high with the imaginary and invented wings his work has always a link and linkage with the soil that has begotten and brought him up. Ultimately we have to constructively comprehend his speaking picture i.e. his work not as an escape from life but as an integral and important part and parcel of human living. Being authentically his work a tower founded on the foundation of life, we cannot separate it from the base and evaluate it independently and individually. The parents matter a lot to the children and vice versa. The source of river is always considered while evaluating the holiness of it. The root always matters a lot for each and every one's survival. It unveils the fact more clearly than its growth into various branches. If not the statue it is the powerful pedestal that always affirms the authenticity of the whole statue with all the demeanors of the person whose statue it is as Shelley has unveiled in his 'Ozymandias' as:

And on the pedestal these words appear
My name is Ozymandias, king of kings
Look on my works, ye Mighty and despair! (02)

Similarly, the base on which literature has been always set up constantly speaks a lot about its nature and function. If the tower aspires to touch the heaven, the credit goes to the firm foundation on which it has been built. As a result we have to touch and feel the feet and then look at the face of every creation. As the whole body supplies the whole things required by a face and always keeps itself behind the curtain, reality provides a fine platform to literature and always resides behind the curtain. Ultimately, every literature is an escape into life. It is not an escape from life. Hence, all the parts and parcels of every creation have to be considered and art has to be freed from all the charges made by the scholars and researchers against it such as 'Art is merely an escape from life' and we have to strongly and stoutly answer to these remarkable charges made by Plato, Stephen Gosson and Peacock as art is quite an escape into life. It is a secondary heaven more beautiful and useful than the first one is created by the god himself. It is a universal, eternally endless and everlasting realm of gold.



It is more seen by the inward eye more specifically though it is unseen apparently by the external eyes. Thus, to the artist:

Heard melodies are sweet but those unheard are still sweeter (03)

Our life is quite dull and drab. It is a tale told by an idiot full of sound and fury and signifies nothing. It is full of spikes and spines and all we are bleeding after willingly or unwillingly falling on these innumerable ruthless thorns. We are the fallen angels who always aspire to go back to the heaven, to our origin. We are the Faustus who has a quest for infinite knowledge. Either we turn to the black magic or the literary magicians to slake our hunger for straight satisfaction. Being fallen on the thorns of life we sincerely and seriously try to seek the help of any godly genius who can lift us as:

..... a weave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life I bleed! (04)

An artist always helps us to transcend the horizon that every common soul feels too difficult in his real life. He himself is a messenger and witnesses variety of messages in the nice nature. He is quite instant in inspiring all the lovers of life to dote life by all means. Through his own example he provides a model for us. He loves first and allows us to copy his style as it is for receiving happiness. He nourishes us as our mother and teaches us as our father. He gives us a private place to shade our tears and thereby heals our heart. We are not ashamed to express our inner intent in the realm of art. Here, the artist is more natural than nature itself. He is an extreme climax of consciousness. He makes us to feel the full fathom of ocean. He takes us to the zenith's height. With him, our heart leaps up when we behold rainbow in the sky. Our heart with pleasure fills and dances with the daffodils. Out of ecstatic and elated state any common reader can thus suddenly and spontaneously utter:

From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody (05)

As a musician, the artist always tries to make our life musical and melodious. He always tunes our tuneless life. As a painter he fills colours in our sketches of life. He makes it minutely melodious. Our heart beats with the beating of life in literature before us. Like Faustus, we need not to sign a contract with the devil to fulfill our dreams and desires. Being literature an escape into life, we can see the outside image in the mirror in our hands though we are confined within four walls of drab reality like the Lady of Shallot in Tennyson's poem. Thus very surprisingly, though inside within the firm fortification of life, we are



outside of it and vice versa only with the presence of art and artist. Art always diminishes deadly lines for us and helps us to drink the glass of gaiety fully and finally.

The poet's head and heart are always attuned to nature and its gifts and thereby we obtain ecstasy, enjoyment and elation in our life. The principle of sheer equality has been always underlined in the creation of a creator. Thus, the poet praises the innocence of lamb and vividly wonders for the burning eyes of a brutal tiger simultaneously. Like God, he creates both the bright and dark picture of life very equally. We experience all our stages of life through the verses irrespective of our present state and age. The art moves us back and forth irrespective of our state. Thus the child can visualize his old age and the old man can experience his childhood again only with the help of art and artist. The artist glorifies the beginning as:

The Child is the father of Man,
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety (06)

These lines underscore the fact that each and every walk of human life is not indifferent to the artist. Rather he generates his speaking picture by making the familiar unfamiliar or vice versa. Rejecting the artificiality, he reaffirms the moral impulse in nature in the creation of his characters that are the part of the truth of humanity. Being a sage and master of life he always makes men wiser, better and happier. He dreams for an ideal state called 'pantiocracy'. He purifies and deepens our normal existence. He reforms and morally and ethically regenerates our spirit. He helps us to experience the bliss of solitude. With him,

Our heart with pleasure fills
And dances with the Daffodils (07)

The artist like wind always hides in the light of his own thought. However invisibly he supports the life at its every plight. Being he himself platinum brings together sulphur (reality) and oxygen (imagination) and forms sulphur-dioxide which itself is a fine fusion that is his creation which always aspires to enhance life and nothing else. He sings hued hymens unbidden till the world is wrought. Thus, his creation is not a mere photographic picture of Nature but something more than that. It idealizes all the elements that it beholds wherein lies the 'more' in literature for which literature has been awarded and rewarded all over the world. The ugly in life becomes beautiful in literature only due to the artist's relentless rigor to bliss life benevolently. It is the more in literature which makes it an escape into life. It becomes an addition of strangeness to beauty. It becomes a censure criticism of life just to beautify and bliss it. It becomes a spontaneous overflow of life. It becomes an imaginative reconstruction of life. This 'more' is the constructive contribution of the artist who



communicates his very fine and finicky vision. He always adds relevant things to life and deletes irrelevant things from life. He looks at life from his own angle and delivers his beautiful design. Hence, literature proves to be an escape into life being loved and liked by all in order to fulfill all our needs and necessities. It creates a foundation for us and assists us to touch the sky and feel the heaven which is otherwise totally impossible to the fallen angel. It aids us to return to our pious origin. Naturally, to call literature an escape from life will be an injustice the art and artist that is to the truth hunter, to the bliss bringer, to the moral master, to the solace seeker, to the perfect puritan, to the happy harbinger, to the heavenly healer, to the brilliant beautician. Thus every intellectual and social leader has to considerately consider and reconsider the accurate and active role of literature in our life and admit its strength calling it an escape into life and not an escape from life.

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