

Is There In Beauty, No Truth? (In Life Itself)

Is there in beauty, no truth? I write this question and give it an exquisite amount of time and energy in my limited and lame attempts to answer it. Intrinsic pulchritude is always evident in anything we see, think or imagine. Perhaps, this is why the answer to this question is so objective.

It has many opinions, shades, nuances and tones of unique thoughts. The standards of proof are up to an individual's interpretation of beauty. There are those who say it is fleeting. "Beauty is transitory," exclaim the cynics. They say it in a manner that bespeaks absolute truth. However, it is their truth.

Such a harshly spoken axiom can be cold and uninviting. It may still other minds from giving their own thoughts and ideals in defining it. Hence, it may be a closed argument. I disagree completely. Beauty survives.

(What follows is a story - a personal voyage - of love, heart, soul, and the ideals of beauty as envisaged by one man who has made that rare discovery of extending love to his precious soulmate.)

Her spangle was glittery. It commanded attention in her box of earthly treasures. It caught the shaft of white sunlight that morning, as it sent an array of diamond rainbows radiating around the room, sparkling and dazzling to my eye. That's precisely what attracted me to it. And to her. Her sparkling personality was like this tumbling and cascading glitter. The woman I saw in that moment was astoundingly gorgeous. My heart raced as I was captivated by her eyes.

Such refreshing candor brings great warmth to those who believe in the permanence of physical attractiveness. Ah, that is the "skin deep" notion, however. Excellence is much more layered than that. Adherents who claim the temporary nature of the thin veneer of beauty certainly must look inwardly and ask themselves: why does the search for truth exist? Is it to find beauty? As I have found in you? There are those who say that all good things must pass. Yes, but at the proper time.

What of the shine this bright bauble possesses? Do you still keep it close to your heart with the vestiges of a previous past? I wondered. Her mind read mine and replied quietly and firmly. Costume jewelry, she would chide me. She would say it was meaningless. "It is merely a small part of me. These are but tiny links to a past of a former love." Her eyes mesmerized mine. And her warmth caused my heart to skip a beat. She was indeed

*beautiful. The words of a favorite love song rang true:
"There is always someone for each of us, they say."*

I believed in her that day. And the many days that followed. We became inseparable. That was truth with a profound ring to it. Yet, as I told my dearest love (as she soon became), my ring to you is a symbol of permanence and of life itself.

I can think of several other life cycles that abound in nature. The growth and vibrancy of the green summer gives way to a hush falling upon the delicate rhythm of the season. For it transitions slowly into autumn. It is this quiet acceptance by all life in the forest of what is now, will cease to be in a tiny march of days.

Crimson, scarlet, yellows and browns paint the artist's palette so brilliantly. The ground is deep with colors. For just what has fallen must accept this as an end. A chilly wind rattles the branches and stems of powerful trees and simple flowers.

"I have been, and always shall be, your friend," she said to me. I replied gently to her, my love, your words comfort me. I realize profoundly, completely, overwhelmingly just how much love I hold in my heart for you. It has been unlocked by the energy in your soul. How much I have keenly felt entwined by yours sharing the Challenge of the Passing Years with

you. Those eyes of yours still found mine and elicited that same giddy excitement from years past.

Winter inevitably arrives, and with it comes the deep sleep of cold. Snows fly, and the deep winter of sleep blankets the land until it is woken from its self-imposed slumber. Your love awoke mine as well. This is beauty in its own right. The cycles of life that beckon gently with each promised spring and the nurture of living things form an ageless carpet of greens of every hue and shade. Shall I ask now, is there in truth, no beauty? The mother shall hold her child closely. As I have stood by your side, as your protector and your truest love.

I would laugh then. Reassured and comforted. The memories of a couple deliriously in love are always wonderful to look back upon. It defines who we are inside. And I loved her then as I do now. My dearest woman, I always called her. My better half. We watched those years unfurl together. Sharing so much and standing by her side. And it was too soon, that the quiet of a gentle night tore her away from me.

The father protects. The child thrives. And beauty survives. The cultural links, ritual activities, and heritage ideals are passed from parent to child. The mantle of family is worn like a royal cloak. Its fabric is beautifully woven with intricate designs of past, and future. What of today - right now? Each second, minute and hour are

so precious, so irretrievable, I must spend as much of them with you.

The fire burnt itself out. I was now alone. Where was its warmth? In the front of the stone hearth, within my reach, there was the spangle. I ignored it, and instead reached for the ring. It was sitting by several charred wood pieces; their embers long extinguished. I retrieved it from the fire.

The voice of my departed wife would have laughed at me in that moment if she were here. "It is a foolish trinket you save, my man. My spangle glittered once. But it was only in my mind." That was true. Its sparkling nature was indeed temporary. But her ring, the one I originally given to her, was not a foolish item. For it was in the shape of a heart and shiny to the core. It withstood the test of time and retained its beauty and its significance.

The ever-present present is beheld with curiosity, wonder, and the search for truth. Our lifelong quest for truth is concomitant with certitude and the acquisition of wisdom. For this search really is the search for beauty. You were firmly placed within my path during this quest.

Your heart, mind and soul were the most beautiful objects I had ever seen. For they are part and parcel of life itself. I handled them gently and with exquisite

care. Look what you've returned to me! A gift as precious as your heart - your love from your mind. As you were then, are now, and my thoughts of you will continue to be. For I was so fortunate to have found them in you.

The sparkle was gone from the jewels which originally caught my eye. All had vaporized in the chimney corner, save one. It had managed to survive the inferno. How? I do not know. My eyes widened at the epiphany of thoughts in that instant. At that point, then, I understood. Completely. How deeply my wife loved me in return. The spangle was as black as coal.
