

A note on "The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho

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"when you really want something to happen, the whole universe will conspire so that your wish comes true"

The story is of an Andalusian shepherd boy named Santiago, to find treasure which he had in a recurring dream, and his journey to the Pyramids of Egypt. The story is motivated by the way Paulo lived after dropping out from law school and living as a hippie [1] while using drugs. The boy Santiago found the divine truth about his dreams from a Gypsy fortune teller that it was prophecy and the boy would discover treasure in the Egyptian Pyramids. This shows that there is dreams in the life of every person, and one should choose a path to fulfill his/her dreams.

In his early journey, he meets the old king of Salem, Melchizedek [2] who tells him to sell his sheep in order to fulfill his dream to travel to Egypt. The King is perhaps from the supernatural realm of reality. He is the wise man, who is very experienced to say his own quotes. When Santiago arrived Africa, he was robbed by his so-called guide who claimed that he would take him to the Pyramids. Santiago saw a baker when he arrived to Africa. The difference between a baker and a shepherd is that, the baker has scarified his dream to get in his own feet and after becoming stable and earning a decent amount of money, he would pursue his dreams. One should first be a baker and then a shepherd. It is said in the story that baker had more responsibilities than shepherd. The society depends on the baker more than shepherd. One could be a baker and a shepherd in this world at the same time, for example, one might need to take a break from the very grueling work that he does so that he can regain the energy by the help of travelling, I.e., becoming shepherd.

When Santiago arrived Africa, his so-called guide robs him who had claimed that he would take Santiago to the Pyramids. This shows that there are a lot of wolves in the cruel world who are disguised in the form of sheep. One should always make fair judgement before trusting anyone in the wild. If Santiago was a little bit experienced, i.e., been a baker for a while and then went to fulfill his dreams, he would have known the intent of every person

by now. In the story, the shopkeeper was not letting Santiago to go with his so-called friend who robs him instead. This shows that one should first gain experience and then go out in the real world, since there are various people with different intent and motives in this world who would not step back to harm you.

He then follows a path of working his own under a crystal merchant to gain stability and money for his journey of going to the pyramids. The boy meets an Englishman who has come to search of an alchemist and continues his travel with the new companion. Santiago falls in love with an Arabian girl named Fatima to whom he proposes to marry. She promises to marry him only after he completes his own dreams. This shows that true love would wait, and sacrificing one's own goal for love is meaningless. There are people in this world who makes false promises, and this would validate the promise when time comes. I have also seen several people wasting time in love thinking that they are investing time and at the end nothing lasts, only regrets (the problem with the current generation). In the present context, it is also true perhaps that people are getting a lot of opportunity through social media and perhaps are getting confused which one to choose after investing time, and for this reason, the purity of love is degrading.

The both boy then comes across an alchemist who teaches him to realize his true self. It is hard to find one true self in this modern world, when people are distracted by various things in life. The society wants you to be something, your family wants you to be something and you yourself want to do something else. Even from my perspective it is hard to find the thing which you really like to do. For example, you might like doing something, but after overdoing it, you might get succumbed to the monotony of the same thing over and over again. Some people spend their whole life in finding one's own self.

The story then continues, they risk a journey to the territory of warring tribes and he turned himself into a simoom (dry dust-laden wind) before he was allowed to proceed into the warring tribe. This shows that there are supernatural powers within oneself. I have heard that when Tansen [3] used to sing it began to rain. I have even heard that Buddha [4] used to teleport. We do believe in gods, and heard of their supernatural powers. It might be true that in certain cases, when you begin to realize your own self, you might become too much powerful and leave the realm of reality. People doesn't believe these things, but they are not aware that science cannot explain everything. There is science in one side and belied in another side. But trust me this belief thing has much more potential and can do much more unnatural thing that you can think of. Think of so many UFO citing [5]. There will be too many things that you cannot explain. Think of this [6].

Let's move on to the story, when he began digging at the pyramids, he was robbed once again and accidentally he learned from the thief's leader that the treasure he was searching was buried near the old church where he had

his original dream. This shows that one had found true piece in oneself. One might search for something which he is missing his whole life, later to realize that it was with him his whole life.

References

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