

Lesson 24
Beauty
美

First listen and then answer the following question.
听录音，然后回答以下问题。

What do glimpses of beauty, either in nature or art, often suggest to the human mind?

A young man sees a sunset and, unable to understand or to express the emotion that it rouses in him, concludes that it must be the gateway to world that lies beyond. It is difficult for any of us in moments of intense aesthetic experience to resist the suggestion that we are catching a glimpse of a light that shines down to us from a different realm of existence, different and, because the experience is intensely moving, in some way higher. And, though the gleams blind and dazzle, yet do they convey a hint of beauty and serenity greater than we have known or imagined. Greater too than we can describe; for language, which was invented to convey the meanings of this world, cannot readily be fitted to the uses of another.

That all great has this power of suggesting a world beyond is undeniable. In some moods, Nature shares it. There is no sky in June so blue that it does not point forward to a bluer, no sunset so beautiful that it does not waken the vision of a greater beauty, a vision which passes before it is fully glimpsed, and in passing leaves and indefinable longing and regret. But, if this world is not merely a bad joke, life a vulgar flare amid the cool radiance of the stars, and existence an empty laugh braying across the mysteries; if these intimations of a something behind and beyond are not evil humour born of indigestion, or whimsies sent by the devil to mock and madden us. if, in a word, beauty means something, yet we must not seek to interpret the meaning. If we glimpse the unutterable, it is unwise to try to utter it, nor should we seek to invest with significance that which we cannot grasp. Beauty in terms of our human meanings is meaningless.

C. E. M. JOAD Pieces of Mind

New words and expressions 生词和短语

- intense
- adj. 强烈的
- aesthetic
- adj. 审美的
- realm
- n. 世界
- serenity
- n. 静谧
- undeniable
- adj. 不可否认的
- indefinable
- adj. 模糊不清的
- vulgar
- adj. 平庸的
- radiance
- n. 发光
- intimation
- n. 暗示

unutterable

adj. 不可言传的

invest

v. 赋予

参考译文

一个年轻人看到日落，由于无法理解和表达日落在心中唤起的激情，便得出结论：日落处想必是通往遥远世界的大门。无论是谁，在强烈感受到美的时刻，心中都不禁油生一种遐想：我们似乎瞥见从另一个世界射向我们的一线光芒，那个世界不仅不同于我们这个世界，而且由于美感的强烈感染，在某些方面比我们这个世界更美好。虽然这光芒令人眼花缭乱，但它确实给予我们一种不曾经历和无法想象的美感和静谧的启示。这种美感和静谧是我们无法描述的，因为我们发明的语言是用来描述这个世界的含义，不能随便拿来描述另一个世界。

不可否认，一切伟大的艺术都具有使人遐想到进入天外世界的魅力。在某种状态下，大自然也有这种魅力。六月蔚蓝的天空总使人遥想一个更加蔚蓝的苍穹；美丽的落日总会引起一个更加绚丽的景象未及饱览便一闪即逝，并在消逝中给人留下不可名状的渴望和惆怅。如果这个世界不只是一个拙劣的恶作剧，如果人生不只是群星寒光中平凡的一闪，如果存在不只是对神秘事物的一种空虚的笑声，如果某种玄妙事物的暗示不是消化不良引起的邪恶情绪，也不是魔鬼为了捉弄我们，使我们发狂而送给我们的邪念，一句话，如果美有某种意义的话，我闪千万不要去阐明它的意义。如果我瞥见了只可意会不可言传的事物，企图把它说出来，那上不明智的；对于我们不理解的事物，我们也不应该去赋予它某种意义。用对我们人类有意义的词解释美是没有意义的。