

A Fable by Mark Twain

Often, people tend to analyze situations and make judgments based on how they perceive them. It is not mostly about reality, and feelings take center stage. In this story by Mark Twain, it is evident that there are many obstacles towards the realities that exist, and it is possible to interpret one thing in different ways depending on the blockages that exist between the self and the mirror of imaginations. More so, the truth regarding about a particular issue can significantly change across people since understanding, interpretation, and perception is entirely different.

In A Fable, Mark Twain gives an illustration of how a single concept has different meanings according to situations and the characters involved. In details, the author describes an artist who painted a beautiful picture and placed it adjacent to a mirror to be seeing it through reflection. In a way, it was meant to double the distance and make it more lovely (Twain 1). As a case in an animal farm, the animals heard about the story through the housecat and developed an in interest to know more about the painting. Indeed, the concept of beauty and attractiveness interpreted differently in the animals, and the need to ascertain the case became a necessity more than an option.

According to the cat, the painting was beautiful. As an intelligent animal, the cat could stand a distant to the mirror and see the art and its fascination. Even in the description, the cat was very particular about what it experienced. "It is a flat thing, marvelously flat, enchantingly flat and

elegant (Twain 3).” Moreover, it was beautiful as the cat described it to other animals. However, the situation changed when other animals got involved. They, first of all, wanted to know what made the painting look beautiful and others such as the cow could not fathom even what the mirror entailed.

Regarding that, there was a need for the animals to discover this experience by close observation. In fact, the ass had developed doubts over the cat’s description of the scenario in that the mirror was “a hole in the wall” where an animal could look into it and see the picture (Twain 6-7). The suspicion grew about the situation to a point where the ass concluded that the cat was lying. As a result, the best way was for the animals to visit the place and ascertain the case by themselves.

Unfortunately, no animal described the painting as the cat. In fact, no animal saw the picture. As Mark Twain puts it, the animals stood in between the picture and the mirror, which means that what they saw were their images. The ass saw itself, and the elephant saw its image. Similarly, the camel, the tiger, and the leopard as well only saw their self-likenesses. But who was wrong? It all but depends on what each animal see, which was the truth in individual capacities. In fact, although there was an element of lies in the subject due to the way the cat had put the initial story, it is justified to deduce that no animal was wrong.

From this narrative, several issues surface as morals. Firstly, judgments are often personal. There is a possibility to judge an entire situation depending on the outcome of one observation which is wrong. Secondly, it is essential to make comparisons in search of proof. It is unfortunate that the animals were not interested to know how the cat

arrived at its answer. Indeed, if they probed, there is a possibility that they could have seen their faulty reasoning. Thirdly, it is possible for people to be their self-blockages in the view of reality. The positioning of the animals prevented all from seeing the reality.

In winding up, this case by Mark Twain connects very well with what happens to many people in real life scenarios. In most cases, people usually judge, perceive or condemn an entire case due to the outcome of a particular subject. As observed in the narrative, all animals concluded there was no painting because they only saw their images. In life as well, some blockages stand in between the realities and the mirrors of imaginations. They prevent a person from getting the truth. As a result, it is essential to analyze a situation in more than one dimension before making any conclusion.

References

Twain, Mark. *A Fable*. UNZ.ORG. n.d. Retrieved from <http://www.unz.org/Pub/Harpers-1909dec-00070?View=PDF>

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