Topic：A Journey of Life—The Knight in Rusty Armor
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I. Introduction

People living in the world are busy at many things, like their business, learning and so many things are waiting for them to do. As time goes by, we all forget to how to love and tell from whether one thing is right or wrong even forget to keep our bodies healthy. We all lose our true self. We are so busy that we always forget to stop our steps and listen to our heart. The knight in this story presented exactly the situation common in this world. He was busy rescuing fair damsels in distress and slaying dragons around the world. He always wore his shining armor and rode off in any direction. Though he strove to be the number one knight around the kingdom, he forgot one thing which is the most important—stopping for a while and listening to what his heart wants to say. Now, let us follow the author's steps and start to explore the journey of the knight.

II. The Summary of The Story

Once upon a time, there was a knight who was busy saving princesses all around and never put off his armor because he wanted to be ready for his next mission any time. As time past, the knight's wife, son and even himself did not remember what he looked like under the armor. His wife and son finally chose to leave him only because he could not take off his armor for them.

Many times later, he had forgotten how to love with our heart and how to get along with people around him. The knight was forced to face the same problem. But were he willing to do so? Was is the result he wanted eventually? The knight had not taken off his armor for a long time. After a period of time, he had forgotten how to love with his heart and how to get along with people around him.

Therefore, we would follow Robert Fisher's steps and started the journey of life with the knight in this story. Going through the path of truth, meet the greatest magician, Merlin and ask some help of him. We would come to three different castles— The Castle of Silence, The Castle of Knowledge and The Castle of Will and Daring. Finally, we would come to the summit of truth to retrieve everything we lost earlier. This journey seemed easy, but during the journey, the difficulties to be faced were unknown. Now, let us follow Robert Fisher's steps and begin the journey of exploring our mind!

III. Inspirations Throughout the Story

As time goes by, we have also put the unseen armor on us for a very very long time.
Just like the knight in this story. At the end, the knight and we will wholly forget to love, appreciate with our heart and even how to get close to the nature. So in order not to forget the things above, we have to learn them again from now on. Everything has to come again so that we can realize what is beneficial for us and what is harmful for us. In this section, the inspirations I got from reading this book will be presented. The inspirations are arranged according to the journey and in each part of the journey, I will express the feelings that I gained from the difficulties the knight faced.

3-1 . The Path of Truth

3-1-1 Try to Know and Accept Yourself

Everyone is born to have something to do. We are living just for ourselves. No matter how people around us think of us and no matter what they consider we are, we should do what we have to do and love who we are. “A person cannot run and also learn. He must stay in one place for a while.” (1) Once we step on the path of truth, we must know one thing: No matter how difficult the journey is, we cannot give up halfway, or we may not know the truth in our heart forever.

3-1-2. Take The First Step Toward Getting Out of Your Armor

The first step we should learn is to care about everything around us. Try to care about people around us such as the lovers kissing each other at the corner, the children playing in the park and the olds taking a rest on the bench in the park. These are all the things we can care about. Pay attention to a warmth of a kiss, a fragrance making us happy or a beautiful melody. Once we can start to notice something in our lives, see the differences within ourselves, we will see the differences in other forms of life. “It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; and what is essential is invisible to the eye.” (2) Don't forget to use our heart to understand and feel everything around us, and around the world.

3-2 . The Castle of Knowledge

3-2-1 . Try to Keep Ourselves Silent

Most people are like the knight, had talked so much all their lives to keep themselves from feeling alone. But few people know that keeping ourselves silent and listen to our heart are such important thing. Besides finishing our business and fulfilling our careers
and goals, should we stop for a while and listen to what our hearts want to tell us and what our hearts want us to do carefully. “We set up barriers to protect who we think we are. Then one day we get stuck behind the barriers, and we can’t get out.”(3) In Saint-Exupéry’s book *Le Petit Prince (The Little Prince)*, the little prince said, “the eyes are blind. One must look with the heart…….”(4) Sometimes, our eyes are as blind as what the little prince said. Therefore, we can’t see the truth clearly. Our hearts are as clear as children because when we are born to the world, we do not have any considerations. Everything is just like a piece of paper. But as time goes by, we are growing up day by day. We have some considerations in our mind. But we are making our heart blinder and blinder at the same time. At last, we lose the ability of judging which is right, and which is wrong. So, try to keep ourselves silent and our hearts clear so that we can tell the truths from the faults in the world.

3-2-2. Enjoy What We Live in The Present

Many people are always wasting their time thinking about their glorious past because it was their great achievements; however, the outstanding achievements were all in the past. Whatever we did before or whatever happened to us, and whether these memories are good or bad, they were all just our memories. “Time waits for no men.” We should not waste our time on recalling the past. No matter how we feel regretful about our past, we never have the chance and the ability to change our past. Instead, we should enjoy what we have and what we live in the present. “Life will be a party for you, a grand festival because life is the moment we’re living right now.”(5) Only quit our past, we can more close to our future.

3-3. The Castle of Knowledge

3-3-1. Comparing “Need” and “Love”

This is the first question the knight and us in the real world have to face and find out the answer in the castle of knowledge. The knight in the story may love his wife, Juliet and his son, Christopher, but maybe he never consider the love for them is based on need. We, living in the world, usually take other’s pay and love to us for granted. At the end, we do not know what need and love are exactly like. We became the people without love in our heart gradually. We need to ask ourselves whether we have taken love for granted for love can be extended but can not be measured.

3-3-2. Learn to Love Ourselves
“You can love others only to the extent that you love yourself.” (6) The magician, Merlin, points out the important attitude we should always keep in mind. The more we learn to love ourselves, the more we will know our real feelings from the heart. There is a mirror in the castle of knowledge. It is not an ordinary mirror. “It doesn’t show what you look like. It shows what you really like.” (7) Everyone has a mirror which is able to see what we really like and what we really think about in our mind. Everyone in the world has his/her own characteristics which are attractive and special. Because we are a single individual, we do not follow others’ thought to live. We belong to ourselves, not belong to others. So, we have to learn to love and live for ourselves. What we have to do in the present is being ourselves.

3-4. The Castle of Will and Daring

Within the journey, the knight finally learns the meanings of what the great magician, Merlin said, “Self-Knowledge can kill the Dragon of Fear and Doubt.” (8) Sometimes, we have fear and doubt in our hearts. But how should we do to overcome the dragon of fear and doubt in our mind? As Merlin said, we must have self-knowledge. We have to clearly know what we are doing, what we should do, and what our real feeling is. Even though we still have fear and doubt, the more self-knowledge we have, the more possible that we can overcome the fear and doubt in our mind.

3-5. The Summit of Truth

Now, the journey of life is coming to an end. In the summit of truth, when the knight let go and plunged down, down into the infinite depth of his memories, he recalled all the things in his life for which he had blamed his mother, his father, his teacher, his wife, his son, his friends, and everyone else. “As he fell deeper into the void, he let go of all the judgments that he’d made against them.” (9) This is his first time he saw his life clearly, without judgment and without excuses. It was like a person whose life is coming to the end that everything happened in his life flashed by. We are tied down by everything around us all the time. When we did something wrong, we always thought to blame others first. But have we ever reflected that if we do something wrong? Some people may answer, “No.” Some people may answer, “Yes.” Anyway, in the summit of truth, what we have to learn is letting go. There is an inscription goes, “Though this universe I own, I possess not a thing, for I cannot know the unknown if to the known I cling.” (10) Letting go something in our mind, we are able to see our life clearly without judgments.
and excuses. We can not be tied down by our hearts. We will not persist in everything.

IV . Symbolism

1 . The Knight

The knight in the story is symbolic of humanity. He always lives in his world, and insists things he thinks right and things he thinks wrong. Because he doesn’t let go of his original concepts and judgments, he finally loses himself. In the modern society, people often judge a person not by his or her inner mind but by the outer performance. To please everybody, we sometimes have no choice but to hide our own temperament and to live in a world where we need to depend on other people's comments or praise. As time passes, we will be used to listening to other people's glory to us and lose ourselves gradually. But the knight finally learns to let go of everything and start a new life. The knight can understand how to do it, and what about us? As long as we can let go of something, renew our hearts and our life, we can have a new life, too.

2 . The Armor

The armor is like a mask for us to deal with the pressure. People often wear the invisible armor with a view to showing the best side to everybody to satisfy their vanity. It is like people wearing a mask in front of everybody only to show the best one and to hide the worst ones to others. It may cause us not to have enough courage to face the problems we encounter and it also causes us to rely on the protection from the armor or the mask. As a result, we usually get accustomed to the existence of the armor, and can not help but fall in the trap into this confusion just like the knight in the story. However, it is important to have self-knowledge so as to manage the armor which we produce for ourselves.

3 . The Three Castles

3-1 . The Castle of Silence

The castle of silence is a symbol of a talking place where we can talk with our spirit honestly. People are always used to accepting applause from others, and don’t want to confront the real feelings from themselves. In addition, most of us are often afraid to be alone, and even don’t want to give ourselves chances to listen to the silence. To tell the truth, only when we are alone and without anyone around us, we will be able to feel
our true thoughts and start to listen to our hearts.

3-2 . The Castle of Knowledge

Knowledge is the light by which we shall find our way. The castle of knowledge is on behalf of the torches of life. As it says, “Knowledge is power.” This castle also indicates that if people do not have ample wisdom, he or she can not make the right decision and can probably lose their way easily when in the face of trouble. With the help of knowledge, the knight and us can tell from what the difference between love and need are. And he can also realize there is nothing more beautiful than the light of self-knowledge as well.

3-3 . The Castle of Willing and Daring

Everyone has a dragon of fear and doubt in our mind. The dragon of fear and doubt is our mental obstacles, and we know that self-knowledge can overcome this difficulty because it is the truth which is mightier than the sword. As long as we have will and daring to understand our characteristics, we don’t need to doubt or be afraid of the unknown. As a result, we can realize the importance of the truth. Actually, these terrible feelings exist only if we believe they do, and if we don’t face them, they’ll surely destroy us. Therefore, try to know our inner feelings and make sure that we are the owner of ourselves.

V . Conclusion

5-1 . Review

The journey of life is over. Some people may have learned the truth in the world. But the other people may have not. Whether we have learned and learned well or bad, when we were in the journey, we met many confusion like in those three different kinds of castles and difficulties like in the castle of will and daring. Whatever we met during the journey, what we must have is a heart that is able to face everything in front us. Finally, we’ll realize the truth in the wild nature.

5-2 . My Own Reflections

After reading *The Knight in Rusty Armor*, I thought of another story which is also similar
to it. The story is called *The Princess Who Believed in Fairy Tales.* It’s about a princess whose name is Victoria, who had ever believed that the prince and the princess will have a happy life since she was a child. When she grew up, she really met the prince she dreamed of day and night. However, after they got married, things were not the same as Victoria had imagined.

Why do I speak of *The Princess Who Believed in Fairy Tales?* That’s because I think Victoria and the knight have something in common—they just put themselves in a narrow space. They do not know how to get along with people around them. They always live in their mind so that the knight believed that he is a kind, good, and loving person; the princess believed that she and the prince will have a happy life.

With the two stories, we may think whether our mind is so narrow that we don’t look at the fact of one thing. Sometimes we can’t see clearly with our mind, but as long as we change the attitude of looking at one thing. I believe we will make some changes when we face the difficulties in front of us.

5-3. Conclusion

Traveling with the knight, we have learned many things. These things are not in the textbooks because they are in our daily lives. Like Mitch Albom’s *Tuesdays With Morrie*(11), Morrie uses the rest of his life to teach many readers to appreciate many things in the world. We are always so busy doing many things every day that we can not appreciate our lives carefully. *The Knight in Rusty Armor* gives us a clear concept about how to achieve real happiness. Sometimes, our eyes are blind, we must look, hear and feel with our hearts. Then we will discover how beautiful and how wonderful the world we are living in is! “He smiled through his tears, unaware that a radiant, new light now shone from him—a light far brighter and more beautiful than his armor at its polished best—sparking like a brook, shining like moon, dazzling like the sun.”(12) “For, indeed, the knight was the brook. He was the moon. He was the sun. He could be all these things at once now, and more, because he was one with the universe. He was love.”(13) The story is over. The knight finally learns such things above all, and how about us? Are we the same as the knight to learn all the things? If your answer is “Yes,” there will be another entrance of new life opened for you.

VI. References

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