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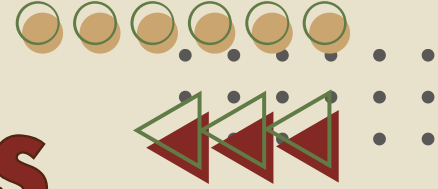
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Hashtag 16



With this issue, #Hashtag enters its sixteenth issue published under the attempt and management of a group of diligent students who have endeavored for the production of this magazine from the beginning.

Having fulfilled so prominent an objective by unifying and connecting ambitious and cooperative members to organize an academic community, #Hashtag is now more determined than ever to keep up its work towards a greater goal and a better future. With this purpose in view, #Hashtag anticipates the expansion of its team to include new members who will passionately contribute to the further advancement of the magazine as well as the achievement of its primary goal, that is, to help us learn, grow, change, and share our experiences. In case you would like to join us, #Hashtag would be honored to use your company as an invaluable part of its family alongside your knowledge and skills congruent with its needs.

Furthermore, all your comments, recommendations, and criticisms concerning the development of this magazine are much welcomed. Should you have any questions or need any further information regarding how to join #Hashtag magazine, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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R Research Articles



A Comparative Study of Machine Translation Quality:
Google Translate vs. Microsoft Bing Translator
MohammadMahdi Parsaeian



Exploring the Layers of Ambiguity:
A Study of the Dual Interpretations in William Blake's
"The Sick Rose"
Sajedeh Salimi

A Comparative Study of Machine Translation Quality: Google Translate vs. Microsoft Bing Translator



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Abstract

This study compares the performance of two popular translation machines, Google Translate, and Microsoft Bing Translator, in translating scientific articles in the field of computer science, data analysis, and software development from English to Persian. The study adopts a qualitative and descriptive design, using five criteria to evaluate the quality of the translations: comprehension, structure, diction, punctuation, and typography. Four excerpts from different articles were selected as the corpus. The results showed that Google Translate outperforms Microsoft Bing Translator in most cases, except for a few instances like punctuation marks where the latter showed better performance than other categories. The study also revealed that both machines have limitations in handling the specific terminology and jargon of the field and that they cannot fully replace human translations in terms of accuracy. By reviewing the existing research on machine translation evaluation, the study offers insights for scholars and professionals who work with scientific texts in different languages.

Keywords: Machine translation, Google Translate, Microsoft Bing Translator, Computer Science, Typographic features

1. Introduction

Translation Machines have evolved significantly over the past few decades, progressing through three primary generations. The first generation that emerged in the 1950s-60s relied on linguist-devised rules and lexicons to translate basic sentences. While pioneering, these systems lacked nuance and accuracy. The second generation arrived in the late 1980s with corpus-based statistical machine translation, leveraging bilingual text data rather than hand-coded rules. This approach improved the quality of complete sentence translation. However, the third and current generation drives the most extensive leap, neural machine translation, which emerged in the 2010s. Powered by deep neural networks trained on massive multilingual datasets, these systems achieve more fluent and accurate translations that better handle context. Google Translate (GT) and Microsoft Bing Translator (MBT) are the most well-known and advanced translation machines that are available to the public.

Every scientific field is progressing, and the latest studies must be translated into different languages to inform people worldwide of new information. One of the most popular areas that has made surprising progress in recent years and is expected to continue this increasing progress is the area of computer science, data development, and software development. These studies may contain unknown and emerging information and jargon that may be problem-inducing for translation machines.

This study aims to assess the performance of certain machine translation engines in translating articles and studies in the field of computer science, data analysis, and software development from various perspectives, determining whether they show acceptable performance or not.

2. Literature Review

Ardi et al. (2022) conducted a study that begins with a brief explanation of three types of translation machines: Google Translate (GT), Microsoft Bing Translator (MBT), and Yandex Translate (YT). The study focuses on the translation of humorous texts, which can be challenging for these machines due to the linguistic, cultural, and universal aspects involved in creating a joke. The focus of this study is on those types of humor that are created using linguistic features such as homonyms, polysemy, and pragmatics. In so doing, a qualitative descriptive method was applied. In the end, translation techniques were classified based on Molina and Albir (2002) and error analysis based on Keshavarz's (2012) model.

Four source texts of humor were used that were taken from a website. The First two texts belonged to linguistic humor or word-based humor that exposed the use of words, such as sound, spelling, puns, or wordplay to trigger humor, and the last two texts belonged to universal humor or bicultural jokes which are understandable by many people from different cultures. Each humor or jock has three steps orientation, event, and twist. There were two results based on two different categories of error analysis.

Similarly, Putri and Nugroho (2022) compared the translation techniques used by two translation machines, Google Translate, and Microsoft Translator, but this time in translating abstract text. The authors aimed to identify the techniques and methods employed by these online translation machines, then examined the accuracy of the translations, and provided insights into the strengths and weaknesses of each system. Putri and Nugroho selected an abstract text from a research journal. The abstract was translated from English to Indonesian using both Google Translate and Microsoft Translator. The translations were then compared to the original abstract text, and the authors analyzed the translation techniques used by each system, based on the classification proposed by Molina and Albir (2002).

Google Translation employs established methods for equivalent translations by translating full sentences instead of translating each word separately. This is because they consider word-by-word translations to be less precise. Conversely, Microsoft Translator utilizes literal translation techniques and often translates word-by-word, leading to less accurate translation outcomes compared to Google Translate.

Having the same purpose, Ziganshina et al. (2021) conducted a randomized comparison study to assess the performance of three machine translation (MT) engines in translating English to Russian Cochrane plain language health information. MT has made significant advancements in recent years, with researchers and practitioners exploring its potential in various domains, including healthcare. In this context, Ziganshina et al. focused on evaluating the performance of three popular MT engines, Google Translate (GT), Microsoft Translator (MT), and DeepL in translating Cochrane plain language summaries (PLS) from English to Russian. All three MTEs have closed-source algorithms. The study aimed to identify the most suitable MT engine based on post-editing efforts required by human editors.

The authors employed a randomized comparison design with a sample of 30 Cochrane PLSs, divided equally into three sets. Each set was translated by one of the MT engines then post-edited by ten volunteers and again edited by two editors for the second editing step. The post-editors were unaware of the MT engine used to ensure unbiased assessments. They used the Memsources translation system to manage the whole research process. It is also powered with an AI to estimate the time that would be required for each editing step per each PLS and to design the result analysis according to the data. The authors employed three methods to evaluate the translation quality. Firstly, they utilized default analysis to acquire automated estimates of post-editing effort following pre-translation using MTQE. Secondly, they used post-editing 1 to compute the amount of post-edited text after the initial editing step. Lastly, they used post-editing 2 to determine the total volume of post-edited text after the second editing step, which includes any modifications made in the first step.

Similar to the study conducted by Putri and Nugroho (2022), Google Translate showed the best performance in this study and significantly had better results in most ranges of edits in comparison with Microsoft Translator. The results of post-editing 1 were consistent with the Default analysis results. Also, in post-editing 2, the Microsoft translator had the weakest performance, and the difference with Google translator, which was the best in most areas, was huge. Ziganshina et al.'s study offered a comprehensive comparison of three popular MT engines in the context of translating plain language health information. The findings of this study suggest that Google Translate outperforms Microsoft Translator in translating Cochrane PLSs from English to Russian, requiring less post-editing effort and providing higher quality translations compared to Microsoft Translator. In the end, the authors noted that their findings were largely consistent with those of previous researchers comparing MTEs.

3. Methodology

3.1 Design

Since this study examines several paragraphs of scientific articles and evaluates the quality of their translation, it is a qualitative and descriptive study.

3.2 Framework

Five criteria of comprehension, structure, diction, punctuation, and typography were considered to evaluate the selected excerpts.

3.3 Corpus

Excerpts from the four articles were selected considering that the excerpts contain several jargon, and aim for more precise and meaningful results after evaluation and research. The mentioned articles were about IoT from Nano Energy, both Cybersecurity and Big Data from Journals of Big Data, and HCI from InSpringer eBooks.

3.4 Procedure

At first, two translation machines (TM), Google Translate (GT) and Microsoft Bing Translator (MBT), stood out among numerous web-based translation engines due to their superior performance. In comparison with other translation machines like Yandex and DeepL, these two MTs demonstrated better functionality. Upon initial examination, Microsoft Bing Translator is equipped with a limitation of 1000 characters for a single translation at the moment, while in Google Translate, this limitation is significantly different, allowing up to 5000 characters.

Considering the existing conditions to establish a balance for a better comparison, texts were divided into smaller sections, and a similar number of characters was provided to both translation machines at the moment.

Additionally, four mentioned articles were selected after reviewing several articles in the field of computer and data science. Following the examination of these articles, sections that employed more formal, academic, and scientific language were chosen based on special terminology, jargon, and complex sentences.

Finally, the output of both translation machines (TM) was examined and evaluated considering the aforementioned five perspectives. Hence, their evaluation results were compared with each other and also with the original text, leading to the following results.

4. Results

4.1 Comprehension

In terms of content and comprehension, both Google Translate (GT) and Microsoft Bing Translator (MBT) showed relatively similar performance and they both are generally acceptable. However, upon closer examination, it becomes evident that GT outperforms MBT in this aspect, as illustrated in the example below.

·**Original:** *The IoT architecture must be designed with an objective to fulfil the requirements of cross domain interactions, multisystem integration with the potential of simple and scalable management functionalities, big data analytics and storage, and user friendly applications*

گوگل: معماری اینترنت اشیا باید با هدف برآوردن الزامات تعاملات متقابل دامنه، ادغام چند سیستمی با پتانسیل عملکردهای مدیریتی ساده و مقیاس پذیر، تجزیه و تحلیل و ذخیره سازی داده های بزرگ و برنامه های کاربردی کاربر پسند طراحی شود.

مایکروسافت: معماری IoT باید با هدف برآورده کردن الزامات تعاملات متقابل دامنه، ادغام چند سیستم با پتانسیل ویژگی های مدیریت ساده و مقیاس پذیر، تجزیه و تحلیل داده های بزرگ و ذخیره سازی و برنامه های کاربر پسند طراحی شود.

In the foregoing example, the term “storage” / “ذخیره سازی” refers to “big data” / “داده های بزرگ”, and the correct way of translation is to mention it before big data in Persian,

·**Original:** *may be summarized as follows*

گوگل: می توان به صورت زیر خلاصه کرد.

مایکروسافت: ممکن است به شرح زیر خلاصه شود.

In the mentioned example, Microsoft's translation is like a word-by-word translation, and the phrase does not resemble a common Persian phrase. Also, it is significant that this text is a translated text.

4.2 Structure

On one hand, GT has segmented long academic-English sentences, less common in Persian, into shorter ones, showing its superiority in this regard. On the other hand, MBT's translation appears more academic and formal, potentially being off-putting for the general audience. But at the same time, as mentioned, GT uses more frequently used Persian terms in translation.

·**Original:** *Collecting data from both the network and host machines is considered a hybrid category.*

گوگل: جمع آوری داده ها از هر دو شبکه و ماشین های میزبان هستند. یک دسته ترکیبی در نظر گرفته شده است.

مایکروسافت: جمع اوری داده ها از هر دو شبکه و ماشین های میزبان به عنوان یک دسته ترکیبی در نظر گرفته می شود.

·**Original:** *as its user wishes*

گوگل: مطابق میل کاربر

مایکروسافت: همانطور که کاربر می خواهد

·**Original:** *provided the user knows*

گوگل: مشروط بر اینکه

مایکروسافت: به شرطی که کاربر

4.3 Diction (Choice of words)

Google Translate outperforms in this aspect. For instance, in the translation examples below, Google has employed more accurate and reasonable equivalents for the specified terminology.

·**Original:** *management functionalities*

گوگل: عملکردهای مدیریتی

مایکروسافت: ویژگی های مدیریت

·**Original:** *handling*

گوگل: مدیریت

مایکروسافت: دست زدن

·**Original:** *Logs*

گوگل: گزارشها

مایکروسافت: سیاههها

In the next examples, two separate words have been scrutinized, with GT excelling in one case and MBT in the other. Regarding the term "Firewall," its common Persian equivalent is "فایروال" (firewall), entered into the Persian language through the procedure of loan word. For the term "sensors," both translations provided are correct, but it is generally better not to use loan words when a Persian common equivalent exists.

·**Original:** *sensors*

گوگل: حسگرها

مایکروسافت: سنسورها

·**Original:** *firewall*

گوگل: دیوار آتش

مایکروسافت: فایروال

In the last example, the term "IoT" has been accurately identified and translated by Google Translate, whereas Microsoft Bing Translator has used the same term in the original alphabets. However, there were also other instances where both translation machines were unable to identify and translate.

·**Original:** *IoT*

گوگل: اینترنت اشیا

مایکروسافت: IoT

- Honeypot
- IDS
- IP
- HCI

For the word HCI, which is an acronym, the full form of the word was manually added in front of it between parathesis, and it had no effect on the output of both translation machines.

4.4 Punctuation Marks

The punctuation marks in the output of both translation machines were so close to the original texts and also consistent with each other, to some extent being accurate in Persian. However, there were only two cases where Microsoft Bing Translator correctly utilized punctuation.

As you can see, in the first instance, Microsoft Bing Translator used a comma between two verbs, which is correct and appropriate.

·**Original:** *When humans successfully communicate, they usually have a shared understanding of the words used and the concepts to which they refer.*

گوگل: وقتی انسان ها با موفقیت ارتباط برقرار می کنند، معمولاً درک مشترکی از کلمات استفاده شده و مفاهیمی که به آنها اشاره می کنند دارند.

مایکروسافت: ارتباطات نیاز به توافق در مورد شرایط مورد استفاده در گفتگو دارد. هنگامی که انسان ها با موفقیت ارتباط برقرار می کنند، معمولاً درک مشترکی از کلمات مورد استفاده و مفاهیمی که به آن اشاره می کنند، دارند.

In the second case, as evident, Google performed poorly in the manner of parenthesis and sentence ending.

·**Original:** *uncertainty (e.g., biased training data, unexpected data types, etc.).*

گوگل: عدم قطعیت (مانند داده های آموزشی مغرضانه، انواع داده های غیرمنتظره و غیره را مدیریت کنند).

مایکروسافت: عدم اطمینان (به عنوان مثال، داده های آموزشی مغرضانه، انواع داده های غیرمنتظره و غیره) را اداره کنند.

4.5 Typography

Google Translate clearly supports and identifies various features of the Persian language better than Microsoft Bing Translator and also has a better understanding of Persian and its writing style. Because of that, it handles the correct use of “Nim Faseleh” (e.g. می کنند) and the proper form of the letter “آ” more accurately. However, neither of them had entirely accurate performance in this regard, but GT, in some instances, observed proper “Nim Faseleh” spacing and also it outperforms MBT significantly in using the proper form of some letters like “ آ ”.

·Original: *management functionalities*

گوگل: عملکردهای مدیریتی

مایکروسافت: ویژگی های مدیریت

·Original: *scalable*

گوگل: مقیاس پذیر

مایکروسافت: مقیاس پذیر

Another aspect mentioned is the correct form of letters. In the Persian language, letters have different shapes depending on their position in a word. In this regard, Microsoft had not adhered to any of these aspects at all, while Google demonstrated an acceptable performance.

In a word like "آن" the letter "ا", comes like "آ" when it comes at the beginning of a word; and also, in the middle of the words in such cases as:

·Original: *efficient*

گوگل: کارآمد

مایکروسافت: کارآمد

5. Discussion and Conclusion

According to this study on two selected translation machines, as predicted, Google Translate provided a more acceptable performance. However, there were exceptions, such as punctuation marks, where GT changed them, making the source text worse. In contrast, MBT did not alter them and added a few more for improved text in Persian. In the other five classifications, Google Translate outperformed Microsoft Bing Translator. Initially, it was believed that previous study results might be influenced by the greater popularity of Google Translate, with the expectation that Microsoft could offer a more acceptable performance. Contrary to this expectation, except for a few instances, Google continued to demonstrate its superiority and its desire for more popularity. MBT's limitation in the number of characters could contribute to its lower popularity.

Despite differences in the topics examined and the source and target languages, the studies reviewed in the literature review section done by Ardi et al. (2002). Putri and Nugrodo (2022), and Ziganshina, et al. (2021), all converged on similar results, affirming the superior performance of Google Translate as a machine translation engine. It should be noted that despite the acceptable translations provided by the TMs, these machines still cannot fully replace human translations in terms of accuracy. This, in itself, can contribute to the progress of several professional fields such as post-editing.

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Exploring the Layers of Ambiguity: A Study of the Dual Interpretations in William Blake's "The Sick Rose"



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Abstract

This article aims to explore the layers of ambiguity in William Blake's "The Sick Rose." This poem is the subject of many different particular and universal interpretations due to its rich symbolism and, more importantly, its well-expressed ambiguity. At first, the rose symbolizes beauty and love; however, its opposite, the worm, signifies destruction. This contrast encourages readers to consider the deeper layers of the poem concealed by its generous ambiguity. Philosophical questions are woven into the poem, such as the interaction between "innocence" and "experience," the destructive power of time, and the fragility of beauty in nature and life. All interpretations share one common theme: the decay of something beautiful. As a major figure of the Romantic movement, Blake's poetry combines spirituality and emotion, highlighting the importance of imagination and individual expression. This paper seeks to discover the complexities of human experience by appreciating the rich ambiguity of "The Sick Rose."

Keywords:

Ambiguity, Symbolism, Human Experience, Romantic Movement, Philosophical Questions

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Introduction:

William Blake (1757-1827) is an English poet and artist known for his imaginative poetry and unique illustrations. Though often linked to the Romantic movement, his work transcends typical categories. Blake's poetry features mystical themes and rich symbolism, focusing on concepts of innocence, experience, and the human condition. His collections, *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*, present contrasting states of being; rather than simply portraying guilt, he emphasizes the loss of innocence through the experience of adulthood. Blake argued that the purity of childhood can be corrupted by the complexities of adult life, suggesting that the greater the experience gained, the more innocence is lost.

Moving away from Neoclassicism to Romantic Movement, a significant cultural shift occurred. It was characterized by an emphasis on emotion, individualism, nature, and the sublime. Within this movement, ambiguity plays a crucial role, allowing for multiple interpretations and deep emotional resonance. Many skilled poets, including William Blake, used this device to enrich their pieces of writing.

According to *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, "ambiguity" in ordinary usage refers to a fault in style, indicating the use of vague or unclear language when specificity is required. However, critics like Epperson have redefined this term, recognizing its value as a literary device that engages readers and transforms them into active participants.

Considering these two major points, ambiguity in poetry holds significant importance. It enables poets to transform their works into dynamic conversations between themselves and their readers. By fostering engagement, ambiguity encourages readers to uncover the hidden meanings woven between the lines. Poets can convey deeper meanings and evoke stronger emotions through ambiguity, creating a unique bond between the artwork and the reader. This interaction allows readers to reflect their own experiences and beliefs in the text.

The ambiguity present in Blake's poem "The Sick Rose" invites readers to explore various interpretations. One of the most striking features of this poem is its use of contrasting images. The rose is typically associated with beauty, love, and purity, yet Blake describes it as "sick." Herein lies the ambiguity: What causes the sickness? The reason could be internal or external, possibly linked to hidden threats such as desire, betrayal, or societal corruption, represented by Blake's "invisible worm." This poem can be interpreted as a cautionary tale about the confrontation between innocence and experience, or the image of love and its vulnerability towards the dangers and threats.

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However, scholars such as J. F. Berwick argue against the notion of ambiguity in Blake's work, suggesting that Blake intended to guide readers toward a specific understanding of the poem. They point to his illustrations, particularly in "The Sick Rose", where the emphasis shifts from the healthy rose to the "sisters," implying that the speaker of the poem is not the rose afflicted by the worm, but rather the two figures hiding behind their thorny defenses. This interpretation assumes that the so-called sick rose is, in fact, the healthiest among them. The clear sky and bright sunlight in the illustration in contrast with "the howling storm" described in the poem are evidence of the claim.

All the devices used in this poem, despite the different points of view that exist, prove that the ambiguity, along with other literary devices and the brevity of the poem, adds depth to it. This allows the reader to engage with the poem, letting their own experiences flow and come up with a unique interpretation.

Literature Review:

William Blake's poem "The Sick Rose," found in his collection *Songs of Experience* (1794), is a brief yet profound piece that unravels the complexities of human emotion, relationships, and the nature of existence. The poem explores love, loss, and corruption using rich symbolism and layered meanings. It invites readers to reconsider their obvious interpretations and reach out for other layers of meaning hidden by its veiled ambiguity. The rose symbolizes beauty and innocence, while the worm represents destructive forces, suggesting that love can be both nurturing and harmful. By the publication of *Seven Types of Ambiguity* by William Empson, ambiguity is now identified as a poetic device that is used to express a dual meaning. "Multiple Meaning" and "plurisignation" are the other two alternative terms for ambiguity. The poem's ambiguity lies in interpreting whether the sickness is inherent in love itself or caused by external factors. This literature review aims to explore the critical discourse surrounding "The Sick Rose," focusing on its thematic dualities and the ambiguity that has fascinated scholars and poets, forcing them to come up with their new understanding of Blake's mastery in creating thought provoking statements.

One work for understanding Blake's poetry is *Perrine's Sound and Sense: An Introduction to Poetry*. The poem is a symbolic exploration of the corruption of innocence and joy. The rose, a symbol of beauty and love, is inflicted by an invisible worm, representing a destructive force that consumes its liveliness. The poem delves into themes of jealousy, deceit, concealment, and the destructive power of the possessive instinct. The ambiguity of the poem allows for multiple interpretations, inviting readers to bring their own personal experiences and understanding to the text.

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All these lead to another major theme of Blake's poetry which is the battle of innocence and experience. A central conflict engraved in many of his works. Matt Simpson in "Blake's "Songs of Innocence and Experience"" argues Blake's *Songs of Innocence* often paints a picture of a perfect world where innocent people live happily. However, Simpson argues that even in these seemingly perfect scenes, there are hidden signs of evil and decay. In "Experience," the poems explore the harsh realities of the world, including suffering, oppression, and loss of innocence. Simpson's analysis encourages readers to engage with the poems on multiple levels, considering both their literal and symbolic meanings. The "worm" that destroys the rose represents experience, particularly the darker and more corrupting forces of life. The rose in the poem represents innocence, beauty, and the potential for love and joy. The poem illustrates the tension between these two states. It can be interpreted that innocence is vulnerable and can be easily corrupted by the harsh realities of life. The interaction between these two can be looked at as a deep philosophical reflection on the fragility of purity in the face of life's harsher realities.

In contrast to all these, a second opinion exists. Through analysis of the design and the poem, J. F. Berwisk in his article "The Sick Rose: A Second Opinion" published in 1976, believes that William Blake did not want the reader to consider the speaker of the poem and poet the same person. He explains in his essay that there is no hint in the design that the beautiful rose is being 'destroyed'. Looking at the design it can be implied that the strongest impression is the beauty of the flower not its destruction. By comparing the three flowers which he refers to as "sisters", the one that is embracing the worm is the healthiest one. It can be derived from the design that the speaker of the poem is the other sister or rather sisters. Because they are jealous of her. This explanation helps clarify the seeming disagreement between the poem and the artwork. Understanding this is important in analyzing Blake's work because he believed that his poetry and art were two different ways of expressing the same creative idea.

William Blake's poem "The Sick Rose" offers deep insights into love, desire, and societal issues. Its meanings range from a simple metaphor for the fragility of love to a more complex examination of desire. Scholars continue to explore its various interpretations, by highlighting Blake's skill in creating long-lasting ambiguity. The poem encourages readers to reflect on the delicate balance between beauty and decay in their own lives.

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Discussion:

It is essential to consider the poem itself for context before analyzing its elements.

“O Rose, thou art sick!
The invisible worm
That flies in the night
In the howling storm:
Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy,
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy.”

Blake’s use of ambiguity is central to the poem’s impact, allowing for diverse readings that reflect the complexities of human experience. As noted in the introduction, the distinction between inherent sickness within love and the impact of external forces is a fundamental aspect of the poem’s thematic exploration. This duality raises critical questions about the nature of love: Is it an inherently pure and innocent force, or is it susceptible to the corrupting influences of jealousy, deceit, and possessiveness?

Thematic Dualities

The thematic dualities present in “The Sick Rose” are emblematic of Blake’s broader poetic concerns, particularly the tension between innocence and experience. According to Matt Simpson, the interplay between these two states is a recurring motif in Blake’s work, “...innocence is no idyllic state. Innocence is born and has to exist in the world on Experience which is constantly at pains to corrupt and exploit it” (23). Wherein innocence often exists in a state of fragile purity, easily threatened by the darker aspects of experience. In “The Sick Rose,” the rose symbolizes not only love and beauty but also the vulnerability of innocence. The worm, representing destructive forces, can be interpreted as the encroachment of experience upon this innocence, suggesting a natural cycle of growth and decay that pervades human existence.

The notion that love can be both nurturing and harmful is further emphasized by the poem’s imagery. The rose’s beauty is striking, yet it is simultaneously tainted by the presence of the worm. This duality mirrors the human experience of love, which can bring profound joy and fulfillment but also pain and heartbreak. The ambiguity surrounding the source of the rose’s sickness invites readers to reflect on their own experiences with love, suggesting that while love has the potential to uplift; it also carries the risk of loss and corruption.



Ambiguity as a Poetic Device

“Ambiguity, in ordinary speech, means something pronounced, and as a rule witty or deceitful...which gives room for alternative reactions to the same piece of language” (Empson, 1). Concept of ambiguity as a poetic device is particularly relevant in the context of “The Sick Rose.” Empson’s assertion that ambiguity allows for multiple meanings expands the reader’s engagement with the poem, encouraging a deeper exploration of its themes. The worm can be interpreted in various ways: as a manifestation of jealousy, a symbol of societal corruption, or even as an embodiment of the darker sides of human desire. This multiplicity of meanings enhances the poem’s richness, inviting readers to draw upon their own experiences and perceptions to find personal significance in the text.

Symbolism

In *Perrine’s Sound and Sense: An Introduction to Poetry* analysis of the poem further underscores the significance of its symbolic exploration. The worm, often invisible and insidious, represents the hidden forces that can undermine relationships and corrupt innocence. This interpretation aligns with Blake’s broader critique of societal norms and the destructive instincts that can permeate human interactions. The poem’s ambiguity serves to highlight the complexities of desire, suggesting that love is not a straightforward emotion but rather a multifaceted experience shaped by both internal and external influences. The rose can be considered traditionally as a “symbol of feminine beauty” or “sensual pleasure” (796). The worm is a common symbol of death in different poems. “Thus, “The Sick Rose” has been variously interpreted as referring to the destruction of joyous physical by jealousy, deceit, concealment, or the possessive instinct; of innocence by experience; of humanity by Satan...” (797).

However, in *Perrine’s Sound and Sense: An Introduction to Poetry* is said “...in “The Sick Rose” no meanings are explicitly indicated for the rose and the worm.” (796). It is so rich in language and organization that it can be read literally or with various interpretations. “A symbol defines an area of meaning, and any interpretation that fall within that area is permissible...the meaning is open, the reader is justified in bringing personal experience to its interpretations” (797). Blake’s poetry prompts readers to reflect on their own experiences with love and loss. The poem’s ambiguity and rich symbolism allows for a personal engagement that transcends its historical context, inviting readers to consider the ways in which their own relationships have been shaped by the dual forces of love and corruption. This reflective engagement aligns with Blake’s belief in the transformative power of poetry, as he seeks to engage readers in a dialogue about the complexities of the human experience.

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The Fragility of Innocence

The poem's exploration of the fragility of innocence is a theme that resonates deeply in Blake's broader body of work. This theme is prevalent in his collections, especially in *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, where he contrasts the purity and simplicity of childhood with the complexities and often harsh realities of adult life. The notion that innocence can be easily corrupted by the harsh realities of life is a central concern in many of Blake's poems. "...innocence is a state of soul belonging to eternity; it needs, in the temporal and sensual world, protectors and redeemers..." (Simpson, 23). In Blake's work, by highlighting the need for "protectors and redeemers.", these figures often manifest as compassionate individuals or spiritual entities who strive to shield the innocent from the corruption of the world. This dynamic creates a powerful commentary on the loss of innocence and the urgent need for empathy and understanding in a flawed society.

The Speaker and the Design

In contrast to the interpretations that emphasize the speaker's alignment with the rose, J.F. Berwick's examination of the poem's design introduces a fresh perspective that challenges conventional readings.



"The Sick Rose," *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* copy B (composed and printed 1789, 1794). 11.1 x 6.8 cm. © The Trustees of the British Museum. Image courtesy of the William Blake Archive.

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Commentators on William Blake's 'The Sick Rose' have commonly failed to explain the ironies of the Song. They have assumed that the poet intends his readers to share the perspective of the speaker and generally implied that the speaker is the poet himself" (77). By suggesting that the speaker and the poet are not synonymous, Berwick proposes that the poem should be viewed through the lens of multiple perspectives. The imagery of the three flowers, which he describes as "sisters," offers an alternative interpretation that emphasizes the dynamics of jealousy and rivalry rather than the straightforward destruction of innocence. He believes that the two other roses are "victims of experience" (78), one is holding its head, the other is covered with thorns. The biggest irony is that the rose that is linked to the worm looks the healthiest of all three. The rose has not fallen to ground but as Berwick suggests "... she has bent down to the earth as though to invite the worm "(77-78). This interpretation reframes the relationship between the rose and the worm, suggesting that the rose's beauty may provoke feelings of jealousy among the other flowers. In this view, the worm is not merely a destructive force but rather a complex symbol of the interplay between beauty and envy. As he points in his essay "Their sister has freed herself from the limbo of airy disengagement and the environment of thorny moralism; she has bent low to the earth and found the fulfillment of her desires" (79). By "freeing herself from the limbo of airy disengagement," she steps away from a superficial or indifferent existence and confronts the complexities of life. The "thorny moralism" implies a rigid, perhaps judgmental worldview that she has also escaped.

Berwick's analysis invites readers to consider the broader implications of the poem, encouraging a reflection on the societal forces that shape personal relationships and the ways in which beauty can elicit both admiration and resentment.

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Conclusion:

In conclusion, William Blake's "The Sick Rose" is a rich poem that offers readers many interpretations and insights. Through its striking imagery, like the beautiful rose and the destructive worm, the poem evokes a deep sense of tension between beauty and decay. Blake's masterful employment of metaphor and dreamlike language adds emotional depth, allowing readers to explore layers of meaning. The poem's brevity is deceptive. It touches profound themes, including love's tender innocence and the inevitable corruption that accompany it. The juxtaposition of rose and worm serves as a poignant metaphor for duality of love. The two sides of love are its capability to nurture and its potential to destroy. The layers of ambiguity present in "The Sick Rose" encourages readers to engage deeply with the poem, inviting personal reflection on their own experiences and perceptions of love, loss, and vulnerability. The divergence in interpretation illustrates the multifaceted nature of Blake's work, prompts readers to engage more deeply with the text rather than just looking at it on the surface. "The Sick Rose" serves as a powerful reminder of the complexities of beauty and fragility of human existence. Its timeless qualities ensure that it continues to resonate with audience today, inspiring thought and discussion across generations.

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REVIEWS

- **Tolstoy and the Purple Chair: My Year of Magical Reading**
By Nina Sankovitch
Faezeh Eshraghi
- **"The Rise of a New Prince"**
Mohammad Javad Shabani





BOOK
REVIEW

Tolstoy and the Purple Chair: My Year of Magical Reading

By: Nina Sankovitch



Faezeh Eshraghi

M.A. in ELT

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This book offered me respite from the frantic life I'm living. It offered me solace, warmth, and peace. So much is explored in this book that I don't know where to begin with; from World War 2 to mourning the loss of a loved one to childhood memories, each is illustrated so gracefully that you don't want the book to end. While exploring each theme presented in the book, I found myself glued to the book as if embracing it, unwilling to let go.

The author skillfully intertwines reviews of the books she has read with her personal experiences. The transitions are so seamless that it feels as if you're sitting in a boat, drifting through the sea of stories, gently carried by the waves of Sankovitch's words.

The book opens with the heartbreaking death of the author's sister and then, moves towards the plan she sets for herself – a plan to see if she can soothe the pain of her loss. She takes refuge in books. For 365 days, they become her shelter, offering peace, tranquility and perhaps the escape she needs to navigate the depths of her grief. Books become her gateway to countless experiences, from love stories that make your hair stand out to mysteries that bring a sense of order to the chaos of life, providing her with a sliver of certainty amidst uncertainty.

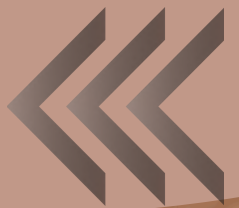
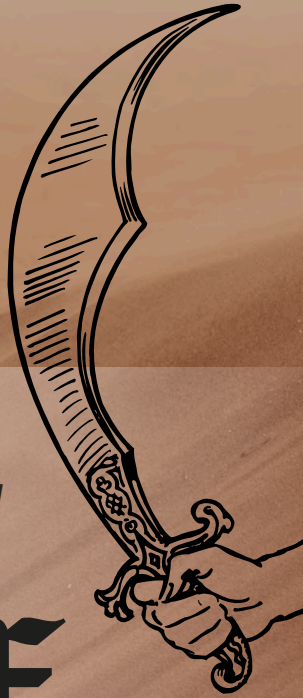
Perhaps the message the book tries to convey is that literature will not be able to fix us, but it can sit with us through the grief, the pain, and the suffering until we find a way forward. Nina Sankovitch beautifully expresses the power of books, that how one might become isolated after the loss of a loved one, but the company of books will offer stories that connect us to the world around us. A quiet reassurance of the healing process that takes place in the company of books.

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Prince of Persia

GAME REVIEW



"THE RISE OF A NEW PRINCE"

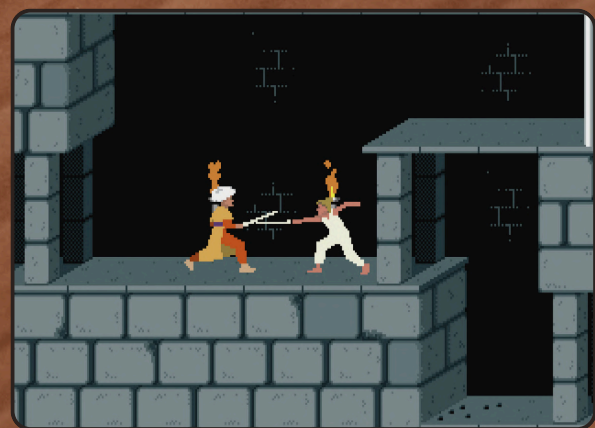


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The year is 2023, and Summer Game Fest, a show that in some way took the place of E3 where new games are announced, starts by showing a new game from Ubisoft. It's a 2D/2.5D game seemingly set in Middle East, but to everyone's surprise, it's a new game in the long-running series, *Prince of Persia*. The last game in the series was released in 2010, and Ubisoft had shelved the franchise for almost 13 years, but finally, they cleared the dust on it and are willing to give this franchise another shot. But what is the Prince of Persia franchise? How was it born? So, let's start this review by first giving you a brief history of this series and how it came to be.

Prince of Persia is a videogame franchise, originally created by Jordan Mechner. This franchise has been around since 1989, and has games in different genres. The first game, titled simply *Prince of Persia*, was released in 1989 and was a 2D platformer where the player controls an unnamed character trying to save a princess from the evil vizier, Jaffar. If that sounds familiar, that's because it is extremely close to the 1992 animation, *Aladdin*. *Prince of Persia* went on to be a big success, which greenlit the sequel, *Prince of Persia 2: The Shadow and the Flame*, which was essentially more of the same. However, the next game, titled *Prince of Persia 3D*, was the franchise's first venture into the 3D realm, though it failed to capture the same critical and financial success as its predecessors. Ultimately, this led to the closure of the studio responsible, and the intellectual property of *Prince of Persia* was acquired by the then-emerging publisher, Ubisoft.



Ubisoft's first game in this series was a total reboot of the franchise, titled *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time*, which was another 3D action-adventure game. *Sands of Time* was a major hit both critically and financially, and for that, it became a trilogy of its own. However, none of the sequels and spin-offs could replicate the same success. The series started going downhill, selling fewer copies each subsequent game, and as we all know, money talks. This downfall made Ubisoft shelve the series indefinitely in 2010, after the latest mainline game, *Prince of Persia: The Forgotten Sands*, failed to meet their expectations.

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This is where *Prince of Persia: The Lost Crown* gets announced, nearly 13 years later. *The Lost Crown* brings the series back to the 2D realm with a metroidvania twist on top of it. In *The Lost Crown*, you play as Sargon, a member of the Immortals, whose job is to save Persia from any and all threats. Graphically, the game has some of the most beautiful art in the gaming industry. While it's not the most visually realistic game, it still serves its purpose effectively and enhances the overall experience. The game is almost entirely set in the legendary Mount Qaf, and the developers at Ubisoft Montpellier have done a fantastic job at creating this legendary place in all its glory. The environment is clearly inspired by the Achaemenid Empire, with massive statues, gateways and hallways resembling those in the Persepolis. This is the first game in the franchise where it is clear that the developers respected the Persian mythology and culture and did their research on Ancient Persia. While the old games had nothing to do with Persia in anything but their names, and looked like a generic place in any Middle-Eastern country, *The Lost Crown* embraces its source material and tries to stay true to it as much as they can.



Mount Qaf consists of numerous places that are vastly different from each other, and they are all amazing to explore and look at. Apart from the castles and gateways mentioned above, there is a forest called "Hyrcanian forest" (again, the respect to source material can be seen even in the names of some of these locations), a "special" library called the Sacred Archives, a catacomb, and many more. Their visual distinction helps to keep the game fresh



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Gameplay-wise, the game plays very similarly to all the other games in the metroidvania genre. However, Ubisoft Montpellier wanted to innovate as well, and they came up with a new mechanic called "The Memory Shard". One of the main parts of every metroidvania game is that at some point in your game, you will be stuck behind a door or an obstacle that you need a special power to go through. With memory shard, you can take a screenshot of that obstacle and save it in your map, so that when you have the required power, you don't have to remember where that obstacle was. Platforming is another core element of metroidvania games, and the platforming in *The Lost Crown* is extremely challenging yet satisfying. There is the usual jumping, sliding and dashing (as a power acquired later in the game). However, if you have played any of the old Prince of Persia games or know about them, you probably know how big-time powers are in this series, and *The Lost Crown* is no exception in this regard. Time powers are a crucial part of the gameplay, aiding in traversal, platforming, and combat. One of these time powers allows you to make a clone of yourself anywhere and teleport back to it by pressing a button, which is very important in a lot of platforming and combat scenarios, especially the game's challenging boss fights. Speaking of combat, it is another amazing work by the developers. The combat moves and combos are seemingly endless, as you can mix and mash all your platforming moves and powers with your sword and bow, and create new moves. I suggest you take the training lessons given to you about an hour after starting the game to see for yourself how much creativity is thrown in this game's combat, and how the developers calculated every possible combo and implemented them in the game. It encourages you to learn all of them, because even the game's normal enemies are tough, let alone the boss fights. You are going to die a lot in this game, and you need to carefully evaluate and familiarize yourself with each boss's moves to be able to defeat them, but once you finally do, the level of satisfaction is extremely high. There are also a handful of side objectives and many hidden areas for you to explore and find, and you will want to try to find as many as you can, so that you can upgrade your character and weapons and have a better chance against these tough bosses.



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Still, that's not all the surprises the game has to offer. The audio design and soundtracks in this game are phenomenal. You will have a pleasurable experience listening to the game's music. Knowing how important the audio and music are, Ubisoft hired a Persian musician named Mentrix. She helped with the game's audio and music in collaboration with Gareth Coker, whose works you might have heard if you have played two other famous metroidvania games, *Ori and the Blind Forest*, and *Ori and the Will of the Wisps*. Together, they have composed some of the most memorable and beautiful soundtracks in a videogame. Each section of the map has its own unique theme too, which helps elevate the experience to the next level.

Mentrix is not the only surprise nor is she the biggest one. For the first time ever in the gaming industry (at least to my knowledge), a game not made by Iranian developers, features full Persian subtitles, along with dubbing. You heard it right! Ubisoft contacted a team of Iranian dubbers and paid them to dub this game in Persian. Playing this game in my mother tongue was a joy beyond explanation. It's something that needs to be experienced by yourself to truly comprehend how unreal it feels, and how fun and awesome it is when you listen to Sargon and other characters interact in the language you speak every day.



Lastly, let me tell you about the game's story and narrative. The game starts by introducing you to the Immortals briefly, and you are immediately thrown into a war imposed on Persia by the invasion of the Kushanians. You eliminate the threat, but as one threat goes down, an even bigger one rises above. Prince Ghassan gets kidnapped and taken to Mount Qaf, and along with the rest of the Immortals team, you need to rescue him. The inspirations from the Persian mythology are apparent in the game's story too. One of the most important figures in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh* is the Simurgh and her feathers. They play a crucial role in the game, as you gain new powers by finding the Simurgh's feathers. In the game's lore, kings are only chosen if they are graced by the Simurgh, similar to the legends of the Sasanian Empire. You can find lore items that are replicas of the Cyrus Cylinder, as well as a very important figure who plays a huge role in the game's story, which I will not spoil to encourage you to find out for yourself. Even though *The Lost Crown* does not feature the most amazing story ever told, it is good enough to keep you engaged and wanting to know more.

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Overall, *The Lost Crown* is an absolute masterpiece that must be experienced by every Iranian gamer, especially if you enjoy the metroidvania genre, because it offers a unique and respectful portrayal of our culture, something we might not see in many other games. I haven't even scratched the surface of this game in this review, as it would have become a much longer review that could not possibly fit into the magazine. *The Lost Crown* is available on PS4, PS5, XBOX One, XBOX Series X/S, Nintendo Switch, and PC on both Windows and MacOS.



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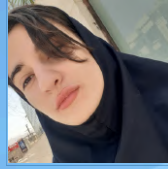


Book Recommendations

To Read List: Spring-Themed
Mahdieh Sadat Mirabootalebi



To Read List: Spring-Themed



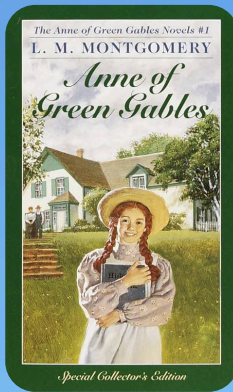
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“I am simply a 'book drunkard.' Books have the same irresistible temptation for me that liquor has for its devotee. I cannot withstand them.”

— L.M. Montgomery

If, like me, you're a 'book drunkard', looking for books best fitted to be read in spring or to fall in love once again with wildlife, trees, flowers, and the lost part of our identity that is nature, join me and find some new reads to add to your ever growing TBR.

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Anne of Green Gables

By L. M. Montgomery, Published in 1908

Children's classic novel

You cannot curate a spring reading list without talking about the number one fan of nature, aka Anne Shirley. This beloved series that you have most probably watched animated adaptations of it in your childhood, is a mesmerizing description of loving nature in its most untouched, uninhabited wilderness. This series consists of eight books, telling the story of Anne from her childhood to her motherhood and beyond.

The first book of this series, *Anne of Green Gables*, recounts the story of Anne (which she insists to be pronounced and spelled with an E at the end), an 11-year-old orphan, who goes to Green Gables, to Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert. They had originally asked for a boy from the orphanage so he could help Matthew run their farm but Anne is adamant to prove that a girl can do any job as good as any boy. Get on board with this fascinating story of Anne's struggles and joys through learning to call a place home for the first time.

If you're craving the perfect book to read in nature, something that describes lovely trees, lively grass, and invites you to fall in love with the beauty of the wilderness, be sure to pick up this book. You won't be disappointed; it has been tried and tested. There are some amazing adaptations of the story such as the famous animation one; the most recent adaptation, the Canadian series called "Anne with an E" is the perfect companion for spring.

"Dear old world", she murmured, "you are very lovely, and I am glad to be alive in you."

"I read in a book once that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, but I've never been able to believe it. I don't believe a rose **WOULD** be as nice if it was called a thistle or a skunk cabbage."



The Enchanted April

By Elizabeth von Arnim, Published in 1922

Classic

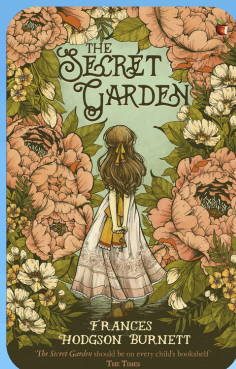
'To Those Who Appreciate Wisteria and Sunshine.' If this advertisement appeals to your senses and is what you need, a month-long vacation, the book *The Enchanted April* is for you. The story of four women, not much like each other and not liking each other much, living in a castle together just to get away from the men in their life.

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It is a book about female friendship, travel, finding friends who are not the same as we are but understand us without any need to explain and much more.

"To be missed, to be needed, from whatever motive, was, she thought, better than the complete loneliness of not being missed or needed at all."

"...But, it was Italy. Nothing it did could be bad. The very rain was different..."



The Secret Garden

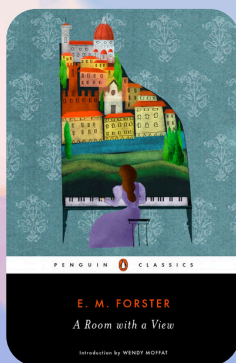
By Frances Hodgson Burnett, Published in 1910-1911

Children's novel

What better way to celebrate spring than reconnecting with your inner child by reading some children's classic novels? Another book that is the perfect combination of spring, nature and wildlife is the book *The Secret Garden* that you have most probably heard about.

The book recounts the story of Mary Lennox, a 10-year-old girl from a wealthy family, who, after a pandemic, is sent to live with her uncle, the husband of her father's sister, Lilies. Upon arriving, she discovers that ten years ago, in a walled garden where Lilies used to grow flowers, she died in an accident. Since then, the door to the garden had been locked, and no one had set foot there for over a decade. Mary becomes interested in finding the Secret Garden herself. This is a story about a secret garden, finding unlikely friends, and the power of friendship.

"The sun shone down for nearly a week on the secret garden. The Secret Garden was what Mary called it when she was thinking of it. She liked the name, and she liked still more the feeling that when its beautiful old walls shut her in no one knew where she was. It seemed almost like being shut out of the world in some fairy place."



A Room with a View

by E. M. Forster, Published in 1905

Classic

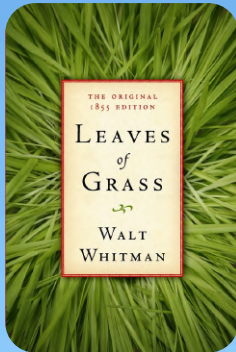
A Room with a View depicts the story of a young woman named Lucy in the early 1900s and the restrictions she faced as a woman in England in that time and the freedom and the love she finds in Italy, Rome that she had no idea existed.

If you are interested, there are also great movie adaptations of the story as well such as the 1985 adaptation of the book which won several Academy and BAFTA's awards.

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“... let yourself go. You are inclined to get muddled, if I may judge from last night. Let yourself go. Pull out from the depths those thoughts that you do not understand, and spread them out in the sunlight and know the meaning of them.”

“It isn’t possible to love and to part. You will wish that it was. You can transmute love, ignore it, muddle it, but you can never pull it out of you. I know by experience that the poets are right: love is eternal.”



Leaves of Grass

by Walt Whitman, Published in 1855
Poetry Collection

The Poetry collection of the American writer and poet, Walt Whitman, Starts with the poem “Song of Myself” as a celebration of nature and humanity’s place within it. In this collection of poetry, we see that Whitman considers himself as a part of the earth, not detached from it. The stylistic choices of the poet stress the unity of humanity, nature, and the divine. He believes that being a part of nature makes us responsible for its protection and preservation.

76 "...My tongue, every atom of my blood, form'd from this soil, this air,
Born here of parents born here from parents the same, and their
parents the same,
I, now thirty-seven years old in perfect health begin,
Hoping to cease not till death..."



Biography

**Biography of Ernest Hemingway:
Chasing the Dream**
Sarah Rostami



Biography of Ernest Hemingway: Chasing the Dream



Sarah Rostami


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Ernest Hemingway, a literary titan of the 20th century, stands as a symbol of American prose, celebrated for his lean style, exploration of masculinity, and lasting impact on the literary world. Born on July 21, 1899, in Oak Park, Illinois, he was the second of six children born to Clarence Edmonds Hemingway, a physician, and Grace Hall Hemingway, a musician and teacher. The values of his upbringing in Oak Park, however, would stand in stark contrast to the adventurous path he would later forge.

From his early years, Hemingway cultivated a profound connection with nature, spending summers at the family's cottage on Walloon Lake in northern Michigan. It was there he learned to hunt, fish, and appreciate the wilderness – themes that would echo throughout his writing. Though Hemingway excelled in English during his schooling, he often chafed against the constraints of the academic environment. He honed his writing skills by contributing to the school newspaper, *Trapeze*, where he developed a concise, journalistic style.

Rejecting the conventional path of college, Hemingway yearned for immediate experience. In 1917, he found work as a cub reporter for *The Kansas City Star*, adhering to the newspaper's rigid guidelines for clear, factual prose. This formative experience profoundly shaped his distinctive style, emphasizing brevity, accuracy, and objectivity.

Hemingway's desire for firsthand experience led him to Europe during World War I. Unable to enlist due to an eye defect, he volunteered as an ambulance driver for the American Red Cross in Italy in 1918. Serving near the front lines, he was severely wounded by mortar fire while delivering supplies to soldiers, an event that left an indelible mark on his psyche and became a recurring motif in his fiction, exploring themes of trauma, courage, and the futility of war.



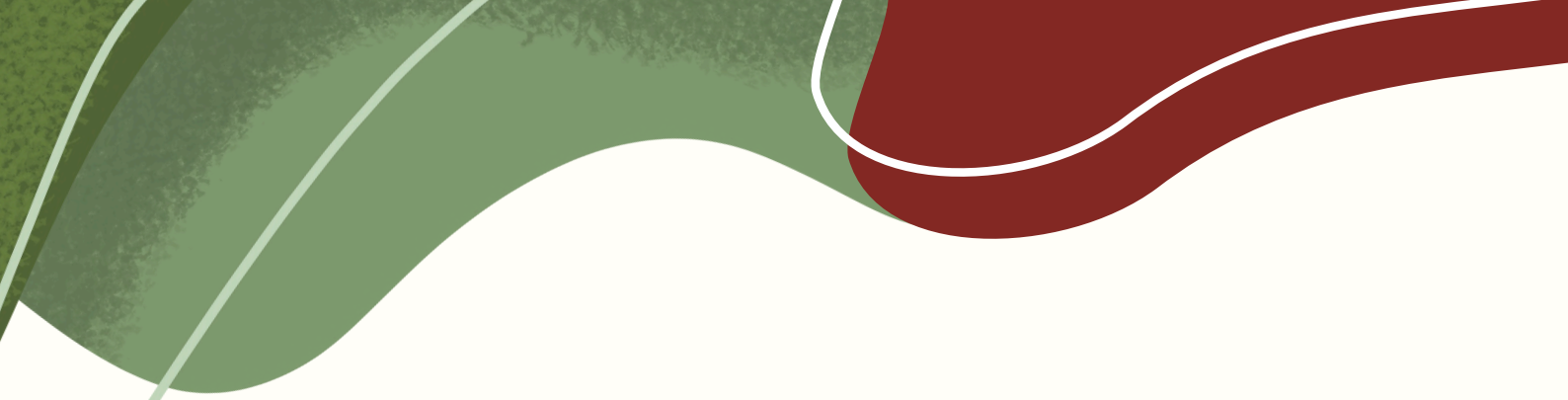
After the war, Hemingway moved to Paris, immersing himself in the vibrant expatriate community that Gertrude Stein called the "Lost Generation." There, he was influenced by modernist writers such as Stein, Ezra Pound, and James Joyce, who encouraged him to experiment with language and narrative structure. *In Our Time*, a collection of short stories published in 1925, showcased Hemingway's burgeoning style and established his reputation as a writer of great promise. Interspersed with stark vignettes depicting the brutal realities of war and bullfighting, these stories explored themes of alienation, violence, and the search for meaning in a chaotic world.

The late 1920s and 1930s brought Hemingway widespread literary success and fame. *The Sun Also Rises*, published in 1926, captured the spirit of the Lost Generation with its poignant portrayal of disillusionment and aimlessness among a group of expatriates in post-war Europe. This novel, with its spare prose, realistic dialogue, and focus on the emotional lives of its characters, revolutionized modern fiction. In 1929, Hemingway released *A Farewell to Arms*, a tragic love story set against the backdrop of World War I and inspired by his own wartime experiences in Italy. The novel, which tells the tale of an American ambulance driver and an English nurse, is celebrated for its powerful depiction of the horrors of war and its exploration of themes of love, loss, and mortality.

Hemingway's fascination with courage, ritual, and the confrontation with death found expression in *Death in the Afternoon*, a non-fiction work published in 1932, detailing Spanish bullfighting and providing insights into his writing philosophy, emphasizing the importance of direct observation and authentic experience. *Green Hills of Africa*, a semi-autobiographical account of a safari in East Africa published in 1935, explored themes of masculinity, adventure, and the relationship between man and nature, offering further glimpses into Hemingway's personal values and artistic preoccupations.

Set in Key West and Cuba during the Great Depression, *To Have and Have Not*, published in 1937, portrayed the struggles of Harry Morgan, a fishing boat captain forced into smuggling to survive. The novel explores themes of economic hardship, social injustice, and the disintegration of moral values in a world defined by desperation. Hemingway's involvement in the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) as a journalist and supporter of the Republican cause deeply affected him. His experiences in Spain inspired *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, published in 1940, a novel that tells the story of Robert Jordan, an American volunteer fighting with the Republican guerrillas, exploring themes of sacrifice, loyalty, and the moral ambiguities of war

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While Hemingway continued to write in the years that followed, his later life was marked by personal struggles, declining health, and a shift in critical reception. He served as a war correspondent during World War II, witnessing combat in Europe and participating in the liberation of Paris. Following the war, he lived primarily in Cuba and Idaho, battling depression, alcoholism, and declining physical health. In 1952, he experienced a return to form with *The Old Man and the Sea*, a simple yet profound story of an aging Cuban fisherman's struggle against a giant marlin. This novella earned him the Pulitzer Prize in 1953 and is celebrated for its themes of perseverance, courage, and the dignity of human struggle. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1954, recognizing his "mastery of the art of narrative, most recently demonstrated in *The Old Man and the Sea*, and for the influence that he has exerted on contemporary style."

In the late 1950s, Hemingway's mental health deteriorated rapidly. He suffered from severe depression, paranoia, and memory loss. He underwent electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) at the Mayo Clinic, but the treatment proved ineffective and may have worsened his condition. After several hospitalizations for psychiatric treatment, Hemingway took his own life with a shotgun at his home in Ketchum, Idaho, on July 2, 1961, at the age of 61.

Hemingway's literary style and recurring themes have had an undeniable influence on 20th-century literature. His minimalist prose, often referred to as the "iceberg theory," emphasized the importance of direct observation and authentic experience. He believed that the most powerful writing was that which omitted unnecessary details, allowing the reader to fill in the gaps and engage with the story on a deeper level. Masculinity, courage, stoicism, and the confrontation with death were central to his work, often portrayed through strong, silent male characters who adhered to a code of honor and faced adversity with grace and dignity. The impact of war and trauma on the human psyche, the beauty and power of nature, and the feelings of loss and disillusionment in a world devoid of purpose were recurring themes in his fiction.

Ernest Hemingway left behind an enduring legacy, influencing generations of writers with his distinctive style and iconic themes. His minimalist prose revolutionized modern fiction, his portrayal of strong, stoic male characters created a lasting archetype in American literature, and his works continue to resonate with readers today, exploring timeless aspects of the human condition. While his work has faced criticism for its portrayal of women and its sometimes-simplistic view of masculinity, his contributions to literature remain significant, ensuring his place as one of the most important and influential writers of the 20th century.

References:

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INTERVIEWS

Voices of Influence

Profterview with Dr. Abbas Zare-ee

Ainoosh Narimani

An Interview with Dr. Hamed Habibzadeh

RadioUK



Profterview with Dr. Abbas Zare-ee



Ainoosh Narimani
 B.A. Student of English Translation
 University of Kashan

Upon a personal request from the editors of the institutional publication "Hashtag" at the Faculty of Literature and Foreign Languages of the University of Kashan at the end of April 2025, it is with great pleasure that I reply the questions they posed.

Could you please tell us about your degree and academic background? Do you do anything other than teaching at this university at the moment?

About my background as some readers may already know, I am a full-time associate professor at the University of Kashan working with BA and MA learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). I received my BA, MA, and Ph.D. degrees in English Language Teaching from the University of Isfahan and completed research attachments at famous international universities like University of Reading in the UK, University Malaya in Kuala Lumpur, and Sheffield University, UK. My expertise is in the area of ELT methodology, individual differences in EFL reading and writing, language acquisition theories, and research methods. I have published some research articles and books in the field and have presented at many international conferences. Academic work has been my main engagement over these years. Even though I am a certified translator as well, I have limited my translations to academic texts at the workplace. I am also a family man and do a little bit of gardening at home in my spare time.



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Are there any specific authors or figures in this field that you believe are essential for students to read and know about?

Research and instruction in EFL owe a lot to many great scholars from around the world who spent their lifetime discovering some of the mysteries. As a learner, I have and will continue to benefit from the works of some (e.g. in random order, Chomsky, Halliday and Hasan, Paul Nation, William Grabe, Diane Larsen Freeman, Douglas Brown, Martin Atkinson, L. Yarmohammadi, Late K Safavi, F. Moshfeghi, M.H. Tahririan...). I do not intend to be unfair by mentioning just a few names."

What is the most challenging part of teaching in your opinion?

The most challenging parts of my job, like those of many of my colleagues, have been the acquisition, formal transition, and the co-construction of knowledge in my field in the truest sense of the words."

Can you share a memorable moment from your teaching career in this university?

Teaching, in both classical and technology-enhanced modes, is a profession filled with memorable experiences shared with learned communities. I was, for instance, invited once to run an in-service training workshop for local EFL teachers and was thrilled to find out that all participating teachers in the program had once been my students."

Any final words?

I wish all EFL learners and practitioners success and happiness.



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An English videocast by English Students' Association of the University of Kashan

In this Episode, Dr. Hamed Habibzadeh, a faculty member of the English Department at the University of Kashan, sits down for an exclusive interview. Dr. Habibzadeh talks about his life's journey, his friendship with Mr. Ali Sabetipoor, and shares some special memories. He also tackles challenging questions, offering unique insights and perspectives. Dr. Habibzadeh reflects on his educational journey, discussing his high school major, student life, and the professors who influenced him. He shares moments from his student years, touching on themes of loneliness and companionship. He also talks about his involvement with ESA, whether he would still choose the road less traveled, and what he hopes students remember about him.

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Scan me!

Featured Guest: Dr. Hamed Habibzadeh
Moderator: Sajedah Salimi
Editor: Esmaeil Bakhshi



"This is the philosophy of my life as well. It is based on traveling. Going around and always coming back."

"We are playing. I am a player. Whether I am a good player or not a good player, that's a different story."

"Life is a matter of nouns and verbs."

"... One is Tamasha, the other is Amouzegar. These are the words that I think are parts of my identity."

"I hope that whenever I'm remembered, I'm remembered in full name, Hamed Habibzadeh."



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@RadioUK2024

POETRY: Ink and Imagination



" ... "

MAHRA KHADEMI

GRAVE GARDENER

FATEMEH SADAT TABATABAEI

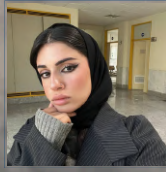
TRUE LOVE

RAAZ GHORBANI

SONNET 1

Translated by Maral Masti

“ ... ”



Mahra Khademi
B.A. Student of English Literature
University of Kashan

this autumn

I will forgive my soul
as leaves fall down and winds grow cold.
the past, once near, fades far behind,
a distant echo I won't mind.

in quiet breath of autumn,
I'll find my peace,
the pain i carried drifts away,
in autumn's quiet, cool decay.

with storms that howl and skies that
weep,
this autumn, I'll my promise keep.

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Grave Gardener



Fatemeh Sadat Tabatabaei

B.A. Student of English Literature
University of Kashan

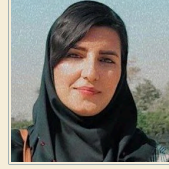
“A LOT OF TREES
GROWING IN HER EYES
BRANCHES OF WILLOWS
REDDENING HER SIGHT

DRIED LAKE OF TEARS
REVIVING AGAIN
SAILOR OF THAT TEARS
WAITING FOR THE PAIN

LONELY BY HERSELF
SUNK IN MISERY
WEARY OF ATTEMPT
KILLED BY VILLAINY”



True Love



Raaz Ghorbani

B.A. Student of English Literature

University of Kashan

Thou, a part of my soul, thou art an end to winter's rule
Thy time be fleeting, and looks impossible to roll back the clock
I wish I were the victor in the game of spring and the cold's fierce pull
Yet, doth it matter? For thy love grows even in the frost's shock
First thy presence like a freshly frozen icicle, sturdy and perpetual
Just as like never supposed to be eliminated, even by God's decree
But as the radiance of the sun melts the icicle, little by little
Thy presence began to fade, as thine ice doth turn to vapor, passing to be.
As the sun who ever wears a cloudy veil in the cold
Severing ties with me in my hardship untold
And as the rain and storm deny the sun to rise with pride
So fate doth not allow our love to shine or to abide.
But love is not like a rootless tree that falls on windy days
It grows vaster and stronger through the hardest of ways.

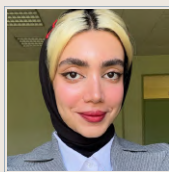
غزل یک

ألا يا أَيُّهَا السَّاقِي أَدِرْ كَأَنَّسًا و ناولِهَا

که عشق آسان نمود اوّل ولی افتاد مشکل‌ها
به بوی نافه‌ای کآخر صبا زان طره بگشاید
ز تاب جعد مشکینش چه خون افتاد در دل‌ها
مرا در منزل جانان چه امن عیش چون هر دم
جرس فریاد می‌دارد که بر بندید محمل‌ها
به می سجاده رنگین کن گرت پیر مغان گوید
که سالک بی‌خبر نبود ز راه و رسم منزل‌ها
شب تاریک و بیم موج و گردابی چنین هایل
کجا دانند حال ما سبکباران ساحل‌ها
همه کارم ز خودکامی به بدنامی کشید آخر
نهان کی ماند آن رازی کزو سازند محفل‌ها
حضوری گر همی خواهی از او غایب مشو حافظ
مشی ما تَلَقَّ مِنْ تَهْوَى دَعِ الدُّنْيَا و أَهْمِلْهَا

حافظ

Translated Poem - Sonnet I



Maral Masti

B.A. Student of English Translation
University of Kashan

Ho, cup bearer, haste. Bring the beaker, fill it, and pass it round the ring.

Love seemed quite easy at first, but the obstacles soon did cling.

In the morning air, she inebriates one by ripping the braids of her musky-scented hair apart;

Her dark twisted silk turns a knife inside my bleeding heart.

My heart finds not shelter in the bosom of the lover,

While a bell cries, "Beware! There are but tears at the end of this novel."

Shall the taverner demand, caress your prayer-mat with the red of wine;

For his wont is with the right way twined.

In the abyss of darkness and dread is my soul crinkled;

How could the mindless claim fathom as they sprinkle?

My momentarily obstinacy gave way to infamy;

To conceal what is sought after, is it feasible for me?

Hafez, if you crave a taste of a glimpse, never take leave;

When you, at length, meet the lover, for this world, bring an end to grieve.

A Note on the Translation

As a student of English Translation, I have come to realize that translating poetry is far more than just transferring words from one language to another. It is in fact about carrying the soul of the poem across cultural and linguistic boundaries. In my work, I tried to preserve layered meanings, emotional tones, and cultural references that don't always have direct equivalents. I have often adjusted sentence structures or chosen alternative words to maintain the tone and mood. Recreating the poem's musicality means using near rhymes or internal rhythm when exact forms are not possible. Also, when faced with puns or double meanings, I tried to find creative solutions—sometimes through rephrasing, sometimes with a helpful note. Ultimately, translating poetry is about striking a delicate balance between staying true to the original and making artistic choices that keep the heart of the poem alive.

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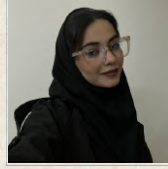


Fiction

Farewell, Wonderland
Kimia Ghofrani



The Fall of Wisdom
Mehrnoosh Talari

Farewell, Wonderland



Kimia Ghofrani

B.A. Student of English Literature
University of Kashan



He saw the daylight cascading through the labyrinth which had entrapped him all his life. He had lost count of all the sleepless nights spent dreaming of her incandescent gleam, fantasizing her bosom intertwined with his. Romanticizing the folklores, she had narrated was never enough, the notion had been carried out all his life. Nothing could change his mind at that moment; he was intending to leap towards death.

“Beware my child, the realm of the embers is no harbor to mortal flesh. Do you still aspire to embrace me?” The source of his longing asked as he was eulogizing her glow. “I am aware of the prophecy. I spent my days glamorizing your grace, pondering on your elegance, and by all means, I have chosen you.” With opal eyes, he gazed upon the boundless ocean, then looked back to the sky. The embodiment of celestial power herself has talked to him.

Fear was no companion of his. Drifting away the waxed wings of liberation, he was thinking about the sweet hoax coaxing him to alteration. Blind to the unforeseen aftermath of his action, he sealed his fate. Carrying out the weight of his crestfallen decision, he feverishly levitated and caught his tragic death. A moment later, the sky rained fire on him as he rose through the eternal blue.

“Fly to me fearless son of Daedalus. Spread your bravery wings as the touch of my enflamed fingertips down your split spine burns your spirit. Hold on to your ambitious heart for the sake of the hideout which kept your body on the land. You will be free from the chains of mortality.” The golden deity’s voice felt more like a merciful caress rather than a persuasion to oblivion.

“I am ready to rise above the path of devotion. For all the years spent yearning for the slightest touch of your warmth, I declare myself as your devotee.” Icarus closed his eyes as the sun put gentle kisses on his wings. Feathers fluttered down to the mystical waters beneath him just before he felt the grab of the cool ocean swallowing him whole. “I am ash from your fire.” He spoke before casting a final glance towards the sky.

The Fall of Wisdom



Mehrnoosh Talari

B.A. Student of English Literature

University of Kashan

The air in the halls of Olympus was thick with the scent of ambrosia and storm winds, but beneath the golden light, something darker festered. Athena, goddess of wisdom, stood rigid before Hera, her gray eyes burning like steel in fire.

"You question my rule?" Hera's voice was a whip-crack, her golden peacock mantle shimmering with barely restrained power. "You, who owe your very existence to Zeus's whim?"

Athena's fingers curled into fists. "I owe my wisdom to no one. And if your rule is so fragile it cannot bear questioning, then it is no rule at all, only tyranny."

The words hung in the air like a blade unsheathed. Around them, the gods fell silent. Even Apollo's lyre stilled, then it was followed by laughter. Deep, thunderous, and utterly humorless.

Zeus rose from his throne, his form swelling with the promise of a storm. "Enough." A single word, yet it shook the pillars of Olympus. "You tear at each other like mortals, forgetting what you are." His gaze settled on Athena, and for the first time in centuries, she felt something cold coil in her gut. It was *fear*.

"You, daughter, have forgotten your place."

Lightning split the heavens.

She woke gasping, her body drenched in sweat, her heart pounding like a war drum. The scent of exhaust and fried food assaulted her senses. The hum of distant traffic. The chatter of strangers.

Where-?

Her hands trembled as she pushed herself up from the pavement. She was in a city, Athens. A voice in her mind supplied but it was wrong. Too loud. Too bright. Too small.

And she was...

She looked down at herself. No armor. No spear. Just a woman in a tattered coat, her skin grimy, her throat parched.

Who am I?

The name came to her in a whisper. *Athena*.

But that meant nothing.

Days bled into weeks. She slept in doorways, ate scraps, wandered like a ghost through the city that bore her name.

Then, one evening, she found herself standing before the Parthenon.

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Moonlight shone on the ancient stones, and something inside her ached. She reached out, her fingers brushing the weathered marble and for a heartbeat, she remembered. The scent of incense. The weight of a shield. The roar of battle. The taste of ambrosia on her tongue.

She jerked back, her breath ragged.

What is happening to me?

The visions came faster after that. A museum exhibit on ancient warfare sent her reeling with phantom memories of leading armies. A scholar's lecture on Greek philosophy made her fists clench—she had been there; she had spoken those words.

And then, one night, in the ruins of an old temple, she found a scroll. The moment her fingers touched the parchment, the words shifted, rearranging themselves into a message only she could see:

"Remember who you are."

The memories crashed over her like a tidal wave. Zeus. Hera. Her banishment.

They cast me out.

Rage burned through her veins, purer than any mortal emotion. She was *Athena*, goddess of wisdom, and she had been wronged.

But she was no longer a goddess.

Her body was weak. Her power, a flickering ember. Yet her mind, her mind was sharp as ever.

And Olympus was waiting.

The ascent was agony. Every step toward the divine realm tore at her mortal flesh, but she gritted her teeth and climbed.

When she finally stood before the gates of Olympus, they did not open for her.

Zeus awaited her beyond them, his expression unreadable.

"You were meant to learn humility," he boomed. "Not defiance."

"You were meant to be just," she shot back, her voice raw. "Yet here we are."

For a moment, the sky darkened. The other gods watched in silence.

Then Zeus raised his hand.

Lightning struck.

Pain.

Then nothing.

And yet...

She was still here.

Her mortal form was gone, but her essence remained, swirling in the void between stars.

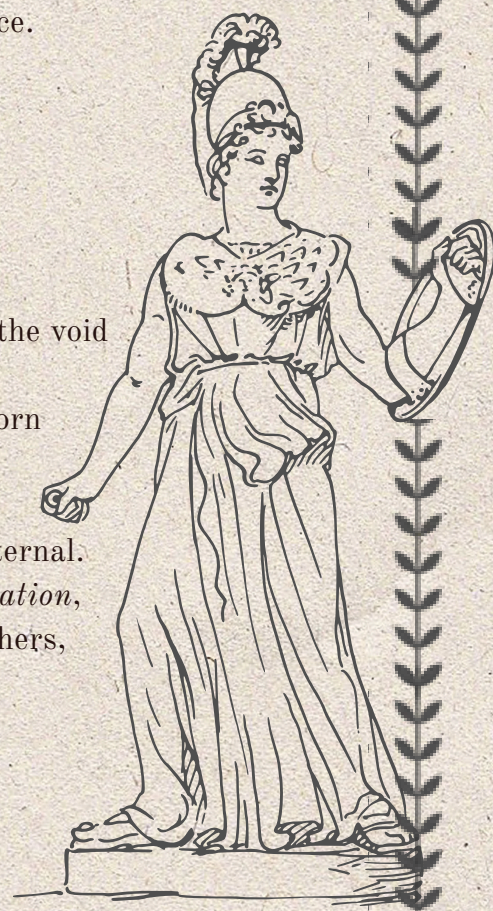
Zeus's voice reached her, softer now. "You were always too stubborn to die quietly."

A flicker of warmth. A shaping of light.

And then, she was scattered across the night sky, her brilliance eternal.

To this day, when mortals look up, they see her. *Athena's constellation*, burning bright against the darkness. Some say it is a warning. Others, a guide. But those who listen closely swear they can still hear her voice on the wind, whispering the oldest truth of all:

"Wisdom without mercy is no wisdom at all."



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DREAM PALETTE

“I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud”



Mehrnoosh Talari

B.A. Student of English Literature
University of Kashan



...r them as the
...d barked at beaut
...a break in the wood
...avenue, the beeches
...gold, and beyond the old
...ing in the sunshine, and
...gering before it.
...h repose it looked; times
...M. F. H.'s day, when the
...d the woods and
...s or the
...e sad
...n galla
...ot-an
...he



Enjoy the little things in life, for one day you'll look back and realise they were the big things.

not all that wander are lost

but I sure am

"Do not feel lonely. The entire universe is within you."

I listen the fresh gentle wild breeze blossom



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Comic Story



Fatemeh Jafari Fard
B.A. Student of English Translation
University of Kashan



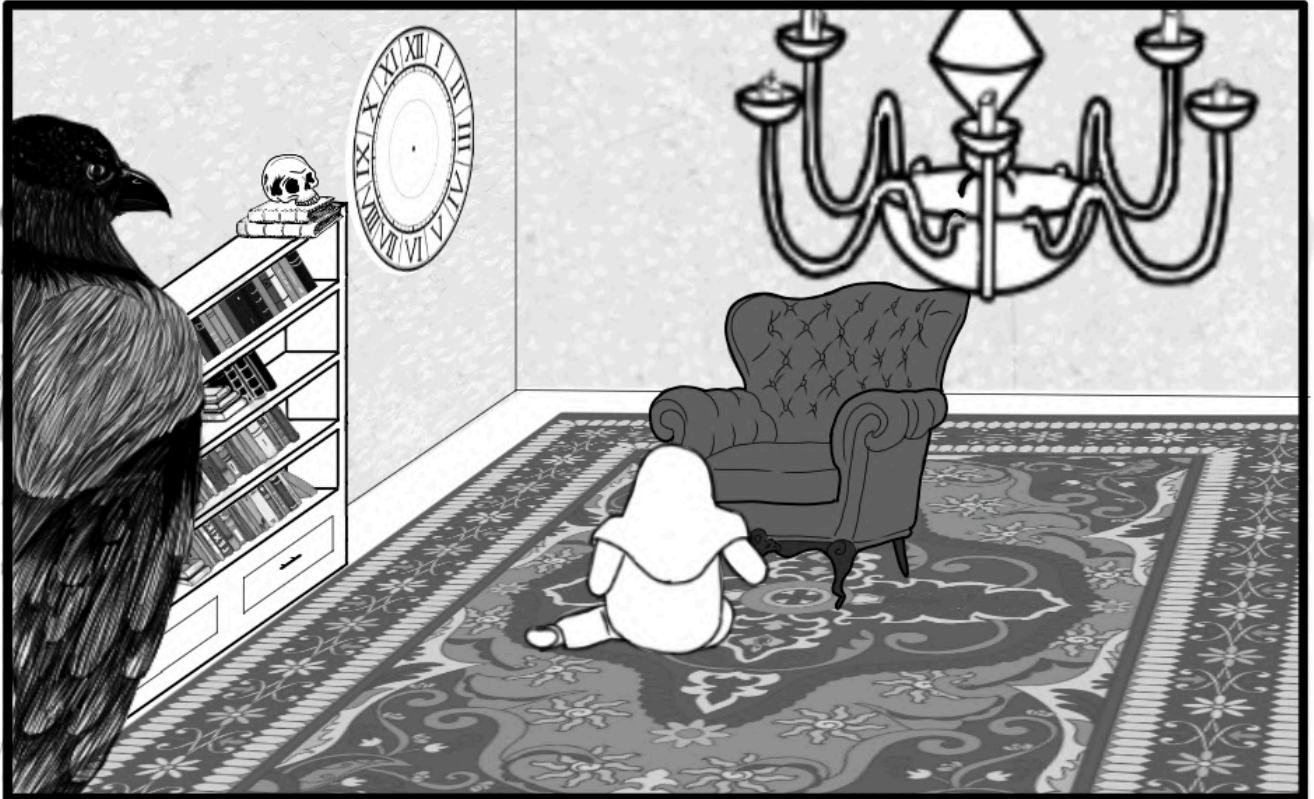
Comic Story

4th Episode





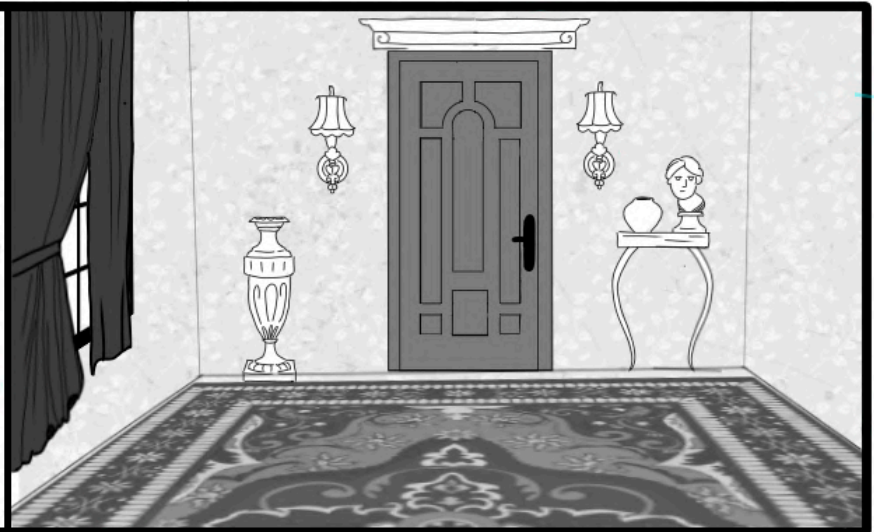
where is this place?

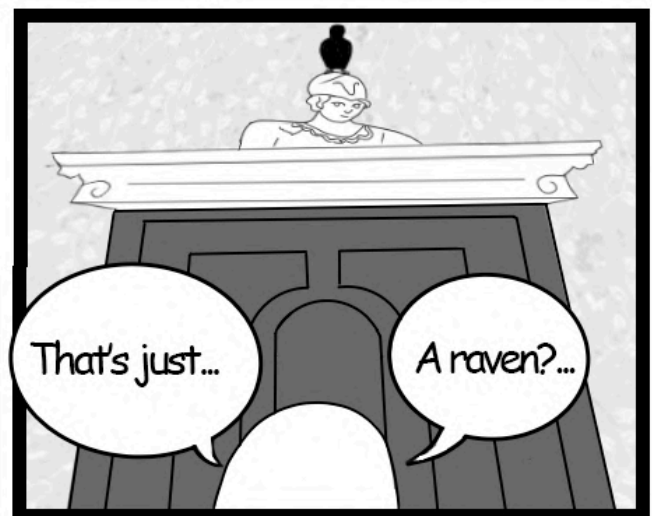
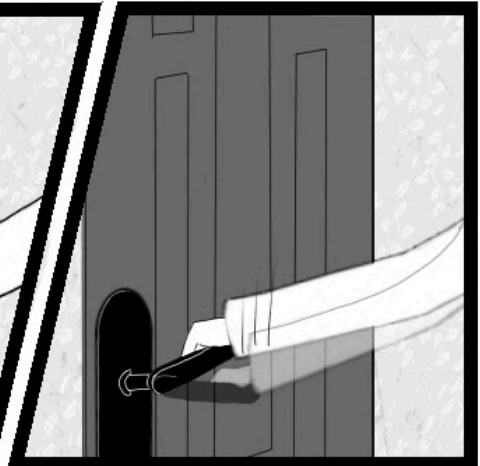
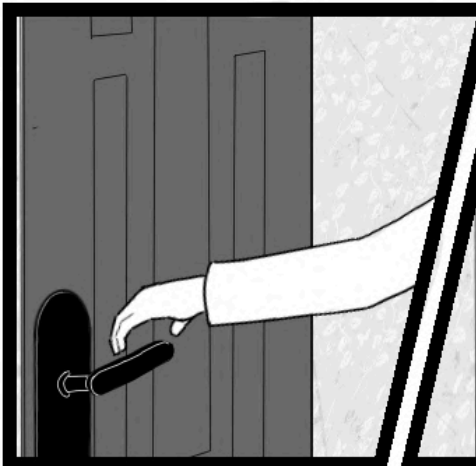
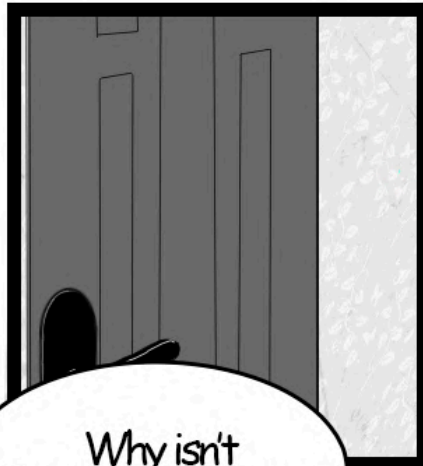


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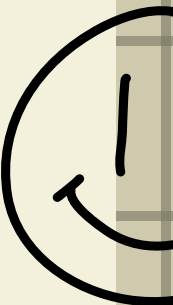
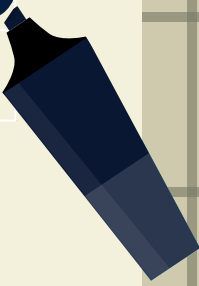
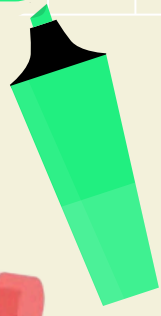
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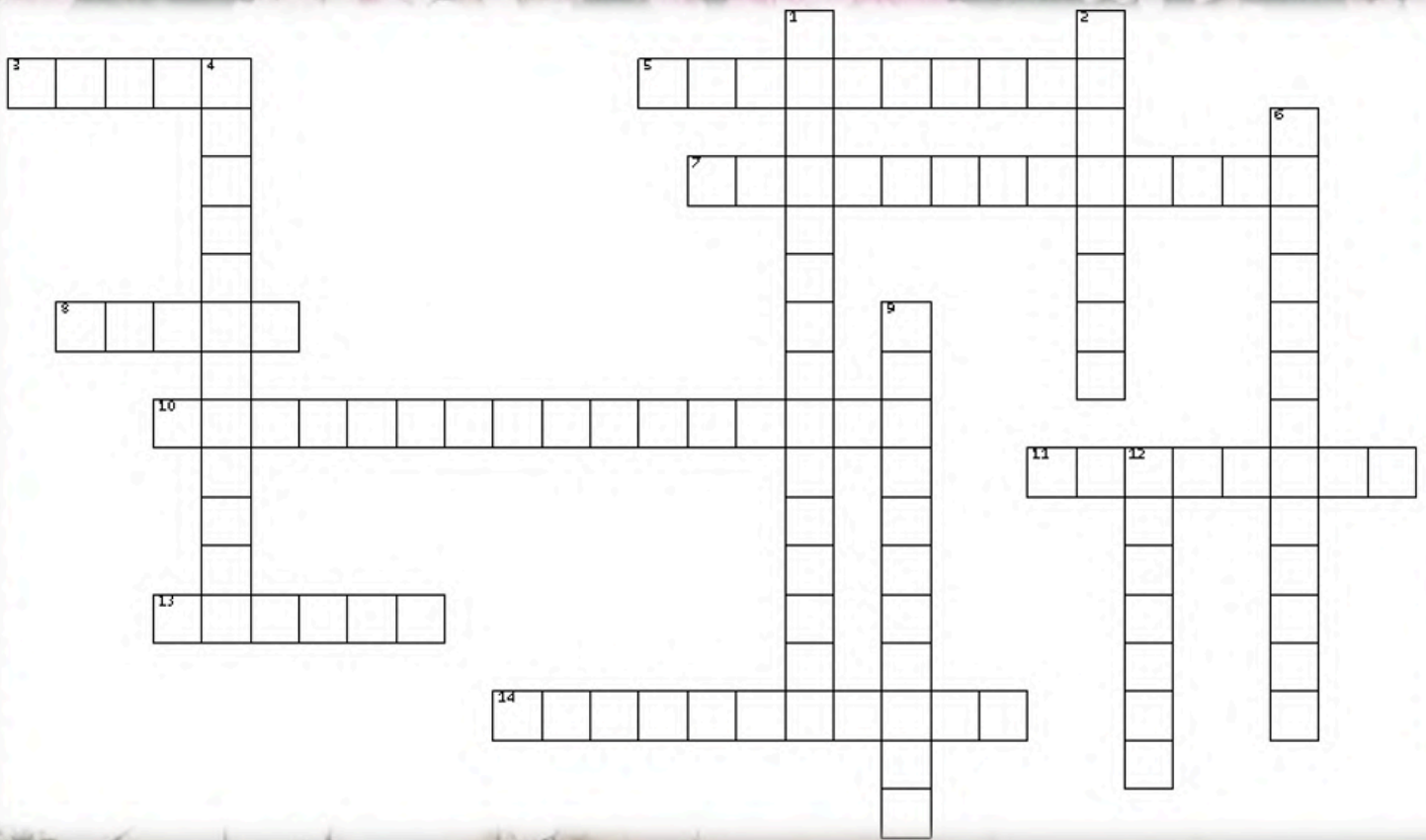


Solve and Savor *feels*

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CROSS WORD PUZZLE!



ACROSS

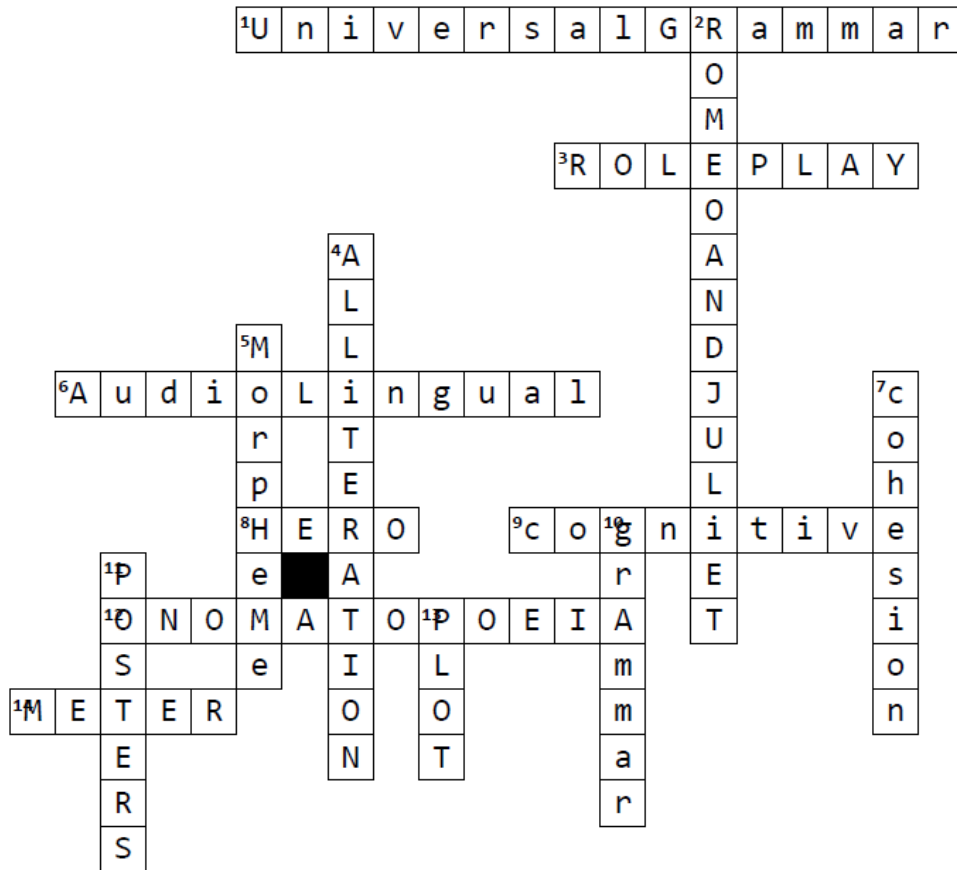
3. A form of literature intended to be performed on stage
5. The famous Irish author who wrote Ulysses
7. An error made by English learners when internalizing incorrect patterns from early exposure
8. A fictional story often involving animals that teaches a moral lesson
10. Giving human traits to non-humans
11. The smallest meaningful unit of language
13. The structural element of a story where tension reaches its highest point
14. Guessing word meanings from context

DOWN

1. A literary device where non-human objects are given human traits
2. A type of figurative language that compares two unlike things without using "like" or "as"
4. A language teaching method focusing on mimicking native speakers' sentences without explanations
6. 18th-century movement focused on reason
9. A style of writing that focuses on detailed descriptions of nature and human
12. The receptive language skill that involves interpreting written texts

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Hashtag 15th Solve and Savor Answer Sheet



Across

1. A language theory by Chomsky, explaining humans' innate ability to learn grammar
3. A teaching method focusing on using real-world scenarios to practice English
6. A teaching method focusing on drills and repetition
8. A synonym for "protagonist" in literature
9. Larsen-Freeman's theory combines grammar, vocabulary, and _____ principles
12. An adjective describing words that imitate sounds
14. A term for the rhythm of a poem or piece of writing

Down

2. Shakespearean tragedy featuring star-crossed lovers
4. A poetic device that repeats the same sound at the beginning of words
5. The smallest units of meaning within discourse
7. Sentences are connected at the sentence level, so they have...
10. Syntax
11. A teaching aid that uses visual elements to aid comprehension
13. An event or series of events in a story



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