Chapter 13: Life

Summary

The poem expresses the optimistic resolve of a young man who embraces life with enthusiasm and resilience. He resolves to live each year to the fullest, facing forward without dwelling on the past or fearing the future. With a "whole and happy heart," he accepts both youth and age as natural parts of his journey.

The speaker welcomes life's unpredictable path—whether uphill or downhill, rough or smooth—finding joy in the pursuit of timeless aspirations: meaningful friendships, thrilling adventures, and personal fulfillment ("a crown"). His courage remains steadfast, and he holds hope that the final phase of his journey will be the most rewarding.

Hindi Translation

यह कविता एक युवक के आशावादी दृष्टिकोण को व्यक्त करती है जो जीवन को पूर्ण उत्साह और साहस के साथ जीने का संकल्प लेता है। वह अतीत के पछतावों या भविष्य की चिंताओं में फँसने के बजाय, वर्तमान में जीने पर बल देता है। एक पूर्ण और प्रसन्न हृदय के साथ, वह युवावस्था और वृद्धावस्था दोनों को जीवन की प्राकृतिक यात्रा के रूप में स्वीकार करता है।

कवि जीवन के अनिश्चित मार्ग - चाहे वह ऊबड़-खाबड़ हो या सरल, ऊपर चढ़ने का हो या नीचे उतरने का - को खुले मन से अपनाता है। वह बाल्यकाल से ही खोजी गई चीज़ों - सच्ची मित्रता, रोमांचक अनुभवों और व्यक्तिगत पूर्णता ("मुकुट") की प्राप्ति - में आनंद ढूँढता है। उसका साहस अडिग रहता है, और उसे आशा है कि जीवन की अंतिम मोड़ सबसे सुखद होगी।

Read each line from the poem and choose the most accurate interpretation:

1. "Let me but live my life from year to year."

   a) The speaker wishes to live passively, taking no control over his life.

   b) The speaker desires to live each year fully, embracing life as it comes.

   c) The speaker is afraid of aging and wants time to stop.

   d) The speaker regrets his past and refuses to move forward.

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2. "Not hurrying to, nor turning from the goal;"

a) The speaker rushes toward success without patience.
b) The speaker avoids setting any goals in life.
c) The speaker moves steadily toward his purpose without haste or fear.
d) The speaker frequently changes his ambitions.

3. "Not mourning for the things that disappear in the dim past,"

a) The speaker refuses to dwell on things that are gone.
b) The speaker is consumed by grief over lost memories.
c) The speaker has forgotten his past entirely.
d) The speaker believes the past was better than the present.

4. "But with a whole and happy heart, that pays its toll to Youth and Age,"

a) The speaker resents both youth and old age.
b) The speaker fears growing old and losing his youth.
c) The speaker believes happiness is only for the young.
d) The speaker accepts the passage of time with gratitude.

5. "Still seeking what I sought when but a boy."

a) The speaker has given up on his childhood dreams.
b) The speaker continues to pursue the same passions he had as a child.
c) The speaker regrets not achieving his early ambitions.
d) The speaker believes childhood dreams are unrealistic.

6. "And hope the road's last turn will be the best."

a) The speaker dreads what the future holds.

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b) The speaker believes life will only get worse with time.

c) The speaker is uncertain about his destiny.

d) The speaker remains optimistic that the future will bring fulfillment.

7. "With forward face and unreluctant soul;"

a) The speaker hesitates and looks back frequently.

b) The speaker faces the future eagerly and without resistance.

c) The speaker is afraid to move forward in life.

d) The speaker ignores the future and lives only in the present.

8. "O'er rough or smooth, the journey will be joy:"

a) The speaker finds joy in the journey, regardless of difficulties.

b) The speaker believes only easy paths lead to happiness.

c) The speaker complains when life becomes challenging.

d) The speaker avoids rough paths to protect their happiness.

9. "New friendship, high adventure, and a crown."

a) The speaker seeks material wealth above all else.

b) The speaker is no longer interested in making new friends.

c) The speaker associates adventure with danger and avoids it.

d) The speaker values companionship, thrilling experiences, and personal achievement.

10. "My heart will keep the courage of the quest."

a) The speaker is ready to abandon their goals if challenged.

b) The speaker doubts their ability to succeed.

c) The speaker believes courage is unnecessary for fulfillment.

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d) The speaker's determination will remain strong despite obstacles.

Multiple Choice Questions

1. What is the central theme of the poem?

a) Fear of aging and nostalgia for lost youth.
b) Regret over missed opportunities in the past.
c) The inevitability of suffering and hardship.
d) Embracing life's journey with optimism and courage.

2. How does the speaker view the past?

a) As a source of pain that should be forgotten.
b) As a time of mistakes that haunt the present.
c) As irrelevant to future happiness.
d) As something to cherish but not dwell on.

3. What does the phrase "With forward face and unreluctant soul" suggest?

a) The speaker is hesitant about the future.
b) The speaker moves forward eagerly and without fear.
c) The speaker is forced to face challenges unwillingly.
d) The speaker ignores both past and future.

4. What does the speaker seek throughout life?

a) Wealth and material success.
b) Fame and recognition.
c) Friendship, adventure, and personal fulfillment.
d) Escape from responsibilities.

5. How does the speaker feel about the journey of life?

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a) It is full of unavoidable suffering.

b) It should be rushed to reach goals faster.

c) It is meaningless without guarantees of success.

d) It is joyful whether the path is rough or smooth.

6. What does the line "And hope the road's last turn will be the best" imply?

a) The speaker expects life to end in disappointment.

b) The speaker believes old age is the worst phase of life.

c) The speaker remains hopeful for a fulfilling future.

d) The speaker fears the uncertainty of death.

7. How does the speaker approach aging?

a) With resistance and sorrow.

b) With acceptance and gratitude.

c) With denial and avoidance.

d) With indifference.

8. What does the "crown" symbolize in the poem?

a) Royalty and power.

b) The burden of responsibilities.

c) Achievement or personal triumph.

d) A literal object the speaker desires.

9. What attitude does the speaker have toward challenges?

a) Fearful avoidance.

b) Courage and perseverance.

c) Resentment and frustration.

d) Indifference.

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10. What lesson does the poem convey?

a) Life is short, so one must hurry to succeed.

b) Happiness comes from ignoring hardships.

c) A fulfilling life requires embracing both joys and struggles.

d) The past defines one's future.

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