

# The idea of living a fulfilling life in don marquis' poem "lesson of the moth"

[Art & Culture](#), [Symbolism](#)



“ You only live once” is a famous quote that has stretched back from the year 2011 that holds much truth even today. To the billions and billions of humans that thrive on planet earth, there is only one chance at paradise; one chance at life. Searching for inspiration and meaning in one’s life is a common milestone to living a fulfilling journey. However, when looking for inspiration and guidance in life, the immediate reaction is to look for a massive and quick changing moment that alters the future immediately. When in reality, paying attention to the world as a combined whole can teach one to better themselves from day to day.

Within Don Marquis’ poem, “ Lesson of the Moth”, the use of detailed imagery and symbolism constructs a community of awareness towards living a fulfilling life that includes the recognition of searching for meaning and guidance in a sacrificial way to strengthen diverse aspects of one’s life in a positive way that simultaneously balances risk and reward. The style and tone of a personal reading can indefinitely procure an understanding from one individual to another about the fine details that a story can symbolize and inscript into a universal truth for living our lives. For some it takes a major revelation in order to turn their lives around and live more holistically. An example of this is through Don Marquis’ illustration of “ Lesson of the Moth”.

A simple short story that encapsulates major choices on how to live life. The story develops with a human observing a moth and how it sets itself up to experience the most important thing to itself in life. A flame. This Moth blindly follows light and flame despite eventually being killed by this energy.

However, it is not the story of how the Moth set itself up to get what it desired but instead what the Moth represents. A small insignificant-seeming creature that has very little impacts on people's thoughts and bodies. However insignificant, this Moth taught a great lesson about the choices in life and its concept need to be taken into consideration. A small simple story and symbol of living that one can add to their life for personal benefit. Looking for small cues in life that display truth is something that anybody can incorporate in their personal journey. Reading books, articles, and stories are all seemingly low risk actions that can teach an unbelievable amount about the world. As well, the search for one's unique values is seemingly easier due to experiencing new and different situations than before. In hindsight, a moral lesson can be extracted from this poem that loosely relates to the plot yet strongly relates everyone's life. Paying attention, interpreting and processing information from things such as spending time with friends and interacting at gatherings is another way to strengthen life experiences. Being immersed in social situations helps to build awareness on how people should be treated and how one would like to be treated themselves. Like mentioned before, the poem is based on a person that is alone and observing the Moth. With no one around, Archy has the ability to simply watch the Moth without being bothered, all the while on the contrary, no to talk to and no one to share his experiences with. This appears to be another low risk and high reward situation. However, taking initiative for managing one's own life can open unexplored doors to learning experiences.

Positive social interactions and the desire to have meaning in our lives describes the mental state which most people desire. We too are drawn to the biggest and most visible events, we wish to follow them or be part of them in our daily lives. Most humans have a tendency to get a quick answer or look for the immediate feedback in everything that surrounds us, thus, focusing on the things that are directly in front of us. However, this could be presented with high risk but not necessarily high yielding reward. We could be blinded by an impulse decision but we should recognize and treat it just as a reactionary response. However, the benefit of spending time with friends outweighs many risks and striving to better one's social interactions is a sign of a more fulfilling life. Lessons from the Moth also can be directly related to its underlying message of life. With its actions, the Moth portrays how life is pointless without a definitive purpose. One choice is to burn quickly but experience a few moments of joy prior to death. It is a choice to live a short but full, purposeful and meaningful life; the choice of truly enjoying ones time rather than living a boring life with little energy or no purpose.

Knowing and understanding the choices of the Moth can reform our own standards of life and change us to reach our ultimate flame. It is a battle of personal values between Risk and Reward. One often chooses to devote their entire live to what they believe is important to them; they sacrifice everything they know and love to fulfill their only goal in life. For the Moth, its ultimate sacrifice is its own life and never being able to live again. The

actions of the Moth provide us with interesting thoughts while we think about our own lives.

Overall, after reviewing Don Marquis' poem, through the use of literary devices, a notion of enlightenment and advice emerges that encourages us to live our lives to the fullest but with caution. We can enrich ourselves by reading writings produced by authors or by immersing ourselves into society around us, interacting with others, or learning from our own experiences. To reach the ultimate light as an absolute goal may not be a feasible target in every person's life. And only a select few will be able to embrace its energy and use it to better the world, but most importantly, themselves. We may also recognize that this process may not be quick for some but a rather gradual one and require long hours and dedication. Therefore, being a moth and searching for that constant energy of light is a life journey to fulfill in our lifetime. And as with anything, one's effort and care for their own future undoubtedly starts with the first step in the right direction.