

## Primary and Secondary Reflection on a Canary

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1. Once, during the early years of my adolescence, I had a pet canary. I kept him in a small cage which I place on the porch table. I never forgot to feed him regularly, a task which I never entrusted to anybody else.

2. I remember the time when I used to sit there on the porch, just listening to his beautiful singing. Whenever my friends called on me, I very often showed them my prized canary with pride. I had taught him to sing whenever I whistled a tune that was similar to his song.

3. Then one day, a terrible thing happened. After I had fed him I did not notice that I had left the cage door open. In a matter of minutes he was gone. My favorite pet had flown away, leaving behind him the empty cage, which I thought was so beautiful, and was not a mere reminder of the happy days when I used to hear him sing.

4. My first reaction was to try to get him back, no matter what it cost. I saw him perched on the fence, his wings not used to flying over long distances. I immediately rushed into the house and got my air rifle. I was desperate, and the only thought that was in my mind was to capture the creature even if it meant that I had to kill him. Fortunately, I was too late; when I returned, he was already gone.

5. I was angry at everything. I kept on telling myself that it was unjust, after all the trouble I went through taking care of the bird. I could not bear it if I was to see him in the possession of another person. Maybe, that was the reason why I wanted to kill him rather than to let him fly away.

6. Several days passed. One afternoon, just as the sun was about to set, I was sitting on the porch. Suddenly, I heard him singing. I was surprised to hear it because canary birds are seldom seen here, and when you hear one singing, you cannot just mistake it for some other bird's song. And my canary's singing. I cannot mistake for some other canaries.

7. I looked up and saw him, perched on one limbs of tree. That time, I felt a longing to have him back. He was so close, yet it was almost impossible to catch him. But the feeling quickly passed, because I realized that the song it was just the same as, if not more beautiful than, the song that I heard from the cage. The song was still mine, mine to hear, mine to enjoy for a moment.

8. As I looked at the yellow bird high up on the branches of the tree, it seemed as if he was happier then, because he was free. He was still my bird, yet he was free. That was the time I began to realize that every bird can, and does, sing a truly beautiful song. Unlike before when I

only know how to listen to the song of a bird in a cage, now I have learned how to listen to every bird I hear. As long as I could hear them, they were mine.

9. My neighbor's pet dog is rightfully mine if he wags his tail in joy when he sees me coming. Real possession can be mine to greater degree than the master's if the bond of friendship between that dog and me is greater.

10. Beauty can also be the object of possession. When I see a flower blooming, though it does not grow in my garden, I own it. Before, I would be tempted to pick that flower and bring it home with me. But now I realize that it is better to let it alone to bloom for me, rather than to have it within my reach only to see it wilt in my hand. Since I put value in it, it is, in a sense, my own.

11. Even spider web is a thing of beauty. Very often, I would watch spiders spinning their webs. I would be tempted to destroy the web.

12. I think that it is in man's nature to have sadistic tendencies. However, I would hold back my hand for I know that the fulfillment of my savage tendency is nothing when compared to the pleasure of appreciating the beauty of nature. Only then that I can say I am the richest man on earth.