

MIDDLE SCHOOL BLUES' POINTS-OF-VIEWS

MIDDLE SCHOOL BLUES: 3-PART, 3-ACT, POETRY-PLAY

PART 1: PROLOGUE. TEACHER'S INSTRUCTIONS, March 7, 1968.

*Dear English poetry students,
Your homework, to be finished tonight,
Is to craft a confessional piece,
To honor Nature in what you write,
And to extol "Natural" Beauty as your theme.*

PART 2: STORY. FALSE PORTRAIT OF A POET AS A YOUNG STUDENT

1.

*Just the other day
I sat watching a deer,
And when I first saw him,
He was standing quite near
A clear, sparkling stream.*

2.

*He turned toward me
And he moved with grace;
Even when startled
And fleeing with haste,
He had wings it seemed.*

3.

*I think he could have
Beat lightning in a race,
And just before he fled
I saw his face:
He had small eyes that gleamed.*

4.

*~~My unwritten epilogue
To my anti-poem is this,
The above confesses only
Depths to which I am pissed
And my satiric rejection of high culture as theme.~~*

-by Kathleen ("Corby") Corbett

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PART 3: ALTERNATIVE EPILOGUES A, B, AND C.

EPILOGUE A: SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S DEAF RESPONSE

*To write like this
at 12 years old!
You must agree, and
Corby must be told –
Her skill shall win her such esteem!*

EPILOGUE B: KATHLEEN'S THERAPIST'S INTERPRETATION

- I walk down the same street. There's a deep hole in the sidewalk. I see it there. I still fall in. It's a habit! My eyes are open. I know where I am. I get out immediately. – Portia Nelson, There's a Hole in My Sidewalk (1994)

1.

*She lied. She wrote she watched a deer,
And saw him stand beside and near
a clear and sparkling stream. She lied.*

2.

*There was no deer that moved with grace,
No sparkling stream, no flight with haste
No wing-born moves. She lied.*

3.

*No lightning speed that'd win a race,
No streamlined disappearing face,
And no small eyes that gleamed. She lied.*

4.

*So why the lies at twelve years old,
First person-voiced and nature themed -
To simply do as she'd been told?*

5.

*Well, that. But, more, as well. It seems
That lightning spark that'd taken hold
Her hand and soul were unseen screams.*

EPILOGUE C: FACT-CHECKED 12 YEAR OLD BLUES NEWS: "NATURE" AIN'T BEAUTIFUL

- I walk down another street. – Portia Nelson, There's a Hole in My Sidewalk (1994)

1.

*Sidewalk cracks, glass shards in toes, Aching back and head and bleeding nose,
Gaping holes in the bathroom floor Through which I see the downstairs door.*

2.

*The stool don't flush, the sink don't drain, Cold winds come through the window panes,
Bats in the attic party at night, Rats, roaches too, but out of sight.*

3.

*To shut it all out, each night I pray: Keep all creepy creatures and devils at bay,
God, rock me to sleep in your loving arms, Safe from glass shards and all earthly harms.*

4.

Sadly, deaf evils keep me hostage each night As I pray for the morning, and thank God for daylight.

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MIDDLE SCHOOL BLUES: HITTING ROCK BOTTOM

Corby,
avowed well-managed long dark curly haired 12-year-old atheist,
complaining for weeks and finally purchasing a new pack of Bobby pins:
"You wanna borrow a Bobby pin? Bobby pins anyone?"
rains Bobby pins in the girls' bathroom

Corby,
two months later,
an abandoned unkempt tangle-haired babe in Christ:
"I was so sure I could find at least one at the bottom of my mother's old purse.
I'm letting down my hair at your feet, God, forgive me, forgive me, if you lead me to just one
I will never again squander the priceless metal objects holding my hair and life
Together like I have done thrice in that diner bathroom,
first, second, and third Saturday of Lent." ☹
searches on knees behind toilets

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MIDDLE SCHOOL BLUES: CORBY'S LAMENT

Broken child
Among silencing stones,
Rooms overflowing
With breaking bones.
Killing classrooms,
Suffocating salons,
Crushing closets,
Cramping corrals.
Questions echo
off imprisoning walls:
What made her mother mad
enough to murder?
What made her father bore
deep into her core?
Would Corby be dead if she'd squealed
On them to trusted others?
She nothing then?
She nothing more
Than worthless shit or
A worthless whore?

Kindred questions bounce
off bathroom walls in schools,
Where Corby's kindred spirits, silent, vigilant,
holding themselves hostages like fools,
keeping themselves mental miles apart
from centered others, sitting down carefully in stalls,
prepare for unspeakables
and read, wincing, from the taunting walls:
"Spics, niggers, whores, and scummy slime,
you know'll do IT anytime, for a nickel or a dime,
or a quarter overtime."
Feeling the heat of having done the awful IT
for nothin', unawares,
And damned to descend to hells much worse
than those already known, down darker stairs,
They exit, one by one
(no room for two-by-twos),
away from garaged suicides, closeted mutilations,
skip no beats in their well-torn running shoes,
and escape to safe, under-worded spaces
of un-walled streets and outside places.