

“Porcelain Dolls”

Written by Lucy Nemec

Honorable Mention, Division II

Our Lady of the Elms

Elaine Fippin, Instructor

Word count: 266

Porcelain Dolls
(Written After Liberation)

My doll in the past:

Smooth skin

Shiny curly hair

Rosy cheeks

Pretty patterned dress

Delicate frame

Me in the past:

I too had smooth skin

I too had shiny curly hair

I too had cheeks flourishing with color and health

I too had a pretty patterned dress

I too was delicate, but strong as well.

I fed and took care of the chickens, helped Mum with chores, and played outside with my doll
whenever I could.

We were unstoppable.

My doll was always there for me

She held my hand when I got sick

She splashed through mud puddles in the rain with me

She listened to all my secrets

But most of all,

She made me feel safe when I was scared.

My doll now:

Her skin is chipped and discolored

Her hair is gone

Her rosy cheeks are fading from the worst conditions

Her pretty patterned dress is frayed and discolored

Her delicate frame is bruised and beaten.

Me now:
My skin is rough and pale
My hair is matted and filthy
My face?
I don't recognize that ghastly face looking back at me.
My pretty patterned dress is long gone
My delicate frame is bent and brittle.
I'm fragile, bruised, and broken
A flightless bird trapped in a cage.
I have lost all hope of ever returning to a time of peace and tranquility.
Looking back at the faces of strangers I realize something:
I'm just a porcelain doll.

Dedicated to Julia Schor
The owner of the doll from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum website source.

Works Cited

Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. Bantam Books, 1982.

"Porcelain Doll with Dress," *United States Holocaust Memorial Museum*,
<https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/irn519950>