A Forgotten Face

I was shuffling towards the creaking door, one that we were originally forbidden to touch. I gently unlatched the rusty silver clasp. The deafening silence of the attic seamlessly blended with reeking mould and termite-infested wood, while I found myself slinking warily towards an ancient bookshelf. A photograph was tranquilly nestled between pages, disintegrating with the passing of time, was something, or rather, someone, who I had never thought to see again, yet here she was, beckoning me, an undesirable yet tempting offer, but one I would never, ever, accept. Alone, uneasy and tense, this passage of time was still, frozen, and I had no other to consult, just the hardest query, one where you were the only person in the room.

I scanned the pages, all the positive, beaming in the light. Their faces told series, volumes, eternities of happiness, simplicity, the good old days, the loving attention, all before they vanished to the far past. Primary school flashed before my eyes. The wobbly, bright lines of my playmates. My hands slipped into the abyss; an eerie green web caught me. At first, I was so relieved… but when I found out all the problems, I regretted all those choices. I lost so much, why should I be punished more? I peered into the picture; Marble Hills Elementary School had now been changed beyond recognition; the crumbling sandstone had been replaced with beautifully polished marble blocks. The tinted black glass was now wiped clear of any grime and clearer than crystal.

The photograph rippled in luminescent colours before it ripped a hole right into the centre of it! The edges glowed with energy. Strange enough, I could see the school bully, and me, the rest of her gang, my friends, and it was moving, like I was spectating it. I dived into the picture. I floated into the class, and I started banging with all my strength against the bookshelf in an attempt to communicate in morse code. I spelled out ‘Don’t do that’, ‘Listen!’, and ‘Be careful, teacher’s watching you’, which, of course, was me trying to change the passage of time. But then I realised, I was my ghost. When I was young, I always saw the books moving on my shelves in the classroom.

Abruptly, I slipped from behind the bookshelf and into the void, the pitch-black nothingness of primary school flashbacks. Novels, picture books and stories of vivid colours toppled from nowhere. Mrs. Knowell, the stern headmistress, was floating down in her sensible lavender dress, at her polished maple table, scolding, “Your scores in first term, were straight A’s and B’s, what has happened to you by second term? You have started flunking all quizzes, tests and exams! If your reviews don’t get better by third term, I will automatically give you detention every Friday at two! Two, you understand? You shall miss out on fun afternoons from then.” Mr Koets, our literature teacher, always dressed in a tweed jacket and black detective hat, was telling me, “You are fabulous at English, but what kind of reading do you give me? Work it on your expression!” Mrs Catalina, the Maths teacher, yelling, Mr Lendor, the Arts and Crafts Department principal shouting, Mrs Cremin, the PE teacher, criticising…

Back in reality, I was in a flood of tears. Then I perceived that how imbalanced my schoolwork was. I focused more on English, Writing, and almost nothing else. However, I had now to redeem myself. The fundraiser was coming up, I volunteered to help out. The recycling centre was in debt, so I donated a hundred dollars. I gave all I could to make amends and say sorry. Making yourself a better person can help the whole community. I had another dream when I was young, making my own treehouse. So today, I spent several hours buying supplies, swings, a trampoline, a pair of gymnastics rings, a bed, and a ladder. I completed it at late afternoon, and I had the night there. before I went to bed, I watched the beautiful scenery, the forest, the stars, my whole world. As one always said: ‘Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery. But today is a gift, that’s why its called the present.’