Childhood to Adulthood

Adults in our life should be role models but others may unconsciously be deadly to a child’s mind. In the short stories *Teachers Reward* by Robert Phillipes and *Long Long After School* by Ernest Buckler, we take a look into the lives of both Wes and Raybe where they are faced with discrimination. Wes was a young boy that got bullied because of his race by his classmates. Raybe was discriminated due to his economic class during his grade years at school. Childhood experiences can influence and shape who we become as adults, due to how we are raised and the people that we have surrounded ourselves with as well as in our community.

Wes was faced with discrimination from a young age. Growing up in a neighborhood of mostly white culture has been hard since being the only boy of colour. The way that Wes was treated in his childhood has left him with a constant feeling of loneliness. Saying that, he could have had it much worse since he had a figure in his life that stood up for him, Miss Tretheway. Miss Tretheway was Wes’s teacher at school, she never thought of Wes differently. “Marilyn said, “Your hands are dirty.’ Miss Tretheway made us both hold out our hands. She said, ‘Why, Marilyn, Wes’s hands are much cleaner than yours” (Buckler 50). Miss Tretheway was a person who did what she believed was right and stood up for it. Wes is thankful for Mrs. Tretheway and as he gets older he understands that there are beautiful people in the world and he wants to give back those people. Wes noticed the little things and decided that he was going to work extra hard just for Mrs.Trethway because she deserved more then she was getting. Wes’s life could have had such a different outcome because of Mrs.Trethway always being by his side and making sure that he never feels less of himself, Wes was able to reach adulthood being grateful and forgiving to those who were in his childhood.

Raybe for *Teachers Reward* was discriminated by his teacher at school. Ms. Scofield did not realize that she was picking on Raybe because of his low economic class. Raybe was always getting his knuckles wrapped from Ms. Scofield for reasons he was not quite sure of. She would blame situations on him that he was not apart of. Ms. Schofield was getting angered “You were a troublemaker, too. I remember the day you wrote nasty words on the wall in the supply closet. Horrible words…” “I didn’t write them.” Reclaimed Raybe. “Oh you wrote them, alright.” Ms. Schofield raising her voice. (Phillipes 386) “No it isn’t. They’re my hands, I ought to know. And do you know who wrote those words on the closet wall? Do you know… No who?” Raybe at this point was ready to let out all his anger. Ms. Schofield whispered breathless with fright. “Nathan Pillsbury, that’s who!”( Phillipes 387) Ms.Scofield only made the assumption that Raybe did it since she saw him as a young poor boy that would be a trouble maker. Your childhood is a big part of how you will be in adulthood. Being surrounded with violence and bad behaviour nearly always leads to the child mimicking what they have seen from their childhood. “Well, it doesn’t seem to have done any harm. A little discipline never hurt anybody… What was it you said you’ve been doing professionally?” Asked Ms. Scofield. “I been in prison,” (Phillipes 385) Raybe may have been a different person if Ms. Schofield just took time to know Raybe for who he was and not on his economic class. Raybe may not have gone to jail and felt like he could do more with his life, if he had an adult figure who treat him no different than other students.

Due to both Raybe and Wes childhood they both had grown into adulthood in different ways. Wes had the support and loving childhood from a teaching figure that respected him for who he really was even though others may not have. Miss Tretheway showed her respect to him when Wes was in need, and never hesitated to help someone so kind to her. How Raybe was treated by Ms.Scotsfield had a big influence on how he grow up. Knowing that he was discriminated and would get abused. Transitioning into adulthood everyone mimics what we learn from our childhood and use that on how we live as adults. “Like this!’ he yelled, wrenching her quivering hands and forcing them to the tabletop. Then with his free hand he raised the hammer. For once, he finished something.” (Phillipes 387) Raybe has come back to Ms.Scotsfield and is giving her what he thinks she did to him. Which of course is not right but it shows that Raybe thinks its ok to do this since he was treated the same. Raybe had a bad childhood and did not get the love and support from the people that are around him the most at the prime time in his life. Which is sad to think that life could have been so much more positive if he had more caring adult figures in his life.

Childhood experiences can influence and shape who we become as adults, due to how was are raised and the people that we have surrounded ourselves with as well as our community. Raybe and Wes are mirroring images of people who were big influences in their life growing up. Having a adult figure like a teacher who you get to interact with on a daily basis, should be a good role model for all children and demonstrate good behavior and qualities since children learn from things they learn and see.