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“Long Long After School” and “A Teacher’s Rewards” Synthesis Essay

 Every people act different when they face difficulty because every people have their own personality. “Long Long After School” by Ernest Buckler and “A Teacher’s Rewards” by Robert Phillips are two short stories which were worth to compare together. “Long Long After School” was took place in Miss Tretheway’s cemetery. The narrator in the story was wondering why the Miss Tretheway didn’t have any relative, but only Wes looked after her cemetery. Throughout the story, the narrator found out the answer and realized why Wes said Miss Tretheway was a beautiful lady. “A Teacher’s Rewards” was talking about that Raybe, a student who had been to prison for years, went back to his school and visited his teacher, Miss Scofield. By reading the story, Miss Scofield remembered who Raybe is and why he went to visit her. After reading these two short stories, people can realize that childhood experience, violent from people, and family background can shape who people become as adults.

 Childhood experience can shape who people become as adults. It is the most important memory for people because children learn things quickly and hard to change from it. In the short story “A Teacher’s Rewards”, Raybe learned to be mean and was sent to the prison because Miss Scofield always hit him in the front of the class. “I had a long time to figure it all out. Ten years to figure it out. Lots of nights I’d lie there on that board of a bed in that puke-hole and I’d try to piece it all together. How I come to be there. Was it my aunt? Naw, she did the best she could without any money. Was it the fellas I took up with in high school? Naw, something happened before that, or I’d never have taken up with the likes of them in the first place, that rocky crowd. And then one night it came to me. You were the one.” (386 Phillips). Miss Scofield always picked on Raybe, whacked his knuckles, and told him that he was the worst child. Because of Miss Scofield, Raybe thought he was a bad student and started to do bad things. However, in the other short stories “Long Long After School”, Wes learned to be nice and kind from his teacher, Miss Tretheway. “Miss Tretheway came along and you all ran. She helped me pick up the stuff and shake the snow off it. She went with me right to Mrs. Banks’s door and told her what happened.” (50 Buckler). Children always laughed at Wes, but the teacher always helped Wes. This led to the kindness of Wes. Overall, the protagonists in the short stories were both victims of discrimination, but they had difference childhood experience. Due to the different childhood experience, they had totally different personality and became two different people.

 Violent from people can shape who people become as adults. Violent is not only physically, but also mentally. Talking something terrible is also a kind of violent too. People always bully someone who is seems to be “weaker” than others. Raybe and Wes are two of the examples for being bullied from other children. “The other kids left me out of things, because you were always saying I was bad. And you always told me I was dirty. Just because my aunt couldn’t keep me in clean shirts like some of the others. You punished me for everything that happened. But the worst was the day of the words on the wall. You hit me so hard my knuckles bled. My hands were sore as boils for weeks” (386 Phillips). In the short story “A Teacher’s Rewards”, Raybe was bullied by his classmate and teacher. The teacher thought he was a bad student and always hit him badly. Raybe’s classmate also thought he was not good and always teased at him. This is one of the reasons why Raybe became a bad person when he grew up. The other example is Wes, he was bullied by his classmate too, just like Raybe. The only difference is that Wes’s teacher, Miss Tretheway, was kind and always encouraged Wes. “She used to come see me every day” (52 Buckler). Wes’s classmates laughed at Wes all the time, they wanted Wes to think that he was not a good student. However, Miss Tretheway helped Wes to be confident. All in all, the violent from people can shape who people become as adults.

 Family background can shape who people become as adults. People always think that someone who is rich or powerful are always in the “right side”. However, if people don’t have enough money or power, that means they are in the “wrong side”. Raybe and Wes are also good examples. Raybe lived in a poor family, he always wore dirty shirt because his aunt couldn’t keep his shirt clean. “‘And do you know who wrote those words on the closet wall? Do you know?’ he screamed, putting his face right down next to hers. ‘No, who?’ she whispered, breathless with fright. ‘Nathan Pillsbury, that’s who!’ he shouted, clenching his teeth and shaking her frail body within his grasp” (387 Phillips). Nathen Pillsbury is a “good student” because he had great score and his family is richer than Raybe’s family. Miss Scofield thought that Nathen would never did bad thing and Raybe was the student who always naughty. In the other hand, Wes was also be seen as a “bad student” too because he is black, and he has a scar on his arm. “and in those days no one felt too comfortable about having his blood siphoned off. I guess no one felt like taking any chances for me, anyway. Mother said I could have hers, but hers wasn’t right. Mine’s that odd type – A negative, isn’t it?” (52 Buckler). People in the short story didn’t like Wes because he was “odd type”. Because he was “negative”, so his classmates always laughed at him. In short, family background can shape who people become as adults.

 In two short stories “A Teacher’s Rewards” by Robert Phillips and “Long Long After School” by Ernest Buckler, readers can realize childhood experience, violent from people, and family background can shape who people become as adults. In short story “A Teacher’s Reward”, Miss Scofield always hit Raybe, she thought Raybe was a bad student just because he is poor and led Raybe to the prison when he grew up. Wes, the protagonist of the short story “Long Long After School”, was also a victim of discrimination. He is black, and he also has a scar on his arm. The difference is that Wes’s teacher always encourages Wes to be nice and kind. All in all, childhood experience, violent from people, and family background can shape who people become as adults.