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Red Drops For A Rainbow

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Red Drops For A Rainbow

Abstract

Splashes of pool water licked my ankles, scenting my coffee-colored toes with chlorine. Bareback guardians, robed in red, hovered high as flocks of fleshy tangible innocence skipped jubilantly across the pool deck and disappeared into a wet square pocket of sapphire. [*excerpt of poem*]

Keywords

Surge, Surge Gettysburg, Gettysburg College, Center for Public Service, gun control, gun violence, race crimes, Trayvon Martin, Skittles, race, African Americans, hoodie

Disciplines

African American Studies | Community-Based Learning | Inequality and Stratification | Peace and Conflict Studies | Place and Environment | Politics and Social Change | Race and Ethnicity | Sociology

Comments

Surge is a student blog at [Gettysburg College](https://www.gettysburg.edu/) where systemic issues of justice matter. Posts are originally published at surgegettysburg.wordpress.com Through stories and reflection, these blog entries relate personal experiences to larger issues of equity, demonstrating that -isms are structural problems, not actions defined by individual prejudice. We intend to popularize justice, helping each other to recognize our biases and unlearn the untruths.

SURGE

[VERB] : to move suddenly or powerfully forward or upward

RED DROPS FOR A RAINBOW

October 2, 2013

Splashes of pool water licked my ankles,
scenting my coffee-colored toes with chlorine.
Bareback guardians, robed in red, hovered high
as flocks of fleshy tangible innocence skipped
jubilantly across the pool deck and disappeared
into a wet square pocket of sapphire.
The sun was eating the day and small winged-black
bodies were cutting the air, but

I remember that those freckled faces
wore grins more than sun block and insect repellent.
Sunbeams beating down hard,
caging the counselors and red-suited lifesavers
within summer's flame,
but we didn't care
as long as the camp's youth
was shielded in that flame's blue.
I enjoyed five uninterrupted minutes
before I was presented with the classic disturbance,
"Miss. Zaza, Johnny pushed something red up
his nose!" Kids, they've always loved

Skittles. Armed with a red pouched rainbow
that was only worth a dollar, but on February
26th, the mottled-candied sugar beads
had an awful fee. This was the year
that America's eyes paused on Florida.
Orange juice and sunshine parks couldn't sweeten
the bitter reality of the robbery of an adolescent's days.
Sugar-coated suspicion gunned down
Trayvon Martin, who died in hoodie. A grey cotton cloud
that released the rain
of racism, rallies and riots. A hurricane showered



the nation with sadness and strife.

The country didn't know that racial raindrops
didn't yield a rainbow and that the sky's tear drops
would stain and sting our skin and eyes

like the sharp sun-daggers, slicing through my
my dormitory window.

College.

It's just like camp,
an academic playground for the bigger kids.
Cocooned in shared skirts, shirts and twin-sized sheets,

Four years committed to this
collegiate bubble. This is my home,
furnished with antique brick buildings,
shaven-grassland doormats, and sun
bathed hallways.

But all bubbles burst; my phone beeps
signaling another bias incident waiting
underneath the buttons.

Bias incidents, gaining normalcy
in my inbox

next to my Forever 21 e-coupons.

Families and foes,

made from the Great Gettysburg Bullets.

Unaware that our words, actions, and thoughts
are heavy like lead and they anchor down
deep into the hearts and minds of the student body.

What kind of bullets do we want to be?

I hope that we aim to be the killers of
discrimination, prejudice, and hatred.

We are all colored with different strengths
and knowledge like a scholarly skittle bag.

A body of bullets, soaring upwards
before we allow the world's social injustice
to drown us, blinding and irritating our eyes like

summer chlorine pool water. I plucked the red
skittle from his nostrils and buried it
in my fist, lined with rough tissue.

I giggled girlishly

when he asked for his skittle back. I never
realized how much fun it was to be
at this age. When swimming goggles, Uno cards,
and damp dollar bills were their summery
responsibilities. Returning to college,

I envied the weightlessness

of my campers' world; how all of their problems

are washed away when they dove into
a pool of chlorine cobalt.

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<http://surgegettysburg.wordpress.com/2013/10/02/red-drops-for-a-rainbow/>