

An Ode to My Children.

If you were the perfect child
or perhaps you're an ideal parent,
then read no further because this
is for the flawed amongst us.

To think, to even suggest, that I
could be a role model, would be
like saying the earth is flat,
And yet it is, in places, flat, for sure.

I fell onto the cliff of loneliness
And was paralyzed from moving
while singularly raising my children.

My stepmother said, "Love them,
for in no time, they'll be grown."

I replied, "Mom, it's more like watching
barnacles grow on a ship's hull."

Discrete hookups and fine wine
occasionally eased the boredom.

While educational learning cliffs and
struggling to pay bills did the rest.

Who said I was supposed to entertain
and provide a social role?

Provide and protect I got.

The rest they should figure out
just as I had needed to do.
So, I just left it at that.
But they didn't figure it out,
and they now talk of being abused.
I was there, and there was none of that.
I've been thinking lately that they
abuse me while I do my best.
Whenever they become transactional
and my name rises to the top of their brain
I get an email or a text asking for their next bailout
Yet I'm used to talking at those times.
Oh yes, I am a role model now, but
for rebelling against everything,
while sitting in the quiet of myself
responsibility-free and satisfied,
knowing my life is not
as creative as my creator,
but creative nevertheless, and in that
there is a deep bounty of satisfaction
that I never found in anything before
while trying to be necessary to others.
To know that you are their reason

for even being here, for having survived,
yet they don't care nor acknowledge you
is definitely what? A stop sign?
A green light? Or maybe a yield sign?
When I don't know what to do
I have learned to do nothing.
Who gets to be disappointed?
Those who staged and threw
the party of your birth to your adulthood,
Or those complaining the party sucked?
But this is an ode to my children
and so I'll end for now with this,
I fed you; I kept you safe.
I gave you freedom because
That gave me time for my stuff.
Living is the easy part
Who and what are the questions,
the answers you need to find,
Because I can't do that for you.
I'm not your role model now; I'm mine.
And now, at last, I'm without responsibility.
Living is my reality,
and the collage of my life

as seen through the limits I presented
is itself an art form of wordy creation,
And includes the short time our lives touched.
No one can unsay their words.
No one can undo their care and love.
No one can redo their lifetime.
And no one can love you more than I.

The End.

Written by Peter Skeels © March 2024