

know

The hot lunch is turkey with reconstituted dried mashed potatoes and gravy, a damp green vegetable, and a cookie. I'm not sure how to order anything else, so I just slide my tray along and let the lunch drones fill it. This eight-foot senior in front of me somehow gets three cheeseburgers, French fries, and two Ho-Hos without saying a word. Some sort of Morse code with his eyes, maybe. Must study this further. I follow the Basketball Pole into the cafeteria.

I see a few friends—people I used to think were my friends—but they look away. Think fast, think fast. There's that new girl, Heather, reading by the window. I could sit across from her. Or I could crawl behind a trash can. Or maybe I could dump my lunch straight into the trash and keep moving right on out the door.

The Basketball Pole waves to a table of friends. Of course. The basketball team. They all swear at him—a bizarre greeting practiced by athletic boys with zits. He smiles and throws a Ho-Ho. I try to scoot around him.

Thwap! A lump of potatoes and gravy hits me square in the center of my chest. All conversation stops as the entire lunchroom gawks, my face burning into their retinas. I will be forever known as "that girl who got nailed by potatoes the first day." The Basketball Pole apologizes and says something else, but four hundred people explode in laughter and I can't read lips. I ditch my tray and bolt for the door.

I motor so fast out of the lunchroom the track coach would draft me for varsity if he were around. But no, Mr. Neck has cafeteria duty. And Mr. Neck has no use for girls who can run

already referred to
 a place for the preservation of spirits
 a place for the preservation of spirits
 A
 metaphorical
 positive connotation
 B
 SANCTUARY = Art room
 similar B
 Art follows lunch, like dream follows nightmare. The classroom is at the far end of the building and has long,

↳ symbolically away from the pain of the not still building

Acromioclavicular joint
 lots of light, but what does this mean?
 south-facing windows. The sun doesn't shine much in Syracuse, so the art room is designed to get every bit of light it can. It is dusty in a clean-dirt kind of way. The floor is layered with dry splashes of paint, the walls plastered with sketches of tormented teenagers and fat puppies, the shelves crowded with clay pots. A radio plays my favorite station.

Mr. Freeman is ugly. Big old grasshopper body, like a stilt-walking circus guy. Nose like a credit card sunk between his eyes. But he smiles at us as we file into class.

"free man" = open
 → positive stains
 → stains (appear dirty but is clean)
 metaphor smile
 → what is out necessary to survival?

He is hunched over a spinning pot, his hands muddy red. "Welcome to the only class that will teach you how to survive," he says. "Welcome to Art."
 → new to survive? smile, stain

Mr. Freeman turns off the wheel and grabs a piece of chalk without washing his hands. "Soul," he writes on the board. The clay streaks the word like dried blood. "This is where you can find your soul, if you dare. Where you can touch that part of you that you've never dared look at before. Do not come here and ask me to show you how to draw a face. Ask me to help you find the wind."
 still sad
 → Mr. Freeman = passionate, invested

Mr. Freeman sighs. "No imagination. What are you, thirteen? Fourteen? You've already let them beat your creativity out of you! This is an old globe I used to let my daughters kick around my studio when it was too wet to play outside. One day Jenny put her foot right through Texas, and the United States crumbled into the sea. And *voilà*—an ideal! This broken ball could be used to express such powerful visions—you could paint a picture of it with people fleeing from the hole,

I sneak a peek behind me. The eyebrow telegraph is flashing fast. This guy is weird. He must see it, he must know what we are thinking. He keeps on talking. He says we will graduate knowing how to read and write because we'll spend a million hours learning how to read and write. (I could argue that point.)

Mr. Freeman: "Why not spend that time on art: painting, sculpting, charcoal, pastel, oils? Are words or numbers more important than images? Who decided this? Does algebra move you to tears?" (Hands raise, thinking he wants answers.)
 "Can the plural possessive express the feelings in your heart?"
 If you don't learn art now, you will never learn to breathe!!! → survive die?

There is more. For someone who questions the value of words, he sure uses a lot of them. I tune out for a while and come back when he holds up a huge globe that is missing half of the Northern Hemisphere. "Can anyone tell me what this is?" he asks. "A globe?" ventures a voice in the back. Mr. Freeman rolls his eyes. "Was it an expensive sculpture that some kid dropped and he had to pay for it out of his own money or they didn't let him graduate?" asks another.

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⑤ keeping one's soul
 11

with a wet-muzzled dog chewing Alaska—the opportunities are endless. It's almost too much, but you are important enough to give it to."

Huh?

"You will each pick a piece of paper out of the globe." He walks around the room so we can pull red scraps from the center of the earth. "On the paper you will find one word, the name of an object. I hope you like it. You will spend the rest of the year learning how to turn that object into a piece of art." You will sculpt it. You will sketch it, papier-mâché it, carve it. If the computer teacher is talking to me this year, you can use the lab for computer-aided designs. But there's a catch—by the end of the year, you must figure out how to make your object say something, express an emotion, speak to every person who looks at it."

symbolic

→ find the novel → good the novelist → well for protagonist

Some people groan. My stomach flutters. Can he really let us do this? It sounds like too much fun. He stops at my table. I plunge my hand into the bottom of the globe and fish out my paper. "Tree." Tree? It's too easy. I learned how to draw a tree in second grade. I reach in for another piece of paper. Mr. Freeman shakes his head. "Ah-ah-ah," he says. "You just chose your destiny, you can't change that."

Appearance can be destiny.

He pulls a bucket of clay from under the pottery wheel, breaks off fist-sized balls, and tosses one to each of us. Then he turns up the radio and laughs. "Welcome to the journey."

visual image

— spiritual