

Fort Dodge, Iowa

Dear Mr. Silverstein,

When I read your poem "Sick" it really made me think. Although it is a light-hearted poem it's really true. There are so many kids my age that try to get out of going to school for no good reason at all. I'm not that fond of school, but I get up and go every day and try to make the best of it. Your poem made me really stop and think why I do that. I never really *thought* about it before. I mean, if I really don't like school that well, why do I get up every morning and go and never give excuses to my parents to get out of going? Even when I don't feel good, I go to school and make it through the day. Your poem made me examine WHY I do this.

My dad had a severe head injury years ago before I was born. I've never known him with any other personality other than what he has now. However, my mom and sister knew Dad as a different person. When you have a brain injury, you can have your whole life and personality change. Mom says he's not the same as he was before. Why does she stay with him? She honors her marriage and the love for her family. She says if it had been her that had been in the accident, she wouldn't want Dad to give up on her.

There was a movie on that Mom saw recently that really struck home for Mom. A guy had been in an accident, and he'd had his personality and life changed in a blink. He says, "I might not be the same, but I'll always be me." That's true of all of us. We all change in some ways, but we are always ourselves. Mom said she'd never heard anyone express exactly what she was going through...until she saw that movie. Dad was not the same, but he was still Dad.

So, your poem made me think that compared to what my dad has gone through, and what many other people go through on a daily basis, I and most other kids really don't have any reason to make up excuses to stay home from school. We need to appreciate what we are given and take one day at a time and enjoy the moments; because in a blink...it could be taken away. That's why I get up and go to school and do what I know is the right thing to do...even if school isn't what I'd call a bundle of fun.

Sincerely

Scott Skophammer