Title: Don’t cry for Billie

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Don’t cry for Billie is a short story about a girl named Billie who is a tomboy and was raised on a farm by her father from a young age. Billie has a hard time being accepted by her peers at school because of her differences and she doesn’t know how to show her emotions and ask for help.

When I read this story I felt sympathy for Billie. I felt this way because of all the tough times Billie has to go through. For example Billie is picked on by the children at her school on a daily basis. All of the kids make fun of Billie and exclude her because she is not what society classes to be “normal”. Billie doesn’t exactly resemble the stereotypical image of a girl who enjoys putting on makeup and playing with dolls. She enjoys being out on a farm and taking part in other boy related activities, and the kids at her school make fun of her for that reason. With all of the constant bullying occurring in Billie’s life, one day her father dies in an accident involving a tractor. This tragic incident proves to make matters worse for Billie as she has to go through more pain and suffering each day. I feel that the way Billie is treated by her peers and the events that happen in her life makes me feel sympathy for her because she is just an innocent girl who is just being herself and she hasn’t really done anything wrong to anyone. This idea is relevant to society because people always tend to judge and exclude individuals for being different to them and it is wrong.

An interesting idea that the text made me think about was that society generally fails to accept distinct individuals. The author seemed to be suggesting that society usually makes fun of and excludes people who aren’t “normal” like everyone else. We see this idea throughout the text when the children pick on Billie because of her outlandish appearance and differences. The children make fun of Billie because she doesn’t fit in like everyone else, they poked fun at the stringy ribbons that tied back her wild hair and talked about her odd socks. They made fun of how Billie liked to be on a farm and were a tomboy they also called her names like “Smelly Billie” because of the cow dung on her shoes. Everyday Billie had to go through the constant pestering and exclusion from the peers around her. This shows us that society fails to accept distinct individuals like Billie who are just being themselves and march to the beat of their own drum. Billie isn’t harming anyone by doing her own thing but society strongly judges her for being different. I think this is sad because it shows that society is afraid to accept people who are different to them, they class people like Billie as “strange” and “abnormal” and it is depressing to see because she is just being herself. This idea is relevant to my world because people are always pushed away and judged if they appear to be different. For example, there are people around me that are excluded from everyone else because they are distinct. Whether it is because of a certain belief they have or something similar I believe that it is wrong and you should get to know a person better before you judge them by what’s on the surface.

Another interesting idea that this text made me think about was that everyone has emotions and some people have different ways of showing them. The author seemed to be suggesting that just because someone may appear tough on the outside it doesn’t necessarily mean they are tough on the inside as well. We see this in the text when Billie is being picked on and she doesn’t seem to have a reaction, she seems to not let it affect her. Billie just goes on with her day. Another example is when Billie’s father passes away, the kids feel sorry for Billie so they collect some money and get a sympathy card to present to Billie. When Billie comes back to school after the incident the kids give the card to her and expect her to react with sorrow but instead she snatches the card away without looking at it and says “Don’t cry for Billie”. The kids become upset and believe that Billie doesn’t care for her father and decide to give her the cold shoulder. When in fact Billie is actually upset but doesn’t want it to appear like she is or she doesn’t know how to show it. Later on in the day Billie breaks down in class by crying uncontrollably in the teacher’s arms whilst the kids watch through the classroom window and come to realisation that she does have emotions and she is really hurting inside. This shows us that even though Billie appeared to be strong on the outside she wasn’t on the inside and she didn’t know how to show it. When she eventually broke down in classroom it showed that she wasn’t as strong as she appeared and it proved that everyone has emotions. This idea is relevant to my world because people who appear to be emotionless are often easy targets for bullies. People believe that just because they appear to emotionless on the outside they cannot be hurt and that is incorrect.

Overall this text shows various ideas that relate well to the world we live in today. It shows that everyone has feelings and that certain things can really bring a person down, it also shows the idea that society fails to accept distinct individuals who stand out from everyone else. I believe the author did a fantastic job of conveying these ideas through the text and it makes an impact on the reader.

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