

Introduction to "Ode to the Leaving Levy"

This poem represents one student's journey --- through high school. The girl who is the subject of this lavish poem began working with me in her freshman year, and she was rather reluctant to do so. She disliked writing and had no desire to present and then develop ideas. To her, I suppose, every writing assignment was a short-answer exercise.

Of course, as she matured as a student, she also matured as a writer. By the time she graduated, she was in total control of her ideas and her ability to express and support them. She went off to college, and as has happened repeatedly to me (and to the vast majority of high school teachers) I was probably relegated to the depths of her subconscious, to be dredged up only under the influence of a hypnotic trance, I guess.

In her senior year, this student paid me the ultimate compliment; she requested that I compose a poem in which I relate her growth as a pupil and writer, and touch upon our relationship as mentor-student. Thus, I produced the ode which follows. It is a bit over-flowery (and the redundancy is intentional; I allowed myself to become carried away as a reflection of the depth of the work we did together and the breadth of her achievements).

She left me with a key chain memento which I look at once in a while. Its inscription alludes to her moodiness and anti-writing stance especially on Mondays, a comic reference, because by the end of her secondary school career, Mondays posed no barrier to her composing solid writings.

P.S. Kim, mentioned in this poem, refers to an excellent Teaching Assistant who was extremely helpful in communicating with the subject of this poem. Thank you again, Kim.