Poetry

For Whom The Bell Does Not Ring

by Bruce Gorden
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4th Period English: 24601
I was dying of hunger, 
my future was waving good-bye.

I felt like I was in criminal court waiting 
the gavel to fall
the Bailiff to approach me, cuff me
escort me to a dungeon
hewn from cold stone
where darkness would consume me
and I would be forgotten forever.

I was actually sitting in Mr. Cooper’s English class
reading Les Miserable and having fantasies
of guilt and cold pursuit
by some authority like Javert.

I kept hearing: Look down, look down, don’t look him in the eye.

Look down, look down, you’re here until you die.

Then the bell rang. Javert had fallen,
and I had a future and a hope
because Javert does not follow me
like he would in Ferguson
if I was young
and black.