

RADICAL TEACHER

A SOCIALIST, FEMINIST, AND ANTI-RACIST JOURNAL ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TEACHING

Poetry

For Whom The Bell Does Not Ring

by Bruce Gorden



BIG READER BY ALEC DUNN VIA JUST SEEDS

For Whom The Bell Does Not Ring

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.



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