

Autobiography: Catherine Adams 10X

Being not me

I remember boredom, when I had nothing to do, no one to speak to. My brother and sister would be having fun without me. My parents would be busy, doing grown up things. They used to tell me to "Go and have fun." Not wanting to listen to me prattle on about my make believe worlds. As a child, I was many different people, assuming characters like other people put on clothes.

During the long, hot summers, hours were stretched to the length of a day; the seconds lazily inched round the clock. There was nothing to do. There was never anything to do. I tried everything to evade boredom during those days, played with my toys, painted, drew silly pictures.

Eventually I would traipse out to the garden, fed up, hot and angry. Flopping on the grass with a heavy, frustrated sigh I would stare up at the sky, a splash of acrylic paint across my world, a shade I could not name, despite my attempts, "New dawn blue" "bliollet" (A cross between blue and violet) "Funky summer daisy time blue"

I longed for something, anything to do. I was a prisoner in solitary confinement, unable to speak to anyone, unable to do anything.

The grass always smelt so sweet around me, and I would often pull it up around me and pour it on my stomach, wondering what it tasted like. The brilliant, fantastical green glowed in my hands, so different from anything I could create in my paint box. I would pick daisies and twirl them in my fingers, sun yellow hearts and the zingy white. I would pull off the soft white petals and drop them to the ground, muttering made up curses under my breath. I was a wicked witch, cursing the people who had kept me prisoner.

When the grass started to leave red (the shade of red that can only mean pain) marks on my arms and legs, I would turn around, facing the grass. I would watch with fascinated eyes the ants, scurrying through the jungle that was the lawn. I was a famous scientist, about to make a mind-boggling breakthrough into the secret life of ants. They were as black as obsidian, like small jewels in the green grass. At their level, I would fall into a sort of dreamlike state, so intent on watching their progress I would not notice my head cutting off the blood circulation to my arms, making them feel all tingly and numb and heavy. I was someone who had to undergo serious surgery, and had just been anaesthetised.

Sometimes I would just lie there, listening to the sounds of my next door neighbours. They had a kid called Harrison. I remember wondering why anyone would chose to name their child Harrison. He wasn't a very obedient child I mused, as the frantic shouts of his parents drifted over the fence that separated them from us. "Harrison! Harrison, no darling no! Don't go near the pond! Harrison! Harrison!" In all my years living two doors away from him, I have never actually met Harrison. I was a princess, locked in a magical garden, where the walls kept me in and others out.

It was then I noticed the tree at the end of our garden. I couldn't believe that as yet, it had escaped my notice. I was an avid tree climber, and seeing this as a new challenge, I

made my way to the tree. I looked up at its massive height, assessing its difficulty. Then, assuming the character of a brave mountaineer, I gripped the first branch and began to pull myself up. Ascending to the first level, I stopped and admired how far I had come. The bark was rough beneath my bare feet, so I became the jungle queen, reaching her throne at the top of the highest tree in the forest.

I stepped up to the next branch, holding on tightly, while trying not to look down. I remember the ominous cracking sound as the branch gave way beneath me. I cried out, the sound hurting my ears, and frightening off the birds at the top of the tree.

My feet slid down the tree, but my hands clung on. A long graze ripped its way down my leg. Pulling myself up, to a branch which looked like it might hold my weight better I inspected the graze. On confirming that it was bleeding, however little, I decided I was a wounded soldier who had to make her way to safety. I made my way back down the tree, dropping the last few feet.

I looked up towards the house. I saw my mum watching me with worried eyes, standing on the steps.

"I thought you were going to fall." She said.

I nodded. "Me too."

I was me again.