

A Smart Cookie

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(translated by Elena Poniatowska)

(bad) derogatory term for women + less intelligent

Feels like a nobody.

Text-to-Text "Stopping by Woods."

BILINGUAL *learned English - had to!

Doesn't know which path to take

Text-to-Text "The Road Less Taken"

Daughter loves her + cares about her

Why did she stop? Doesn't have time!

scratched, stuck in same groove not enough \$ to buy her own

SMILE

I could've been somebody, you know?

REGRETS? TEXT-TO-TEXT "THE ROAD NOT TAKEN"

my mother says and sighs. She has lived in this city her whole life

She can speak two languages. She can sing an opera.

Hasn't had many experiences

She knows how to fix a TV. But she doesn't know which subway train to

couldn't afford to pay someone to fix it

take to get downtown. I hold her hand very tight while we wait for the right

train to arrive.

waiting for an opportunity

She used to draw when she had time.

Necessary SEWING skill

Now she draws with a needle and thread, little knotted rosebuds, tulips

making nice clothes for her daughter

made of silk thread. Someday she would like to go to the ballet. Someday

Has hopes & DREAMS for the finer things in life

she would like to see a play. She borrows opera records from the public

library and sings with velvety lungs powerful as morning glories.

soft + smooth voice

Flowers
full bloom in morning
strong vines which WRAPS AROUND YOU
(Like her voice)

Puccini wrote the OPERA: A Japanese woman marries American Naval officer. He leaves for 3 yrs. Returns with American wife. She is shamed. Stabs herself. He begs for forgiveness.

Allusion

maybe her husband left and she is shamed her daughter means "hope" maybe she'll do things I could not do. close female friends maybe they doesn't have anyone to take care of her

Today while cooking oatmeal she is Madame Butterfly until she sighs and points the wooden spoon at me. I

she dies. Repeated important! she ended her life over a man waiting - don't

could've been somebody, you know?

Esperanza, you go to school. Study hard. That Madame Butterfly was a

fool. She stirs the oatmeal. Look at my comadres. She means Izaura whose husband left and Yolanda whose husband is dead. Got to take care all your own, she says shaking her head

Then out of nowhere:

Shame is a bad thing, you know. It keeps you down. You want to know why I quit school? Because I didn't have nice clothes. No clothes, but I had brains.

you have to be able to take care of yourself. voice in your head - all your fault, keeps you from moving on "climbing" Mother to son. Shame! Feels Shame!

Yup, she says disgusted, stirring again. I was a smart cookie then.

SARCASTIC! say the opposite of what you mean.

Don't could have been something, be something!

Esperanza stay in school! Be all that you can be.

Don't wait. Make the choice.

Hope for her daughter.