

Olivia Scott

Poetry

Parkway South High School

Grade 12

Nabokov Sirin;

A Soliloquy

Penning side notes in my lectures, while a mumbled comment falls on the deaf ears of absent seats once—or twice.

There's a cicada at the window, buzzing songs of summer. Just two crickets singing.

Under my feet lays my lapdog brief case,

with its opened mouth and lolling tongue of child slang, and firearm notes.

The newest New Yorker in its jowls, dog-eared at an editor unmarred Chapter 5; Pnin

A Cinderella tinted ashtray piled high with sugary molasses chips, sits in guard

on top of a half written letter to Roman Grynberg;

“No one walks around from morning to night remembering their past life—except authors.”¹

And then those Authors turn the quiet reminiscent words in to works of art,

all the while belting—Speak Memory.

Speak, Mnemosyne. Goddess of Memory, mother of Muses,

tell the tale of Émigré Poet, and Author, Father and Teacher, in stil' Poeta.

Speak Memory, Speak of Conclusive Evidence,

of how I condone “Poshlost”, as a vulgar and dry depiction of the world,

along with all the writings under Stalin, Lenin, Hitler and Goebbings,

as well as the teaching of text as a rendering of the social views of the time.

Speak, of how I teach students to read—and read well!

To imagine the boundless worlds of literature, drawn up in minute detail,

not the social-ecological minds pushing views into it through reviews and criticism.

Speak, all literature meriting any worth, of the old through the new

or fall subject to the degradations of philistines pulling “poshlost” views from books colored

with “Poshlost” hues.

Fill your dry and light and tear-able pages with the originality of Stil’ Poeta, Avtorylyubvi, chitatelifantazii. *

Invoke the spirit of childlike imagination, and throw off all conventions learned.

Speak, literal artisans of the world, through the stamped black letters expressing the minutiae; teach your audience how to pay attention to details and transform cold words into warm worlds.

Speak, in opinionated rants, in delighted outbursts,
in condescending fits of giggles over illiterate literature
or in the hushed and delicate whispers that tickle the pink skin of Vera’s ears.

Speak Muse, speak of my own exploits on paper,
The very mimicry of God’s- Art, For Art’s sake.
Drawing out robust and heartfelt men through the dead lead scratch of a pencil scrawl.

Lolita—A rowdy nymphet with scab grazed knees,
and dreams of H.H. with the actor face,
lives on scribble faced note cards pleading for their life,
seconds away from the mouth and belly of an up roaring furnace.

Pnin- An unfortunate case of “what can go wrong, will go wrong,”
finds his agonizing (but humorous) misadventures at the mercy of my hand,
as I play character by his side, narrate and draw out the plans of his demise,
a life quick to end with ragged loose ends, then changed on a whim with the strike of a pen.

Krug- A self-made and famous philosopher,
his life revolved around his son and a puddle depiction of his wife,
sees his stage-writ world through the clear thinking of insanity;
his is a novel life with strenuous trials and errors only found in ink.

Speak Muse, of these three—unlikely to really be called hero to heroine—

have unfortunately been cast into separate worlds of type-written paper.

Keep in common the delicate (or in cases sadly brutal) portrait of a purest form of love,
between a Father—a mother, and a son—a daughter,
a love between a parent and child.

My little lizard-boy, clinging to rock precipices he loves.

But speak, tell the tale of silent horror, quietly aghast sitting rooms,
for am I not known for desecrating that love I was so for, so fond of?

Am I not known—not for my own ventures in this nature, though Giriodis would believe it—
but for those of Humbert the Humble – Humbert the Hound, and his precious little Lola,
Lolita, Lo the Bobby-soxer, Carmen—O my Carmen.

“She was Dolores on the dotted line.”²

Speak Lolita, My nymphet.

Speak volumes regarding this precious time in our lives—
Childhood and how it ought not to be destroyed by any means.
Speak for me Lo, for “I am in favor of childhood.”³

Speak out from under the Wrath of Grapes,
a list of books returning (In Lolita’s case) to the fiery pit,
that once tried to consume the horrid evidence, of a perverse warning.

Speak—shout your secrets to the crowds,
though they may scorn you on the street, hungry eyes devour you in safety of their homes,
make the people feel the reality of the world through their fingertips grazing a page,
and silently, quietly, remind them, No! “Mark, that it is a highly moral affair.”⁴

Speak, or be spoken for by the Kinbote’s or Freudian’s of the world,
seeking out their mad truth and ego in the softest stream of words,
too high off their own delirium to take any value in another’s life, treacherous or soft.
Or worse a Wilson, of the Edmund kind may shake your pages,
and declare that only licentious porn falls out, reminding one of the ashes

from a branding fire in à l'Histoire d'O !

Speak, my Lolita, speak for centuries to come and go,
for even when my tongue fails me, and my last breath is drawn,
your infamy will be remembered, your story will read on.

1 - Quoted from a letter to Roman Grynberg from Nabokov on 9/11/1950, found in the
biography Vladimir Nabokov the Russian years. By Brian Boyd. Page 197

*The poets style, the authors love, the readers fantasy Translated into Russian (Romanized
form)

2 - Quoted from Lolita By Vladimir Nabokov

3 – Quoted from an interview with Nabokov in 1958, found in biography Vladimir Nabokov the
Russian years. By Brian Boyd. Page 227

4 – Quoted from Nabokov to Edmund Wilson, 1956. found in biography Vladimir Nabokov the
Russian years. By Brian Boyd. Page 227