

Tom Graduates from Criticism School

by Jim Gold

Tom finally graduated from Criticism School.
It took many years.

Here's the story: As a first grader in the School of Elementary Criticism, arrows of criticism pierced his body, affecting his manner of walking, talking, thinking, and feeling.

A few years later, during his attendance at the High School Of Secondary Criticism, he developed protective armor. Nevertheless, although most arrows were now deflected, the sound of their ping and ring as their iron tips glanced off his protective Mogen David shield still affected the way of life.

This continued through graduation from the College of Higher Criticism, where he received a Ph.D. in Protoplasmic Pin-Cushion Maintenance from Dr. Dolor in the Bilious Department. This degree meant he had mastered the art of inner confidence.

Two weeks after graduation, though he still saw arrows of criticism whizzing by, he was able to toss away his shield. True, he felt their breeze but otherwise, he hardly noticed them. Bilious barbs, once so sharp and frightening, had turned into puffy clouds.

With clear sky above him, he strolled with swinging arms, feet rolling, and brain released, into the smiling freedom of the wide open countryside.

from *Carlos the Cloud*

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