

James King, K-68166

WordsUncaged Submission

(Free Verse / Essay)

“Rejection”

For 45 years, I have always blamed my time and service in Vietnam as the turning point where I began my destructive behavior. Truthfully speaking, however, that only compounded the underlying problems that were the causative factors of my dysfunctional behavior

Now, at this stage of my life, I can truly look back and see where I went bad. I could hold onto the fact that it started with the rejection of my supposedly “southern gentleman” biological dad telling my biological mom, “Go in the back room with this coat hanger and get rid of *IT*.” I won’t. Or, I could point out it was the rejection of my biological mom, rejecting this hideous thing growing inside of her. Not from the throes of love and passion, but from the terrible act of rape, then to be discarded on the side of a dirt road in the swamps of central Louisiana to be found by a childless couple. I make mention of this, but that is not the reason.

Over the years, as all this came to light, rejection came after rejection, “You’re not one of us,” or, “You’re not part of this family and you never will be!” Along with the emotional, sexual, and physical abuses starting at a young age, I began to lash out in anger, forming my destructive behavior. I was stuck between two worlds, fully accepted by neither. One black, one white, forced into an educational system governed by Jim Crow laws, rejected and abused by both. Some of the scars are still plain to see. Yet, I will not place blame there either!

I wish I could say that all the rejection and abuse that I endured caused the pain, frustration, depression, resentment, anger, and violence, not only in me, but in others also. But I can’t! I can thank God today, I can say after many, many years of prayer and reflection on my destructive behavior, it was not all the rejection and abuses that caused me to act out. It was how I chose to view the rejection and abuses, and respond to them.