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Be Careful What You Wish For, Little Girl

R. Scott Yarbrough

“What’s stupid literary analysis for anyway?
I just want to move,” Julie said.
She pumped her hips on “want” and “move.”
There are times when silence is the best service.

Be careful what you wish for little girl.
You may just get to be as big as you
thought you wanted to be. First,
you should prepare for your journey:

alienate your family; then, confirm
an animal as your new BFF.
Dogs are always good to run
away somewhere over the rainbow.

Second thoughts? Too bad. Screen door’s smacked
shut, your home-sweet-home’s twisted up in a tornado
and dropped into a color-filled, little-people patch.
You’ll need new shoes when you arrive; a journey requires them.

Red flashy ones always stir up the town.
Bask, because suddenly, you’re bigger
than even the mayor, got a key to the city, and
an endorsement from the Good Mother. Still, there’s

always that catch; your journey is just beginning. Just
stay on the straight and narrow and everything will be
fine, but look left and right, pay attention
to crossroads, and remember to pick up some tools:

get some brains for logic, a heart to feel, and a badge for courage,
even if – inside – you’re really still scared. Road Trip! Stay
away from drugs, especially when you see your final
destination; there are those who want to see you fail.

Big cities always offer unique challenges; they can
change as quickly as a horse of a different color.
“Nobody gets somethin’ for nothin’,” either. So,
you’ll probably have to talk to God. [It was inevitable.]

God’s pretty scary, too, a figurehead speaking out of fire.
And God, he’ll send you on that one last duty
- a small task for a God - but a mountain for a mortal. It will require
a trip deep into the woods, off the path, and you’ll probably

meet some flying monkeys. Textbook Rule: fight evil
with good. Try water instead of fire to melt away your enemy.
Those you save from slavery will thank you with a key.
And then, just when you think you will be the hero,

you’ll find out your God is just man’s mirror-image feared. You’ll find
that hearts and brains and courage must be cultivated; you’ll emerge,
and instead of red ruby pumps, you’ll find slippers silently sliding
an ageing sage searching for no place but home.

Untitled #3 Stephanie Kelly

