

Source:

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#flo

## 1 | Note to Alexa:

These are my live notes (written in markdown) as I am going through the reading. At the bottom is a brainstorm about possible topics for the close reading paragraph.

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## 2 | *Going to the Bakery*

*Elizabeth Bishop* Written in context of war and rationing and sickness

Perspective of moon

Describes pastries with humanoid features

perfect gibberish Contrast

Also contrast between cheery bakery and morbid descriptions

Habit...?

Cachaca = strong alcoholic beverage

- Terrific money ...?
  - Massive inflation rate increase — Inflation Rate
    - This perhaps led to people using their own form of currency, hence **MY** terrific money
    - Also, government made false promises about indexation and debt
      - Had the largest debt in the world
      - This led to the 1970 energy crisis, and years of recession and hyperinflation.

Doesn't acknowledge humanity through lack of true communication

Excuse – gives money, yet still doesn't recognize humanity.

Invisible Side

= Not recognized by the society or by the speaker

Dying, flaccid toy balloons

= Dying promise. Figurative: Iridescence reflects idea?

*Thesis/Brainstorming :*

The “black man” is not recognized by the speaker or the society as human, only

The speaker's offhanded treatment of the “black man” represents the colonialists' relationship to the colonized

The speaker's off-handed treatment of the “black man” represents the dismissal of the colonized persons' humanity.

Black, invisible side

Not recognized by the society or the speaker

He speaks in perfect gibberish

Speaks, but his words are viewed as holding no meaning.

Giving the money isn't actually helpful but a *symbol* of helpfulness. It's habit. The speaker is not engaging in true interaction, not acknowledging the humanity of the “black man.”

Say ‘Good Night’ from force of habit. Oh, mean habit! Not one word more apt or bright? “Good Night” is completely incorrect. Said out of habit, again, not acknowledging the humanity of the black man.

**Theme: false promises** Reflected in flaccid balloons, government to people, and colonialists to colonized  
#todo : ask Alexa how this relates and whether or not to incorporate it.

- Crazy Article
  - Coup in 1964
  - Implemented all kinds of new monetary policies
  - Totally messed with the market
  - Prior to this, there was no less than 80 - 100% inflation EVERY YEAR.
  - This short story was written in the midst of all these false promises
  - During inflation, very common to use other forms of currency (*my* money)
    - cents might refer to US money

Author uses x and y to convey the overarching theme of false promises, which was a prominent feeling in Brazil due to (the coup)

*Paragraph Begin.*

Thesis:

- Context
  - Written right after a coup which led to massive legal changes in the monetary system, totally messing with the market.

- Large feeling of false promise
  - “we are gonna create all these new laws, they are gonna make everything better”
- Bishop’s Tools:
  - Flaccid balloons – symbol of false promises

**Outline:**

- Topic Sentence / Thesis
  - Elizabeth Bishop uses symbolism to convey the overarching themes of false promises and deflated optimism, two immensely prominent cultural feelings at the time of writing.
  - Elizabeth Bishop conveys the widespread cultural sentiment of deflated optimism and unfulfilled promises through her vivid, cynical imagery.
- Context
  - Coup - at the time...
    - Was in massive financial crisis, had a coup, implemented new monetary laws and messed with the market, four years later still in a financial crisis. AKA, unfulfilled promises, deflated optimism.
    - ‘This is perhaps most clearly referenced’ by the *my money*.
      - Commonly used other forms of currency when times were bad financially
- Ex 1.
  - Flaccid balloons
    - The tin hides have the iridescence of dying, flaccid toy balloons.
    - Represents the once bright and cheery prospects of new leadership and laws, now deflated.
    - Balloons are meant to be a promise of joy. (Childish hope) - devaluing her hope after the fact by retrospectively calling it childish
- Ex. 2
  - Pastries
    - Uses sickly descriptions
      - The gooey tarts are red and sore
      - The loaves of bread lie like yellow-fever victims laid out in a crowded ward.
    - The happiness and hopefulness inherent in the concept of ‘pasties’
    - The promise of joy brought by pastries has been broken, the optimism completely sucked out of it.
    - hope has been deflated, rejected, defiled - it’s now tainted and repulsive, like illness. twisted, viscerally disgusting
    - Optimism isn’t just broken - it’s repulsive. There’s something fundamentally repulsive about disease on a very basic level.- Hop is forever tainted, sickened
- Ex 3. false promises
  - Good night
  - OR
  - False almond
- Conclusion sentence...?

3 |

*Writing Time**: sunglasses :*

Elizabeth Bishop conveys the widespread cultural sentiment of distrust and deflated optimism through the vivid, cynical imagery in her poem "Going to the Bakery." This poem was written during a time of massive poverty in Brazil, roughly four years after a coup catalyzed massive changes in monetary policy {citation}. The impact of these policies is perhaps most clearly referenced when the speaker describes their currency as "*my terrific money*" {citation}. Notably, this is the only place throughout the entire poem that the author uses italics for emphasis. At the time, Brazil was in poverty; distrust towards the government was rampant. Much like other times of economic and political turmoil, it was common to use a form of currency not managed by the legal system, hence Bishop's use of italics: "*my terrific money*" (citation). Bishop's distrust in the government is also reflected earlier in the poem, where she describes her surroundings as having "the iridescence of dying, flaccid, toy balloons" {citation}. Balloons are a symbol of almost child-like hope – a promise of joy. Here Bishop describes them, however, as "dying" and "flaccid," just as the country's sense of hope deflated while the new government failed to lift them out of poverty {citation}. Bishop chooses to use toy balloons to represent optimism, retrospectively calling it childish and naive. The speaker then enters a bakery, describing "the gooey tarts" as "red and sore," the "loaves of bread... like yellow-fever victims laid out in a crowded ward" (citation). The promise of joy, and therefore hope, inherent in pastries is not only deflated like the balloons, but also tainted and repulsive on a visceral level. Hope is an illness; hope is *sickly*. Ironically, this outlook on hope simply maintains that which causes it; without hope, one cannot achieve change, making it deadly to require change to be hopeful.