

# Gorilla, my love with all the boys and girls: stories of betrayal

[Life](#), [Childhood](#)



Gorilla, My Love With All The Boys and Girls: Stories of Betrayal "Gorilla, My Love" by Toni Cade Bambara and "Boys and Girls" by Alice Munro are known as initiation stories. These kinds of stories usually end with the main character reaching a "moment of illumination" (p. 504). By the end of the story, they tend to either grow as a person or gain personal knowledge. "Gorilla, My Love" and "Boys and Girls" also have a common theme: betrayal. The main characters of both these stories are exposed to being betrayed using different experiences they have during their stories. In "Boys and Girls" we are introduced to a young, tomboyish girl who has problems coming to terms with the life she is expected to lead. The story takes place in a world where women were subservient and the men were in charge. "Mothers had traditional roles, which usually left them in the house, while men also had their roles, outside of the house." (Alice Munro Boys and Girls Essays) She identifies more with her father who is a fox farmer who sells fox skin to fur traders. However, she sees her mother as an "enemy" who continually tries to "convert" her to become a domestic wife. (Boys and Girls) "She was plotting now to get me to stay in the house more, although she knew I hated it (because she knew I hated) and keep me from working for my father." (p. 513) She continually expresses her annoyance with her mother and how everyone tries to make her act "more like a lady". "'Girls don't slam doors like that'. 'Girls keep their knees together when they sit down.' And worse still, when I asked some questions, 'That's none of girls' business.'" (p. 514) The story revolves around two horses, Mack and Flora, who are to be butchered for their meat to feed the foxes by their father. When Flora gets loose and tries to run away the little girl does nothing to try

to stop her and lets her run right through the gate and out of the farm. Flora is eventually caught and then butchered anyway. This is where the theme of betrayal comes in. She betrays her father by releasing the horse even though her motives were never really clearly expressed. He ends up shunning his daughter for what she has done. The most significant part of the story is when during dinner he condemns her as being "only a girl". This can also be seen as an act of betrayal on the father's part by becoming part of the people that the main character thought were against her. Eventually the young girl leaves her father's world of fox hunting and ends in her mother's world of becoming a young lady. She slowly starts caring more about her hair and clothes. Even her dreams seem to change. At the beginning of the story, she dreams of being a sort of hero and being independent. However, as the story progresses she begins to see herself as a damsel in distress which shows the transition of being a tomboy to being more lady-like. We are never shown why these changes take place however.

In "Gorilla, My Love" by Toni Cade Bambara we are introduced to yet another tomboy. Not until nearly the end of the story do we find she is an African-American girl named Hazel. Hazel feels she is not treated with respect and dignity and values keeping one's word. The story starts off with Hazel riding in a car with Granddaddy Vale, Hunca Bubba, and her younger brother Baby Jason. They are bringing pecans home from the South. This is where we learn that Hazel's uncle, Hunca Bubba, decided to change his name back to Jefferson Winston Vale because he fell in love with a new woman. Once Hunca Bubba shows them a picture of the girl Hazel goes into a "digression" when she sees the movie theater in the picture's background.

(Gale, Thomsan) Hazel tells of a story where she, Baby Jason, and her brother Big Brood go to the movies on Easter Sunday where they decide to watch a movie the theater is promoting called Gorilla, My Love. However, once the movie begins, they see that Gorilla, My Love is not playing at all and instead they are showing Kings of Kings, a movie about Jesus Christ. An angered Hazel starts hollering, feeling like she has been betrayed. " And I'm ready to kill, " Hazel explains, " not cause I got anything ' gainst Jesus. Just that when you fixed to watch a gorilla pic, you don't wanna get messed around with Sunday school stuff. " (p. 506) Hazel and her brothers start " yellin', booin', stompin', and carryin' on. " (p. 506) This draws the attention of Thunderbuns, one of the theater matrons. Hazel describes her as a person who does not let anything to get out of line. " She do not play. She do not smile. So we shut up and watch the simple ass picture. " (p. 504). While the movie is playing a scene comes on of Jesus' crucifixion and Hazel immediately believes that he is acting too passively and would never happen if her family was involved. The last straw for her was when a Bugs Bunny cartoon came on that she has already seen before. Big Brood eggs her on by saying. " Aww sheet, we going to see the manager and get our money back. And I know from this we business. " (p. 507) Hazel, determined to get her money back, storms up to the manager's office alone to " deal with the manager who is a crook in the first place for lyin' out there sayin' Gorilla, My Love was playin'. " (p. 507) It does not take long for the manager to start treating Hazel as just a child and he never gives Hazel her refund. Just like how the theater did not show the movie it promised, to show, she felt like Hunca Bubba betrayed her by promising her they would get married then

goes off and marries someone else. She cries which causes her brother to cry "'cause he is my blood brother and understands that we must stick together or be forever lost. " (p. 509) As you can see, both of these stories have themes of betrayal. In Boys and Girls the child betrays the adults while in Gorilla, My Love it is the adults who betray the child. The tomboys in both of the stories get a sense of how the world often does betray people. WORKS CITED " Alice Munro Boys Girls Essays -- Alice Munro's Boys and Girls." Free Essays, Term Papers, Research Paper, and Book Report. 123HelpMe!, 2001. Web. 16 May 2011. . "' Boys and Girls'" Cowboy Hat. Blogspot, 29 Mar. 2005. Web. 16 May 2011. . Gale, Thomsan. " Gorilla, My Love." Novelguide: Free Study Guides, Free Book Summaries, Free Book Notes, & More. The Thomsan Corporation, 2005. Web. 16 May 2011. .