

Once upon a time x
constant image of
your face

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Guilt is a common feeling that humans feel when they have done something wrong. The poets Gabriel Okra and Dennis Brutts both express this feeling of guilt in their personae backgrounds. Therefore, Okra's "Once upon a Time" and Brutts's "It is the Constant Image of Your Face" are poems portrayed with guilt, but they show it in different situations. The body of both poems have a specific situation happening. In the poem "Once upon a Time" the persona wishes to be young again and forget all the lessons he has taught himself.

He admits of having to put on a "mask" depending on who he is in company with, however he wishes to return to his childhood days when he would laugh a honest laughter. The persona speaks to his son about the times when people WOULD seem to be sincere and caring when dealing with one another. In the poem "It is the Constant Image of Your Face" the persona chooses his woman over his country. The persona looks at his love for his country along with his mistress and the heartbreak that is inflicted with his choices.

The persona admits that they cannot make excuses for his mistress does not take precedence over the personae country, however he still commits treason against his country by being seduced by his mistress's beauty and protection. The persona hopes that his country will forgive him for choosing his mistress. In both the poems the personae give a feeling of guilt in their events. In the poem "Once Upon a Time" the poet creates contrast between "heart" and "faces". "Hearts" suggest a deep honest feeling and emotion.

Thus, when people shook hands "with their hearts", their emotion was true and real. However, when they laugh "With their teeth", not with their eyes.

This suggests that the eyes are like the windows of the soul thus letting us see how a person truly feels. In the second poem, "It is the Constant Image of Your Face" the persona reflects on the image of someone he cares for. The persona admits that both him and his mistress can "plead excuses" for his behavior because the woman does not take precedence over his country. He is also feeling guilt and sadness because of what he has done.

He has committed treason against his country and he hopes his country will pardon him because of his love for his country and woman. The two poems show contrast through literary devices. Personifications and oxymoron are used by the poets in their poems. In the poem 'It is the Constant Image of Your Face' the phrase 'heart's Treachery' is an oxymoron used.