

Irreducible Children's Story Pt. 1

From his bedroom window, the boy could see houses across the river. He wondered what it would be like to be a boy growing up in one of those houses across the river.

He began working various jobs. Years later, he found a steady job and was able to rent a room across the river. And he did. This room had a view of his old house across the river. He could even make out his old bedroom window. For years, he would watch his old bedroom window without ever seeing anyone open it or look out of it, not even his parents because they didn't live in that house anymore, either. He wondered what he would do if he saw someone look out of it and see him. He also began wondering more about the river itself, especially what it would be like to live on a boat much like the boats he grew up watching after the sun went down and all he would be able to see were the lights on the boats and some lights in some tall buildings across the river.

He could not find a job on a boat, because he didn't know any of the boatmen or what he could do on a boat to help a boatman should he meet one, one day. So he continued working. His office was on a top floor in a tall building. From his desk, he could see out one set of windows a clear view of the side of the taller office building next door.

A year later, the boy found a job in the office building he'd been staring at from his office window. The job was similar. The boy became very good at checking the work of imperfect machines.

But something was missing, something obvious to the boy. The boy didn't like his job. The boy traced the route of his troubles back to his decision to move across the river.

The boy returned back across the river. He kept his job. Every day, he'd take a ferryboat to work across the river. He moved in with a girl. He thought he'd figured everything out.

The boy's father died. His mother was losing her memory. The girl he was living with began dropping hints that she wanted to marry him, the

boy thought.

One night, the boy packed a suitcase and walked down to the docks. He snuck onto a ship. He still didn't know much about boats. It could have been any kind of ship.

He spent the night under the stars, using clothes from his suitcase as linens. It rained in the middle of the night, but the boy resolved to spend the entire night on the boat, no matter what.

The next night, the boy snuck into an even bigger ship, one with a shelter on board. This time, voices woke him in the middle of the night. The boy continued to hide. He was at sea at least. He fell back asleep. In the morning, the ship had returned to the dock, and had emptied.

The boy returned to his room with his girl and proposed to her that they move away. The girl had mixed feelings about the boy moving away from his mother. So they moved only back across the river, across the river from his mother, as a kind of compromise.

Once back across the river, the boy found a job on the side of the river from which he'd just moved away, on the side from which he had now twice moved away, so that he could live with his girl and take the ferryboat to work every day. On weekdays, he'd take the ferryboat to his job, and on weekends, to visit his mother, which pleased his girl. Again, the boy thought he'd figured everything out. His mother said she'd live happily ever after.

Then the boy had a boy of his own. His boy grew up in a room the boy had carefully designed, with one window very high up.

Sometimes, the boy's boy would slide his bed underneath the high window and stand on it. From there, he could see the street, and beyond it, the river. But mostly, the boy's boy just contemplated doors.