

Extended Metaphors and Movies

I came across the poem below by a high school student after one of my classes saw *Searching for Bobby Fisher*. If you've not seen it, it's well worth watching; most streaming services provide it. Link possible?

Here are some questions for reflection after you've read the poem (hopefully aloud):

- Have you ever felt this way in your life?
- Who/what is your opponent in education/life?
- What move do you see yourself making to win the game?
- Perhaps you need to "clear the board" as in the movie Bruce taught Josh to do in chess. What do you need to get rid of? What other life lessons might "clearing the board" remind you of?

The movie, this poem and your own thinking are always pertinent. The game of life moves much faster than chess, and I want you to be alert and prepared.

If you are inspired you may decide to write your own life metaphor or analogy poem. You could also use the Movies for Musing and Using guide sheet to focus as you watch the movie. (in Projects) Then enjoy the links to Josh Waitzkin's life since the movie is based on a real person.

This might be a good place to refer to the Chess Game story. Hopefully I can get it on the website soon. Meanwhile, here's the student poem:

The Chess Game Sheila Moran

I wonder about the course of my life,
and if it would have been different if I made more
of an effort.
Maybe I just got tired of trying so then, I didn't.
But at some point I had tried,
right?

When did this game of chess start getting harder,
the opponent more strategic?
Maybe I had tried too hard for a quick victory,
a two move checkmate.
What if in choosing to take a risk,
in trying to do what I thought I wanted,
I had exposed my king beyond retreat?

Law school was always my goal,
the Oz at the end of my yellow brick road.
And after so much waiting,
so much dreaming,
I forgot to plan for what comes next.
I guess that's it;
I was too shortsighted that I didn't see the whole
board,
didn't keep track of all of my pieces.
So I guess that's how I got here,
to this empty apartment in an unfamiliar city.
I wonder if there's still a way out.
A way to end this stalemate,
this unending game.

Maybe this is all I need:
a realization that I don't have a next move,
a recognition that I'm lost.
I still have most of my players:
my cunning queen still intact.

With my eye on the entire board,
I notice a weakness,
a flaw.
It's not too late to begin anew,
to win this unrelenting game.

First slowly,
then with conviction.
I raise my head to see my opponent's eye;
"Check mate."

