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A Lesson in the Profession

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A LESSON IN THE PROFESSION

Jim Persoon

If you think
section A by Professor X =
section B by Professor Y
you are lying
in a deep slumber.

Who is your teacher?
Jesus? Discipline
in the classroom a
very serious problem.
Nietzsche, I hear,
was too hard a grader.
Emily Dickinson
wouldn't show up
a student or for class.
Robert Frost at a girls' school
dumped all the essays
in a wastebasket and read
Sports Illustrated instead.
Shelley ran away with
one of the sophomores;
Keats had this habit
of coughing and coughing
while staring out
a window and falling
silent a long while, which
made his lectures
quite uncomfortable,
his handkerchief
pressed to his mouth.

Carlyle? Always excuses:
the stove went out or
the maid burned my notes or
what are you looking at anyway?
Coleridge? No one could
follow him. Roethke?
The Administration feared
some student would follow him
out a window
to experience God
on the ledge.
The Marquis de Sade? High
student evaluations
but complaints from
parents. Hitler?
Good lecturer,
you'd hang
on every word.
John Wayne Gacy & Jeffrey Dahmer?
Always an open door
for unexpected drop-ins.
John & Lorena
the unhappily mated
team-teachers of our nation?

My own Nintendo-tended children
are not given to scenes
in public or in private
or even in their imaginations,
without pain, or any difference that matters.