

Oranges

By: Gary Soto



The first time I walked
With a girl, I was twelve,
Cold, and weighted down
With two oranges in my jacket.
5 December. Frost cracking
Beneath my steps, my breath
Before me, then gone.
As I walked toward
Her house, the one whose
10 Porch light burned yellow
Night and day, in any weather.
A dog barked at me, until
She came out pulling
At her gloves, face bright
15 With rouge. I smiled,
Touched her shoulder, and led
Her down the street, across
A used car lot and a line
Of newly planted trees,
20 Until we were breathing
Before a drugstore. We
Entered, the tiny bell
Bringing a saleslady
Down a narrow aisle of goods.
25 I turned to the candies
Tiered like bleachers,
And asked what she wanted—
Light in her eyes, a smile
Starting at the corners
30 Of her mouth. I fingered
A nickel in my pocket,
And when she lifted a chocolate
That cost a dime,
I didn't say anything.
35 I took the nickel from
My pocket, then an orange,
And set them quietly on
The counter. When I looked up,
The lady's eyes met mine,
40 And held them, knowing
Very well what it was all
About.

Outside

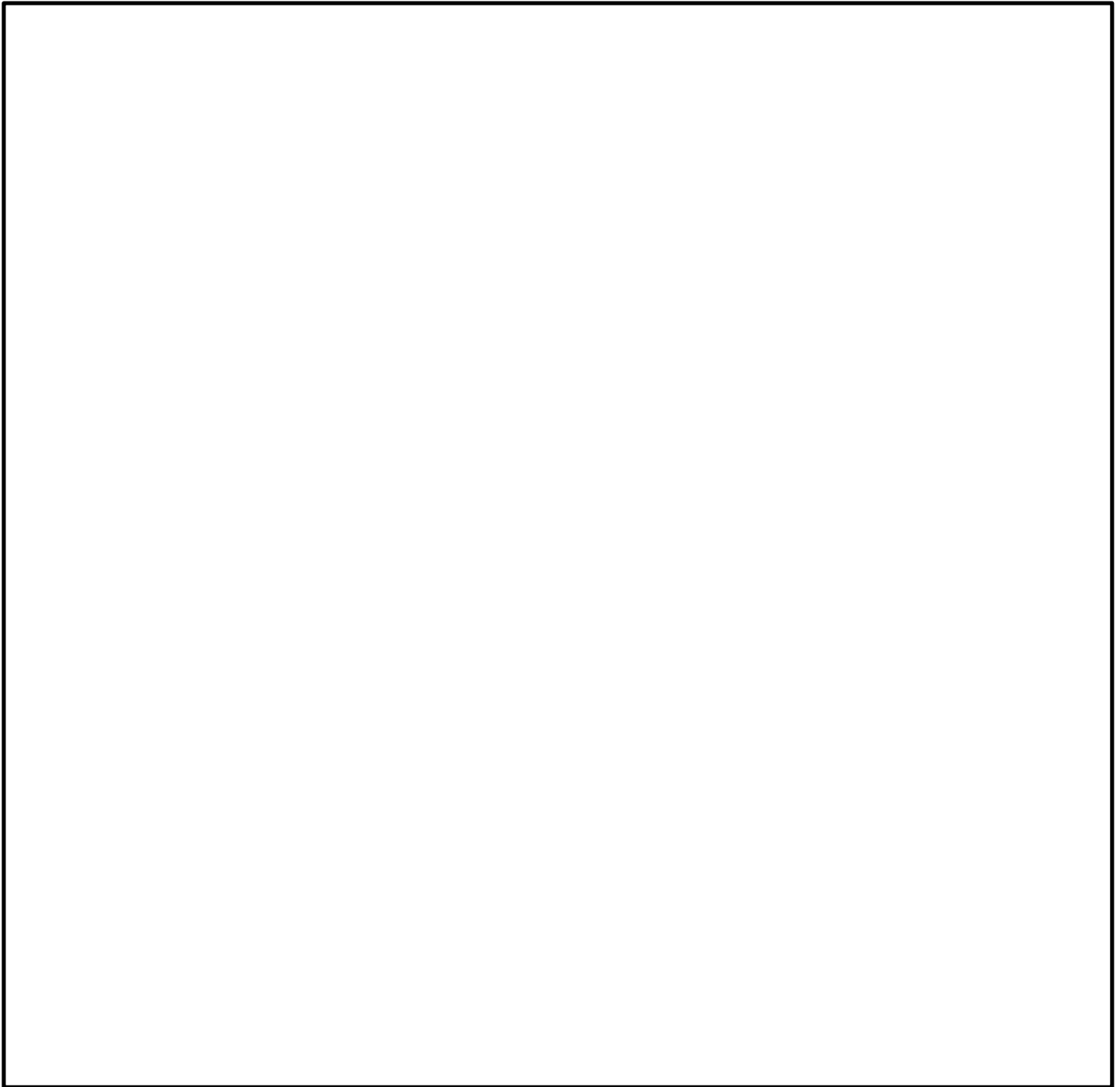
A few cars hissing past,
Fog hanging like old
45 Coats between the trees.
I took my girl's hand
In mine for two blocks,
Then released it to let
Her unwrap the chocolate.
50 I peeled my orange
That was so bright against
The gray of December
That, from a distance,
Someone might have thought
55 I was making a fire in my hands.

Name _____

Period _____

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In the box below, design a plot diagram: **Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action, Resolution**



Summarize the poem.

CITING TEXTUAL EVIDENCE: Prove the statements by stating details from the poem. Include line numbers.

1. I know it is cold outside. Why? (6 reasons)

- (line _____) _____
- (line _____) _____
- (line _____) _____
- (line _____) _____
- (line _____) _____
- (line _____) _____

2. I know the narrator is ashamed that he does not have enough money for the candy. Why? (3 reasons)

- (line _____) _____
- (line _____) _____
- (line _____) _____

Find Evidence: Find lines of support from the poem to answer the questions below. Explain why the evidence from the poem supports your answer.

3. What does the woman behind the counter understand?

4. When did the characters smile? Why could these times be important?



Writing Activity: Change the narrative. (Let's Discuss)

What would happen if the saleslady made the boy pay? How would this affect the "date" if she did? Write your ideas on a piece of notebook paper in prose. Include dialogue where appropriate.