

Head Over Heels

I have to love you, you know
As you honestly labor to understand
The significance of Abner Snopes tracking shit
Into the mansion of Major de Spain.
I watch your empty well-meaning breath projected into
empty air,
Building dialogues around stereotypes and the triumph and
nobility
Of a man who refuses to wipe his shoe.
It means so much to you
To sift through an unsightly occurrence
And find a code of honor at the core.
Your heart is good.

But let me tell you: my mother's second husband
Was Abner Snopes, base, hulking, and dull
And when he tracked shit into the house,
He had no thought about asserting his class
In the domain of another.
He had no thought at all, only ignorant disregard
And shit on his shoe, shit on his shoe,
And my mother to scrub it.

Here I sit then, the daughter of a weeping mother,
The step-daughter of a salt of the earth man,
A scholarship student in a private university,
And I love you for your intentions
And kiss your ivory innocence.

Sarah Gardner