

## Creative Works

### Poems: Goodbye, Adam West and A New Tale

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My scholarly work has turned increasingly to Popular Culture Studies in recent years. My work as editor of *Diversity in Disney Films* confirms the continuation of a trend in which portrayals, particularly of physical disabilities, are still largely negative, though such trends, as with ethnicity, may be shifting some. While I'm more concerned with poetic techniques especially in the revising process, it was probably inevitable that popular culture and fairy tale references would eventually show up in my disability-themed poems as well.

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## Goodbye, Adam West

1928-2017

I've lost my Batman, through all the darker incarnations, my syndicated "Bright Knight."

1970s Antenna TV, 3 networks, and "UHF."  
David Carradine, the "Asian" kung-fu master.

On M\*A\*S\*H, Koreans, background characters of their own war.  
Hong Kong Phooey, masked Asian janitor superhero dog.

Disability telethons and illness stories, only  
Ironside survives. No Soap stars or adventurers

on TV who looked like me segregated  
in Special Ed with others' colostomy bags, therapy mats.

You visited my class once, a "special" treat.  
You and Robin shook hands, no kicks, no punches.

Only your costumes real. Still, I dreamt of you, fighting  
the kids who beat up Sam Teng daily after school. POW!

Commissioner Gordan Batphoning, you pursuing those who scrawled,  
"Johnson is a Yellow-colored Dickhead" on school walls. YOW!

Batman, we still need you to punch the guy who mocked,  
then sucker punched the 7-11 patron with cerebral palsy.

Swoop down, Batman, and save Destinee Mangum,  
and Walia Mohamed on that Portland train,

rescue their dead and injured defenders. Goodbye  
Adam West, thanks for your beacon through the dark night.

## A New Tale

Once upon a time...  
the sleeping beauty, awakened, perfect;  
the puppet boy, wooden doppelgänger,  
transformed into a child of marrow.  
What becomes of the fairy tales when  
your wish falls upon a tarnished star?


Should you birth a child, potentially wooden,  
or abort? I cannot decide for you.  
I am a wooden child-turned-flesh.  
With my magic, I ward off tricksters:  
the ones with fine faces, porcelain dolls,  
their insides, poisoned apple; the hungry  
wolves disguised as wisewomen to deceive  
the naïve; the witches enticing children,  
who, lost, call for love, for home.

No, I cannot give your child my magic.  
You may have to release your wooden child  
into the woods alone to forage for the life of flesh,  
bone, fending off the melancholy ghost's dirge.

Prepare your child for battle:  
banish the ghost; strengthen your child  
with luscious meals, lovingly prepared;  
battle the green goblin, eyeing  
the non-wooden with learned love,  
your gift, an open heart,  
home.

### References

Sethi, A. S. (2018, August 13). *Portland train attack survivors Destinee Mangum and Walia Mohamed speak out*. Literary Hub. <https://lithub.com/portland-train-attack-survivors-destinee-mangum-and-walia-mohamed-speak-out/>

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