

Zoe Santiago

Dr. Kim Jensen

English 102

November 17, 2020

My White Name is Mary

(This diary has been translated to English)

Friday 9th November 1880

Dear diary,

My name is Zonta which means trustworthy. I am part of the Lakota tribe. I am also twelve years old. Today was a good day because I played all day with my two brothers Chatan and Hanska, and my sister Macha. We got to play in the beautiful sun, and went to the stream. While we were at the stream, we saw so many fish. We also skipped rocks which caused the water to splash on my face. Ah, it was so refreshing. While we were playing in nature, father went hunting for food. When he got back home, we all ate what he had caught which was fish. He also hunted for wild rice. It was so tasty! After eating, I felt tired, so I'm going to sleep now. Goodnight.

Monday 12th November 1880

Dear diary,

Right now, I am writing while we're being transported to Carlisle, Pennsylvania. We are being forced to go to the Carlisle Indian Industrial School. While I am writing this, I am also trying to comfort Macha. My siblings and I are all very upset and very confused. Our parents were also sobbing when we left. They didn't want to let us go, and I didn't want them to. Why

are we being taken away from our families? When will we see them again? What is it like at this school? I just want to be with my family. I don't want to leave them.

Tuesday 13th November 1880

Dear diary,

When we got to the school, my brothers got separated from us. I didn't know what was going on because I couldn't understand their language. A very pale lady took my sister and I with her, and she gave us some strange clothes and shoes. She made us put the dresses and shoes on. The white lady made us point to a weird name. When we did she called us that name from then on. I was called Mary and my sister was called Lily. Then, she pulled out a sharp tool. I didn't know what she was going to do, but then she went towards my hair. I was quiet until she went towards my hair. Our people wear their hair long. I didn't want to cut my hair, but I had no say. I tried telling her to stop, but she cut my hair off anyways. Then, we were sent to the girls dormitory for bed. I noticed all the girls were dressed the same as me and also had their hair cut. Today was not good, and it wasn't a goodnight either. All night my sister and I cried, but I also heard a lot of the other girls crying. I don't want to be here. I want my family. I want to be home.

Wednesday 14th November 1880

Dear diary,

In the morning, a loud alarm went off in our room which woke all the girls up. I was already awake because I couldn't sleep at all. How could I sleep here? I don't want to be here. All the girls got straight out of bed, and made their beds. I did not, but one of the girls told me to, and I could understand her because she spoke my language. I asked her name and she told me it was "Chapa." However, I couldn't call her that around the Whites because we would get in

trouble. She told me that they make you change your name to a white name, so that's why they keep calling me Mary. Why do they do that? My name is Zonta, not Mary.

After exiting the dormitory, we had to go to church and pray. I am not Christian, so I didn't pray with them. Then, a white lady told me to even though I am not Christian. I still wasn't praying, and she slapped me. My face stung. I was in shock. I didn't even cry. Why did she just hurt me? What did I do wrong? I'm not Christian.

When we left the church, we had to go to class. In class, the Whites taught us to cook, sew, clean, and do laundry. I don't know why they're teaching us this. My family didn't teach us this.

Thursday 15th November 1880

Dear diary,

Today in class, I saw my friend Chapa. I was speaking to her, and then the white lady said something to me, but I couldn't understand her. I kept speaking to Chapa, and then the white lady hit me. I stopped talking because I was in pain.

Later that day in the dormitory, Chapa told me that we are only allowed to speak English or the whites will get mad and hurt us. I am glad that Chapa can understand some English since I cannot. But why can't we speak our language? Why do they hurt you if you speak your language?

Monday December 15th 1880

Dear diary,

I know it's been a little bit since I have written in my diary. I haven't felt like writing. I have been too upset because something heartbreaking happened at this place. One of the girls was found dead in the bathroom. She took her own life because she has been wrongly touched by

the whites ever since she has gotten here. She just couldn't take it anymore. She should never have been at this place in the first place. None of us should be here. What if this happens again? How many of us are getting touched? I do not want to be next, but I can't escape. People don't escape from here. Even if they try, they get brought right back here. I can't try to leave because I can't leave my siblings. I still haven't seen my brothers since we've gotten here. Please, just let us leave.

Wednesday December 17th 1880

Dear diary,

Chapa woke up very ill today. Her head was so warm to the touch when I felt it. She also had bad body aches and headaches. The white people won't help her. They can see that she is not well. She needs help.

Friday December 19th 1880

Dear diary,

It has been two days since Chapa woke up extremely ill. Today, she woke up with a strange rash on her tongue and mouth. I don't know what she is ill with. However, I will stay with her as much as possible because I don't want her to be alone.

Monday December 22nd 1880

Dear diary,

Chapa has still not gotten better. The rash was only in her mouth before, but now it's on her skin. First, the rash appeared on her face, then it spread to her arms and legs, and eventually her feet and hands were covered in rashes. Please let her get better. I can't lose the only friend I have here. What would I do then? Will she get better?

Tuesday December 23rd 1880

Dear diary,

I tried to stay awake all night to check on Chapa, but I accidentally fell asleep. When I woke up, I tried speaking to Chapa, but she was not responding. I tried waking her up, but she wouldn't.

Chapa is gone now. The whites came and took her away after they saw me sobbing next to her. They could have saved her, but they didn't care to. They do not care about us.

Thursday December 25th 1880

Dear diary,

Today, I woke up with sores in my mouth. The same sores that Chapa had. I did not know that staying with her would make me ill. However, I'm glad I stayed by her side. She needed her family, and I was the closest thing she had to family here. I demanded my sister to stay away from me because I don't want her to die too. I told her to survive this place. I told her to stay strong because one day she'll be able to see our family again. One day she will be able to see our parents and our brothers. I don't think I will be able to see them again in this life, but she'll be able to. I'm feeling too weak to write. Goodbye my family. I love you...

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