

FAVORITE POEMS TAMUK

DEAR BASKETBALL

Kobe Bryant 1978-2020

This is my favorite poem because this is how Kobe Bryant announced his retirement. It was released in 2015 when I was a sophomore in high school. He spoke about what the game of basketball meant to him and how much he poured into it. This is the true concept of doing something you love and appreciating everything it gave to you. Now that Kobe has passed, it means even more. As I read this poem, I really thought about basketball and what it did to me personally and how much I loved it. It was fun reading this poem and envisioning it in my head. Looking back on it, it has as much meaning now as it did back then. I am grateful that Kobe was able to motivate me in high school to now in college, it really came full circle. This will always be my favorite poem and has so much meaning to me. Thank you, Kobe, for inspiring me on the court and in the classroom.

Antonio De La Garza
Marketing Major, Junior

Dear Basketball,

From the moment
I started rolling my dad's tube socks
And shooting imaginary
Game-winning shots
In the Great Western Forum
I knew one thing was real:

I fell in love with you.
A love so deep I gave you my all
From my mind & body
To my spirit & soul.

As a six-year-old boy
Deeply in love with you
I never saw the end of the tunnel.
I only saw myself
Running out of one.

And so I ran.
I ran up and down every court
After every loose ball for you.
You asked for my hustle
I gave you my heart
Because it came with so much more.

I played through the sweat and hurt
Not because challenge called me
But because YOU called me.
I did everything for YOU

Because that's what you do
When someone makes you feel as
Alive as you've made me feel.

You gave a six-year-old boy his Laker dream
And I'll always love you for it.
But I can't love you obsessively for much longer.
This season is all I have left to give.
My heart can take the pounding
My mind can handle the grind
But my body knows it's time to say goodbye.
And that's OK.

I'm ready to let you go.
I want you to know now
So we both can savor every moment we have left together.
The good and the bad.
We have given each other
All that we have.

And we both know, no matter what I do next
I'll always be that kid
With the rolled up socks
Garbage can in the corner
:05 seconds on the clock
Ball in my hands.
5 ... 4 ... 3 ... 2 ... 1
Love you always,
Kobe

Bryant, Kobe, "Dear Basketball." The Player's Tribune (November 29, 2015).
<https://www.theplayerstribune.com/articles/dear-basketball>.