

The Parable of The Boy, The Dog and The Bear

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<http://mccue.cc/bob/spirituality.htm>

A boy was passing through a forest. He knew it well by day. But he enjoyed too many pleasures, and as darkness fell became uncertain of his way. New sights and sounds frightened him. He found himself deep in a long, steep ravine that seemed to lead in the right direction. Just ahead, he saw a fierce dog in the shadows. A dog was said to have killed some, and maimed others, at night in the forest. The Dog growled, and leapt at him.

The boy fled headlong into the bushes. Branches ripped at him, tearing clothes and flesh. He felt nothing.

So blind was his flight that the boy burst from a thicket and almost into a feeding bear. He was close enough to touch its fur. It stank of a terrifying rot he had never before encountered. His legs buckled as with startling grace the Bear reared and bellowed at him. He instinctively plunged back into the thicket the way he had come.

The boy knew he must deal with the Dog. A grim calm enveloped him as he charged back through the brush toward his predator. He stooped to pick up a heavy deadwood club.

The boy recognized the clearing in which the Dog had charged him, and wondered why he had not found it yet. He stopped. There was the Dog. It waited where he had left it, ready to spring. The Bear's roar hung heavy in the air.

Maybe he could make it past the Dog? Maybe he could frighten it with his club. And if not, he would do what he could with it! He sprinted forward behind his most fearsome scream. The Dog disappeared into mottled shadow as the Boy passed two large boughs groaning wildly together in the wind.

The landscape opened up. He saw light. There he found himself, and rested, until a passing bear led him on his way.