

When I was very little  
Though it's still true today  
There were no sidewalks in Lincoln heights  
And the home we had on Jackson Street  
Was right next to a bus stop and a sewer  
Which didn't really ever become offensive  
But one day from the sewer a little kitten  
With one eye gone  
Came crawling out  
Though she never really came into our yard but just  
Sort of hung by to watch the folk  
My sister who was always softhearted but able  
To act effectively started taking milk  
Out to her while our father would only say  
Don't bring him home and everyday  
After school I would rush home to see if she was still  
There and if Gary had fed her but I could never  
Bring myself to go near her  
She was so loving  
And so hurt and so singularly beautiful and I knew  
I had nothing to give that would  
Replace her one gone eye

And if I had named her which I didn't I'm sure  
I would have called her Carol

- Nikki Giovanni

"I had nothing to give that would replace her one gone eye". Isn't it the main idea in Nikki Giovanni's poem? The expression, which says much about the kitten, has a meaning of something what makes us think deeply into the projection of what the author is trying to say.

What is the kitten Nikki wrote about is not a kitten but a disabled child or a child without a family? We can feed him or her, put the child into a place where he will be taken care of, but can we really help a person who has lost more than we can give back? I don't think we can heal the wounds of a disabled person by "acting effectively" in "taking milk out to her". Certainly we won't help a child with disabilities by just missing him, not paying attention or just trying to forget about him. Well, some people do it, according to Nikki: "Our father would only say don't bring him home". Even our softheart won't make much difference any more.

There is only one conclusion Giovanni makes in this poem: "I had nothing to give that would replace her one gone eye", and that is the reality.