

# Kaye Gibbons' Ellen Foster Essay

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Ellen, who is a young girl, lived with her sick mother and her alcoholic father. Her father was

very abusive, both mentally, physically and sexually. He was not the father that most read about in

story books. Her mother was sick with heart problems and was not very functional. Ellen was

convinced her dad would kill her and her mother. Ellen's mother took a bunch of pills and Ellen

tried to get her to vomit them up. Her [father](#), who is not concerned at all, tells Ellen to let her be,

she would sleep it off. Ellen wanted to call for help but her father threatens to kill her if she does.

So Ellen sat with her mother until she passed. Ellen dealt with her hardships better than most

young girls. She became a heroine and became great at survival. She overcame great obstacles and

fight, against all odds, her way to happiness. The book is a work of fiction that mirrors Gibbons

own life. The story is narrated by Ellen herself. It is unusual for the subject of a story to also narrate.

Ellen uses different verb tenses, going back and forth from past to present.

Gibbons stressed that Ellen was afraid of her mother dying when Ellen would lie next to her

mom in bed and check to see if she was breathing. This showed that Ellen's fear of losing her

mother was intense. Gibbons repeats Ellen's fears that her dad would kill her several times in the

beginning as if to tell what happened next. This is how Gibbons built the beginning of the story up,

letting the reader know to expect something. In the novel, Ellen's mother was sick with heart

problems. Maybe Ellen's mother wanted to die because her husband's character was so mean.

When Ellen sat with her m...

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...girl overcomes them and

directs her life in a place she wants to be. It is a recommended read for any young girl or boy as

well as adults who is facing any type of hardship. Ellen's character can be any little girl or boy in any

little town who needs reassuring that life can be what you make it.

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