

Roberts denial and confusion in black and blue

Sociology



**Edu
Pony**

In *Black and Blue* (Abrams & Shapiro, 1999), Frances Benedetto (Mary Stuart Masterson) is married to a New York cop, Bobby Benedetto (Anthony LaPaglia), who physically and psychologically abuses her. For twelve years, she endures the abuse and puts on a public face that they have an ideal marriage because they have a son, Robert (Will Rothhaar). After witnessing a woman die from repeated domestic violence abuses, she realizes that she has to leave her husband, even if it means being part of a witness protection program and taking her son with her on a run. I understand why Robert thinks that his mother is wrong for leaving his father because he is too young to understand the causes and effects of domestic violence, and because his father has not hurt him yet, so he is in a state of denial on his father's misdeeds. I do not agree with his behavior of asking his mother to go back to his father, but he is young and confused, so he needs counseling too that he did not get when they abruptly left for Florida.

Robert hates the idea of leaving his father and home because he is too young to comprehend how bad his mother's situation is and he has not experienced domestic violence yet, so he denies the possibility that his father is not an ideal father, but an abusive husband. He does not understand the depth of domestic abuse his mother is going through because he only overhears the violence in their home. He must be in denial too that his ideal father, a hero to him, could be such a violent animal to his own wife. Robert does seem to understand what is truly happening to his mother because, while waiting for the bus during their escape, he wants them to go home and for his parents to "kiss and makeup" (Abrams & Shapiro, 1999). He does not know that his father does not kiss and make up, <https://edupony.com/roberts-denial-and-confusion-in-black-and-blue/>

but hurts his mother as a way of making up. He is not aware of the psychological abuse his mother goes through every day because he is too young to notice and understand everything. In addition, Robert does not yet experience his father's violence. His father is good for him. He brings him to ball games. He shows affection for him. He might yell at him, but he has not hurt him yet. Because he does not directly experience his father's violent side, he is sheltered from the reality of his father's troubling personality. I understand why Robert wants to go back home because his youth prevents him from understanding the gravity of domestic violence and because his father has not physically abused him so far.

I do not agree with his behavior of asking his mother to go back to his father, but he is young and puzzled, so he needs counseling too that he did not get when they abruptly left for Florida. Robert is confused because he is suddenly uprooted from familiar surroundings. He is upset with the sudden changes in his life. He also cannot talk to anyone, family, and friends. He should be more patient, but I cannot expect much from a boy his age. All he knows is that he is in a new environment and he has lost security and stability. I believe he needs counseling to help him understand the situation. He needs someone whom he can trust and who can help him make sense of these sudden changes in his life and to determine the benefits of being away from his father.