

THE MAPLE POINT JOURNAL



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Too Late

by Emily Jones

I was only ten years old when my grandfather finally lost the long battle with lung cancer. He would start smoking in the morning, and he would smoke throughout the day. Sometimes, I could have sworn I saw the flicker of his lighter illuminating his bedroom for just an instant in the darkness of night. I would beg and plead with him to quit, but all he would tell me was, "It's too late for me, Jamie. Just promise me you won't let a cigarette touch your lips for as long as you live and that will clear me of my sins."

But he just didn't understand. Why couldn't he stop? For this, I resented him. Sometimes I would almost try to punish my granddad for not understanding what he was doing to himself by ignoring him. I remember days when I wouldn't even look at him. I acted as if he were a contagious disease and, if I got too close, all his flaws would rub off on me, overtaking me to the point where I couldn't even take care of my own problems.

There was so much time with him I missed when he had a cigarette hanging lazily out of his mouth, which was practically every waking moment of his life. I just could not accept his problem.

When I heard the news that Granddad was gone, it was a cold rainy day in late November. It was the kind of cold that covers you in a heavy blanket of numb clammy chill. I was sitting on my bed engulfed in a mountain of blankets and pillows, doing my math homework which consisted of a page of geometry was already on problem number 5 when the phone rang, disturbing my train of thought. I ignored it like I always do, instead letting my parents get it.

A few seconds later, another sound penetrated my ears, but this time it was not the phone. I could hear my mom wailing. Her repetitive cries of disbelief echoed up the stairs and down the hall spilling under my bedroom door. I froze.

I knew what had happened. The time was bound to come; it was just a matter of when. I couldn't bear to go down stairs, afraid that if I heard someone tell me what had happened, the reality of it would come alive. I sat there dreading what was coming next. The hope that my prediction was false was like the uplifting glimmer of a star in a dark sky of depressing gloom.

I heard slow footsteps trudging up the stairs. My heart was in my throat. There was a light knock on my bedroom door. I said nothing; the sound of my mother's muffled cries was still reverberating through the house.

I knew what had happened. The time was bound to come; it was just a matter of when.

They knocked again. I said nothing. They knocked again, a little louder this time followed by my father's voice. "Jamey, can I come in?" I said nothing. I could not manage to speak.

The door opened, and my dad drifted in. His face wore a more exaggerated version of the expression it always has when he tries to make dinner and fails to create even a simple salad. "Granddad passed away early this morning." My heart skipped a beat and then sunk like a rock in the ocean. I shouldn't have been shocked; I knew exactly what he was going to say, but nevertheless I was. Maybe after that flicker of hope is extinguished, it takes a while for you to adjust to the darkness. I was silent.

Even though his death was anticipated, it just didn't seem real. He was gone, gone forever. A tear ran down my face, and it occurred to me how permanent this was.

During the next few days, everything seemed wrong. It felt like at any moment we were all going to hop in the car and go visit granddad at the hospital, or I would see him come out of his bedroom down the hall, but nothing happened.

Every once in a while, my mom would burst into tears. This upset me. It's not like I had never seen her cry before; it's just that this time it seemed more saddening. Her chestnut hair was matted, and there were dark circles under her green eyes. She was very close to her dad because he was the only parent she had growing up. Her mother had died after giving birth to her. My dad would try to comfort her and it would help, but her sadness never lifted completely.

Two weeks later my dad tried to go through granddad's room, but mom just couldn't let go. She eventually agreed that it had to be done, so we got some boxes and started sorting through. It was painful to open his drawer and look at his hefty stash of cigarettes. They stared up at me menacingly. I had so much hatred for them that was building up inside of me. They were the reason granddad was dead.

I felt sick. I had treated him so terribly because of these. Instead of focusing my anger out on them, I focused in on granddad.

I shut the drawer with more force than I had meant to, and the dresser shook. A few minutes had gone by, and we were looking at an old photo album of his. I was so surprised. It made me feel as if I never even knew him. There was a picture of him winning a triathlon; I didn't even know granddad was into sports. There was another picture of him and my mom on her tenth birthday; the same age I was now. It made me feel as if he were a stranger; the whole idea of him had been tainted by his addiction.

Now that I am older, I understand why he couldn't quit and it makes me sad. I should have given him a chance, but I was blinded. Now I will never make that mistake again.

Life Experiences

Lost Passport

By Angela Cook

I just couldn't take it any longer! It was so early, and everyone on the plane was still asleep! I wish I had someone to talk to; I was so tired yet couldn't fall asleep after hours of tossing and turning in the fabricated airplane seat. I jerked my head to the side and watched crisp morning rays penetrate the thick airplane window and flow into the narrow, carpeted passageway. An exaggerated yawn escaped my mouth, and I delicately raised a hand to smother it. Glancing to the side, I prodded a thin, pale finger into the side of Jillian, a fellow member of the Princeton Girl Choir, figuring she'd be the easiest to wake since she'd been the first to fall into a deep slumber.

The annual tour that year was scheduled to be international, and our destination was far away indeed. At that moment, I was on a large jet plane heading to Paris, France. The entire choir had been much more than excited when the managers announced our stop in the exotic country, but we were also extremely disappointed when we discovered that our stay in the city was merely a pit stop; we weren't even scheduled to stay a full twenty-four hours. It was strictly forbidden to even leave the airport once we arrived. Our time spent in this tourist trap was only estimated to be an hour or so, just enough time to unwind for a bit and grab a bite to eat. It was supposed to be for only that much time, but we ended up stranded there for quite a bit longer. . .



For the umpteenth time, I jabbed a finger into my friend. "Get up, Jillian! I'm bored." Finally deciding to give up on sleeping longer, the girl's eyes snapped open to reveal hazy brown orbs clouded with drowsiness.

Her thick hair curled into gentle ringlets as she wiped at her eyes and mumbled, "How long do you think I slept?"

I offered a shrug, and then further answered her question after I glanced at my pink digital watch, "Umm, a little more than two hours. You feel refreshed from your little nap?"

Jillian gave a quick nod as she grabbed her wire-framed glasses and delicately placed them on her ears, "I feel a lot better, actually. Did you sleep at all?"

I simply sighed and shook my head to signal a no. Our flight had been eight and a half grueling hours and I hadn't gained a wink of sleep. Needless to say, I felt drained of all energy and incredibly

sleepy. Although my attitude was dreary, the sun still shined brightly into our section of the plane.

After a few minutes of sitting in silence as Jillian adjusted to waking up, I noticed that the plane was dipping slightly. My eyes flickered to the scenery outside the window. From what I could see, it appeared that we were starting to head towards the ground. To confirm my hypothesis, I slid a finger on the touch screen built into the seat in front of me. I selected the plane icon, and in front of me was a caption that stated we'd be landing in approximately ten-minutes.

Squealing girlishly, I turned to face Jillian and exclaimed, "Dude, less than ten minutes 'til we land! Tell me you're not excited!"

"Actually, I've already been to Europe, but it's nice to see someone excited for exploring a different continent for the first time." At her words, I began to pout. One thing that frustrated me about those Princeton girls was they've already been to all sorts of foreign countries. The only person in the choir who hadn't been anywhere exotic was Jes, blond-haired and ocean-eyed; she was the next person I knew to awake from a deep sleep.

"How long will it be until we land?"

"Eh, about ten minutes. But then we'll have to get off the plane, go through security, find a shop that sells food *and* one that has employees that understand English, and so on."

Jes rolled her eyes and began to pack up her carry-on, and I soon followed. The next forty minutes were filled with shouts of French, excited chatter coming in the direction of the Princeton girls, and a light happy mood in general. Not long after this we found ourselves standing in the Paris airport.

"Wow!" I exclaimed, spinning around to get a full view. "It's so pretty compared to JFK."

Jes nodded and showed a pearly grin, "Isn't it beautiful? And since I've been taking French for the last year-and-a-half, it'll be easier for us to navigate this place." That was just one more plus about having Jes in my tour group. If anything ever happens, she knows a bit of French so she can speak to the local people.

"Okay girls, gather around me!" Our activities manager, Ms. The short woman cleared her throat and said, "I have a bit of bad news for everyone. The plane that our choir is scheduled to take to Vienna is going to arrive late because of unknown complications. Because of this, we're all to remain in the airport for an extra four hours." Is Mrs. Perkins serious? Why, oh why, did our plane have to be so late? It was only six in the morning, and we were scheduled to board the jet to Austria at eight o'clock. Add in four extra hours, *Continued on page 3*

Back-up Plan

by Kiera McKenzie

"Jezza, stop barking, there is nothing there!" I shouted at my dog, as I strained my ears trying to listen to the television.

One restless day after I arrived home from school, I was sitting on the couch watching television. I called my mom to let her know I had arrived home.

"Hey mom, I'm home," I said into the phone.

"Hey sweetie, I should be leaving work soon," she replied.

I hung up the phone and put it back onto its base, as it clicked into position. I walked over to the couch, hearing the old floors under me crack with every step. The floor cracked with relief when I plopped onto the couch. As I sat down, I grabbed my backpack and unzipped it. Once it was unzipped, I fought with my sweatshirt that was intertwined with my folder. I pulled and pulled it, hearing ripping sounds from the sweatshirt. "Oh my gosh, it won't come out!," I said to myself with frustration.

After two minutes of pulling, my folder came out of my book bag. Then suddenly, I heard a bang come from the kitchen. I slowly walked over with caution. Only hearing the cracking of the floors, I tried to stay calm. I looked into the kitchen; there was nothing there so I went back to the plush couch. I felt so relieved to know there was no one in the house.

Once I sat back down, I yelled at my dog, "Jezza shut-up, there is nothing there, I even checked."

But I was very wrong. There was a squirrel in the kitchen. The squirrel ran out of the kitchen then ran onto the couch with its sharp nails scratching the fabric of the couch. It jumped onto the balcony barrier holding on for dear life while my dog was right under the squirrel waiting for him to fall into her mouth.

With my cell phone in hand, I ran out of the house and dialed my mom as fast as I could,



apartment. I don't know what to do, but Jezza is still in there!" "A squirrel?" she replied puzzled. "Yes."

"Okay, whatever you do don't go inside the house anymore. Got it? I should be home soon. Love you," and she hung up.

Luckily, when I looked out into the pouring rain, I saw my neighbor's car pulling up. As she came up the stairway she said, "Hi sweetie. How are you?" "Not good," I replied, "there is a squirrel in my house; that's why

I'm out here."

"All right, I'm going get my son to help us, come on in."

"Okay, thank you so much. I appreciate it."

Wow. I couldn't believe it; finally I was getting some help with this catastrophe. If I found out someone had a squirrel in their apartment, I wouldn't know what to do! Within five minutes, I went back into my apartment to find my dog and the squirrel still in the same spot. My neighbor's son went in and used my Guitar Hero to try to get the squirrel out. He slid the door open and the squirrel ran out like a bullet! It was gone. It was back to me and my dog!

"Thank you so much!" I said to the son with relief.

"No problem, if you need anything just come over," he replied. "Okay, thank you again."

Then he left. I was very lucky this time to have my neighbor coming home from work. Then I realized you always have to have a back-up plan.

LIFE EXPERIENCES

Lost Passport

Continued from page 2

and we'd be stranded in the Paris Airport until noon! My face distorted itself into a frown, and I turned to Jes.

I groaned to her, "I can't believe we're going to be stuck here for four extra hours!"

She offered a confused expression and asked, "What's wrong? You look unhappy about being stuck in *France* for six hours!"

I sighed, "I am. I'm nervous because I can't speak French."

The blond girl smiled serenely and told me, "Don't worry about it; if you need to talk to anyone, I can say what you need to say for you." I nodded and smiled. Jes has always been there whenever I needed her, and for that, I'll always be grateful.

I asked Jes, "Would you mind finding something to eat?"

"Sure!" she chirped, "As long as we can take Sindhu along." Jes motioned to another friend of ours. "We're hungry, so I think it's about time that we find some place to grab a bite to eat."

I responded, "I agree; I don't think we've eaten at all in the last six hours." As our trio exited the bathroom, I began to think of what I wanted to order. I don't know a word of French, so whatever I want to eat has to be in Jes's French vocabulary. . .

"Hey Jes," said the blond. "Do you know how to say bagel in French?"

The tall girl placed a finger on her chin and thought for a moment, "I probably knew one point, but I don't remember. . ." I groaned, Sindhu giggled, and we all continued walking.

Suddenly, a word captured my eyes that I could read, "Guys, look! It says *café!*" We all scurried over to the familiar word. Jes ordered me a cup of decaf coffee, and I gulped it down in an instant.

We found an area where other Princeton Girl Choir members were hanging out, so we joined them and rested our legs by sitting in plush red chairs.

As Sindhu and I sat with the Princeton girls, the speaker announced something in French. I could have sworn I'd heard my name. I just wrote it off as not listening closely and kept on strolling through the ever-so-crowded building. My sneaker clad feet smacked against the tiled floor, and once again I heard "Angela" over the loudspeaker. It was a bit odd to have possibly heard my name said two times in a row, but in an airport this huge, it wouldn't be uncommon to share the same name as someone else in this place.

By the third time I heard my name followed by a slur of French, I was having a mental breakdown. Who was I kidding that they meant someone else? There was definitely something wrong.

I turned to Sindhu and said, "Can we stop for a second, I feel like there's something missing."

She furrowed her dark eyebrow, and asked, "What's wrong, Angela?" At that moment, I felt as if I'd just collided with a brick wall. I'd figured out why they were announcing my name over the loud speaker, why I felt like there was something terribly wrong. My delicate pale hands reached to touch the empty air over my stomach; the area that should be occupied by the lanyard that contains my passport.

But the air still was empty, and my passport wasn't there.

My lips began to quiver, my whole body shaking in fright. Where's my passport and plane ticket? What will happen if I can't find them? Will I be stuck in France alone?

I sucked in a deep breath of air, and said in a hushed voice, "S-sindhu; I figured out what's wrong. My passport is gone."

The girl with chocolate brown skin gasped in horror, and then I realized that they had to be calling my name for a reason. Perhaps they knew where my plane ticket and passport were.

At the single thought of that, I bolted. The tourist help center wasn't too far away, and I sprinted the whole way there. People yelped in French as I swatted them out of my path and mumbled curses as I pushed them out of the way.

When I finally arrived, I padded up to the front desk. Still out of breath, I stammered, "Have you found any lost passports by the name

of Angela Cook?" The employee looked confused, but grabbed the black lanyard lying next to her. She plucked a small blue book out of it that I presumed was my passport, and opened it up. She pointed at it and then me. I nodded, and she dropped both the small book and the lanyard into my hands. Sindhu arrived only a minute later, and I showed her that I'd retrieved the lost object. We both retreated back to the Princeton reserve where I found that a concerned Mrs. Waters had been awaiting my arrival.

For the remaining time before the plane arrived, I was very careful with what I did. Every five minutes I stopped and checked to make sure that black lanyard was safely secured around my neck, and because I was so careful, that was the only time that I lost my passport or anything else.

While losing my passport was a stupid and careless move, I definitely learned a lot from it. Now when I travel, I'm a whole lot more careful with anything that's important to me, and I have a feeling that I won't forget this event for quite a long time.



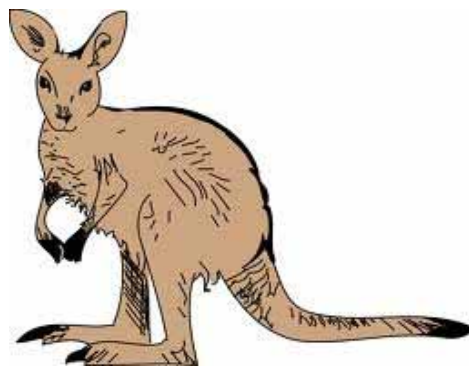
Kung-Fu Kangaroo

by Jake Long

The mother kangaroo tensed up while I reached for her delightful baby cuddled in a ball in its pouch. She was making a growling sound. Suddenly, I was terrified. Once I laid a finger on the joey, I realized that I had made a horrible decision.

It all happened in legendary Steve Irwin's Zoo. I was on an amazing trip with a student ambassador program called People to People. It was slightly hot, but tolerable. The sky was blue and clear with only a single cloud slowly drifting away from the sun. The zoo was like a crowded city street during rush hour. The many different people and families were packed in the zoo like an overload of trash in a compactor. We shuffled through the crowd, wide eyed just looking at the front gate with all the cool designs and animals on it. Smiles came across all our faces when we saw the koalas.

"Look! We can actually hold the koalas," hollered my friend, Rudy. He was a small, black haired boy who's always overly excited about the littlest things. He was also funny and laughed at all of my jokes.



"Do you guys want to take a picture?" asked our counselor, Miss Mary. She was in her mid-forties but in good shape for her age. Miss Mary said she was always an outside kind of girl.

"Sure!" Our small group of boys said simultaneously.

Our first impression of the koala was that it smelled like Vick's Vapor Rub. The trainer rocked the koala toward us like it was a big, furry, infant baby. Once we got to hold the koala, it held us tightly and kept scratching our backs like it was trying not to fall. For the picture, we smiled, but afterwards we were eager to put it down because of the painful clawing at our backs. We moved along and helped the huge crowd of excited people get their picture with the clawing beast.

What else is there to do?" I asked. While our group was walking, we were slumped over and wobbling around because we had to waste all of our energy standing up as stiff as a board to get

through the huge waves of people.

Hopefully there's something to do with kangaroos in this zoo, I thought. I've always liked kangaroos because of how they looked.

Finally, after what felt like an eternity, we found the kangaroos. We were walking down a narrow dirt path for at least a half a mile, and I was thinking "This is what I've been waiting for? This is pretty boring. Then there was another gateway. Behind it was green grass, rocky cliffs, and a stream. It looked like you were in the wild! The kangaroos were hopping around the cliff area. I would, too, if I were a kangaroo because the sight was amazing! I saw a beautiful baby by the stream still in the mother's pouch.

It seemed like I was the only one that ran over to the stream. I was sitting next to the 4 foot kangaroo and her baby that was only inches tall. The baby had a blank stare, so I thought there was something wrong. Then, the baby whimpered and looked up at me with its glassy black eyes. I made a decision to pet the little joey because it was so cute. I started to bend my arm forward like it was a rusty axel. Then I stretched my middle finger outwards as far as I could towards the baby. I was so close to touching it, and I looked up for a second. The mother towered over me and I was thinking

"maybe I should back off. I pulled back a little bit.

I told myself to stop now. I never thought it would be this hard to simply touch a joey. I stretched my arm back out to where I was when I backed off. Then I realized something too late for me to react. Two huge feet came flying toward me. WHAM! It felt like I flew back 10 feet! I finally landed on the ground with a thud and clutched my chest. Was I going to die? It felt like I just got hit by a car and my chest exploded. I was lying there for 5 minutes thinking I was dead when my group finally found me.

"What just happened?" my group sounded concerned.

"I just got kicked by a kangaroo!" I moaned out the words, because it hurt to talk.

"Are you okay?" They sounded like they were miles away.

I took a look at my chest, and it was just bruised, so I said, "I guess I feel all right."

Later that night, I was sitting on a bed in the hotel that we were staying at. What if I did die when I got kicked by the mother? Thinking about death crept me out. It was a relief to me that I didn't break anything. Now I am more cautious about what I do. I bet if I came back to Steve Irwin's Zoo, the mother would be waiting for me to fight back in the next round.

Life Experiences

Friendships

By Athena Vafiadis



The colors of the different towels we collected sent a wave of pride through me. The towel fort was now complete, with Kiera secured inside. “How’s it looking in there?” She didn’t answer me. Maybe she couldn’t hear. Sam approached behind me.

“Hey,” I said as I turned to face her.

“Hi,” she replied. I turned back to the fort of towels.

“We’re going down to rehearse our group dance for the talent show this year,” I called. No answer from Kiera. I shrugged, and Sam and I headed down to the dance room to rehearse.

Once the exhausting rehearsal was finished, we made our way back to the fort. There was a small opening. Kiera’s green eyes glared up at me before ducking away and escaping the dark fort. *She’s mad at me*, I thought. *But why?* I looked around for Kiera but she had disappeared, one of her best qualities.

All right kids, let’s go to the yoga room,” our camp counselor announced. A loud variety of moans came from all of us in the camp. The yoga room was very hot and humid and sickening. As we trudged down the stairwell, I was still looking for Kiera. I only saw the back of her head before she disappeared again.

Sam and I decided to play tag in the yoga room while we were waiting for Kiera to come to her senses and tell us why she was mad. We must have played for a half an hour before we crashed against the back wall of the room, tired and out of energy. The only thing in the room besides all the kids running and screaming was a house of mats, set like a fort. *I wonder who made it and why it isn’t coming down*, I thought.

Everyone started crowding around her. I kneeled down and saw Kiera was unconcious.

“Sam, I’m worried about Kiera,” I admitted. Sam sat up, the strawberry scent of her golden hair pervading my nostrils.

“Why?” she asked, raising an eyebrow. I was about to answer when the loud scream from a bunch of girly-girls caught my attention. First, I spotted a pile of shoes. A large guy who looked about 2 years older than me tripped over those shoes. The world suddenly seemed to go all slow-mo as his body fell onto the fort of mats with a loud thud.

The fort collapsed. The guy stood up, trying to keep his cool, but the mats weren’t totally flat. No one else seemed to notice the body under the mats. But I did.

“Kiera!” I shouted, running to her body under the mats. “Move!” I yelled. “Sam, get the counselor.”

While I made my way to Kiera, everyone started crowding around her. I kneeled down and saw Kiera was unconcious. Her chest was moving, which meant she was breathing, but it was slowed.

“Kiera!” I screamed. “Wake up.”

My only thought at that moment was getting Kiera’s eyes to open. I tried slapping her face. Sam joined me and we helped her sit up. In that moment, a soft sound sent a wave of relief wash through me. Kiera groaned softly. Her eyes were beginning to open.

“Kiera, Kiera are you ok? Can you hear me?” I asked.

Athena, what happened?” she asked, sounding conflicted and confused. Even worse, sounding dead.

“Don’t you remember?”

“I was mad, then, nothing,” she explained. I helped her up and led her out of the yoga room. We had to get her out of the sickening heat.

“The room is spinning” she murmured. We were at the door of the yoga room, and I was about to open the door when I felt the grip I had on Kiera loosen. I turned to look at her. She looked like a walking zombie. *So pale and sick with sleep*, I thought. As my

hands clenched the handle and turned the knob, the cold struck Kiera and me, catching us off guard.

We made our way into the freezing cold room. It felt like an icebox compared to the horrid heat in the other room. The change in temperature had its effect on Kiera. She would have collapsed had I not helped her up.

The counselor walked toward us, reaching for Kiera. “Get her to sit down and drink this,” the counselor instructed as she handed me a cup of orange juice. I helped Kiera sit down and gave her the orange juice. Kiera sipped it quietly, still acting dead. “Orange juice?” I asked, as I directed my attention to the counselor.

“It will raise her blood sugar. She looks so pale because her blood sugar dropped after being under those mats,” the counselor explained.

I looked back at Kiera. Seeing my friend like that, I had to say *something* to make her feel better. She looked straight ahead, slowly drinking her juice.

“You know, you just totally made it impossible for us to ever use the mats again,” I said. She put on her famous half-smile.

“I know,” she sighed.

“Well, the way I see it, you were mad at me, I helped you out of that sick room. We’re even.”

“More than even. I owe you.”

I shrugged. “What else is new? We good?”

“Yah, We’re good.”

I eventually learned why Kiera got mad that day, but in the end, it really didn’t matter. Kiera and I became really good friends from then on, and we still are. We better be; after all, if I hadn’t seen her under the mats and brought her up to the counselors attention, they would have had to call 9-1-1 once she was found.

We realized that day that no matter how angry we get at one another, we are friends. Sisters. We sort of know if something is wrong with each other.

Teacher

by Bella Steele

As I walked through the halls on my way to class, I knew something was wrong. Not much happens in fifth grade, so this was a shocker.

We were all ready for our teacher, Ms. Smith. Instead, we got a chubby, old woman. “All right, maggots,” she said. I’m the substitute teacher, Mrs. Cretin.”

“Uh, Mrs. Cretin, where’s Ms. Smith?” asked my friend Jimmy.

“Ms. Smith is on vacation today. She needed a break from you brats,” shouted Mrs. Cretin. “Now, for the first fifteen minutes of class, I want you to do pages 53 to 57 in your math workbooks.” Then she sat herself in Ms. Smith’s velvet chair.

“NOW!” she shouted. We all exchanged scared looks and got to work.

Fifteen minutes went by, and she said in a shrill voice, “You maggots better be done, or you all have detention!” She clenched her detention sheet, looking around the room, and then walked through the aisles looking for children to punish.

“Mrs. Cretin, can you give us more time?” I asked. “I like our old teacher better Jimmy said.

Mrs. Cretin walked to the front of the room. “If you maggots don’t get your work done, you’ll all go to the principal!” she yelled. Her voice was so loud that it made the other teachers scream with pain.

Suddenly Ms. Smith appeared. “What’s going on in here?” she said. We all jumped out of our seats and swarmed her. The greatest teacher in the world had returned! We all cheered.

“We thought you were on vacation,” I said.

“I wasn’t on vacation,” Ms. Smith replied. “I was just looking for my car keys, but someone must have hidden them.”

We turned to Mrs. Cretin. She looked at her watch. “Wow, look at the time. Gotta go!?” Then she ran from the room very, very fast.

FALL

Autumn

By Jason Fitch

*Fall is made up of
September, October, and November,
We hope the cold weather
We won't last forever,
When the children
Go on haunted hayrides,
The time when you look up
To see the geese flying south,*

*When the school bell rings
But the sky remains dark,
And the moon is in the sky
Twinkling among us.
Soon the fluffy snow will begin to fall,
And all the birds will sing out
Their final morning call,
The bare brown trees will crackle
In the cool crisp wind,*

*Soon we will begin to smell
The great aroma of pumpkin pie,
Outside on the ground is the place
Where the leaves will lie,
When snow sails down from overhead,
We know that fall is gone.
Leaves of gold, red, and brown
Are in piles on the ground,
The colorful leaves will glitter in the
sun
And dance in the breeze,
And the light will fade away
Earlier and earlier.*

SQUIRREL!

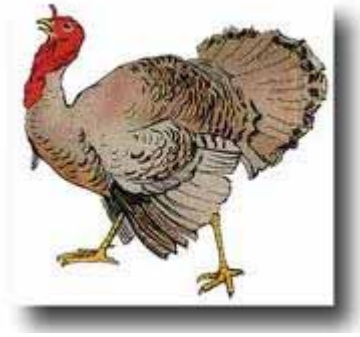
by Lindsey McAnany

The squirrel's tiny feet
run through the fallen and crushed
leaves.

It runs through
The squishy brown earth
to dig for acorns.
As it scurries and digs,
It finds acorns
And gobbles them down its mouth.

It hopped back
To its hollow hemlock.
Now it could settle down,
And eat all that it found.
It looked like a clown,
With its cheeks full and round.

A happy squirrel was it.
Up in its tree it did sit.
Full of fur and fun.
Getting ready for winter's white
And wet snow.



Autumn Is Here

Erin Tuomi

Autumn is here!
It's soaring in the air.
The vibrant colored leaves are
sprinting from trees,
They're swarming around
Just like bees.
Blood sucking bats bursting from
tree to tree,
This is a sign of Halloween!

The weather worms colder and
Colder each day,
While little kids jump in leaves
And shout HOORAY!
Turkeys beware!
Thanksgiving is in the air!
Mashed potatoes, pumpkin pie,
Days off from school WOOHOO!
Shorter delightful days dash by,

It is already night,
All I can do is sigh.
The seasons are changing.
Where are the scarecrows?
Where's Thanksgiving?
No leaves, just bare white trees!



Fall for All

by Ellie Cautilli

Outside the crisp leaves will fall,
The sun is sinking way too early,
When inside there is food for all,
Tiny toddlers play in the leaf piles.

Wind whispers through the bare
trees,
Haunting Halloween is just arriving,
Summer's over, there are no bees,
While grinning pumpkins
Stare you down,
The scary spirits will spook you out

All the leaves are on the ground,
And all you hear are creepy shouts.
As the fuzzy Uggs go on your feet,
Thanksgiving is a time for family,
Everyone is prepared to eat,
The delicious turkey your Grand
Mom made,

I look out the window,
And see the grand parade,
Bonfires let smoke grow tall,
I am now toasty warm,



Colorful

by Caitlyn Little

I feel fall coming on,
Thanksgiving is turkey fitted,
Seeing fattening leaves being killed,
Fire red, sparkling gold, and
pumpkin orange
Dancing down the trees,
All turning to an ugly dull brown,

Wishy-washy wind
Coming my way,
Please let this colorful fall stay
Crischy crunchy leaves
On the ground,
Hopefully finding a fantastic
Bright pumpkin being found,

Here comes
A happy colorful turkey
Waddling with leaves
On its back,
Better watch out for it is almost
November 24th,



Tranquil Thoughts

by Kemal Basara

When the sun rises
With its unique gold color,
The grass will shine emerald beauty.
Birds singing a magnificent melody
In the morning,
The yellow bus goes to school
And starts our day,

The class starts to study for the test,
We all try our best,
And put all effort into our work,
Also check our homework,
Slip into lunch,
Eating autumn apples and pies,
Come to an end of school,

Ride home and feed food to the birds,
And listen to them chirp while they eat,
The blue jay can't be beat,
As they fly in the sky so delicately,
With their tranquil thoughts,
They land so specifically,
In their den,

Finally the sun sets
With its tangerine color,
The day ends with a beautiful sunset.

THRILLS

THE ZIPPER

by Laura Kane

I was passing through crowds of wild teenagers and toddlers and screeching salesmen trying to pull me aside to sell products. My feet pound on the old wood of the boardwalk. My parents are behind me trying to catch up, but I still hustle to get to the one ride I have been waiting for my whole summer, the Zipper. "Wait up Lauri," my dad yells from somewhere behind me.

Finally, I am at the Zipper. I have to look up to see the entire ride. It is not only giant, but it is loud and fast and scary, and now my heart starts to pound like a drum. My parents finally catch up to me. "Don't you ever do that again young lady, and don't ever leave my sight!" my mom says to me, but I am not listening. I am drowning in my thoughts that are starting to pull me back.

In Disney World in 2009, I was determined to ride the Zipper, even though my dad couldn't handle it. My mom just handed me four red, crisp tickets for the ride. I slowly tiptoed to the usher, forcing myself to hand over the red tickets. My fear grew vigorously after the worker showed me how fast the cage could spin. See, the point of the ride is a bunch of cages that people go in, and when the ride starts, your cage goes up and down and all around. My biggest fear is that I was going to throw up because that would be really embarrassing.

The man opened the door and waited with a blank look on his face for me to walk in. At the same time, half my body was saying, "Run away before it is too late!" and the other half is saying, "Face your fear and get in the cage!" Then without thinking, I crept into what seemed like a dungeon. As soon as I set foot on that ride, I wanted to get off. He closed the door and locked it. "So this is what juvy feels like," I thought to myself. I strapped my seatbelt and adjusted it so tightly that I almost went purple. I knew there was no turning back now, no matter how much I wanted to.

My face felt hot. The worker stepped closer and closer to the big neon button that read, START THE RIDE, on it. My eyes shut so tight, my eyelids crinkled up like a rotting apple, and my fists clenched my seat belt like I was holding on to dear life. The man's hand got closer and closer and finally pressed hard. Here goes nothing! The metal all around me started to vibrate as I gradually went up.

I was fine, up until the cage started to flip. That's when I got the urge to puke. It seemed to get faster by the second. As the cage flipped, my stomach did the same. I held on tight and looked forward to the end.

Then, right when I was thinking I made the ride, I felt something coming up. I pinched my hand and sealed my lips. Then, the ride stopped. I couldn't believe it; I felt wonderful. I had made it through the ride!

The Time I Rode King Da Ka

by Annlyn Runquist

The day that I overcame my fear of roller coasters was the day I went to Six Flags with my cousins Isabella and Tommy. I was really nervous because this was my first time on a roller coaster. I was going to ride King Da Ka and was frightened by the thought of it.

While we were waiting, Isabella told me what would happen. I didn't really hear her because of the screeching and screaming of people who were already on the ride.

Finally it was time to go on the rollercoaster. I couldn't breathe. I was shaking when I sat down in the seat. It started to move but then it just stopped. We sat there for a little bit, and it just rocketed up the tracks! I couldn't see a thing! Once we got to the tippy-top, it stopped, and everyone looked down. I could see the whole Six Flags from there. The next thing I knew we started twirling down the tracks! I was screaming like crazy, but when we got off the ride I thought, let's do it again!

I had a gigantic fear of roller coasters. I was hoping that we would go on a smaller ride first. Instead we went on King Da Ka which was a huge leap for me. Now I don't have a fear of roller coasters anymore.

During this time I was terrified. King Da Ka is colossal! I was sweating a lot. Plus I couldn't think straight All I could focus on was the screaming. I was grinding my teeth. It's just like your worst nightmare. I learned that roller coasters are a lot of fun. Plus it feels good to face your fears and get it over with.



Black Cat

by Justin Davis

One scary mysterious night, I heard a booming groan. I turned around while my heart raced and there I saw it, a dark cat-like figure. I was shocked and couldn't speak.

At first I thought it was my cat. My mom was the only one home so I asked if she had heard anything, but unfortunately she didn't. She went to the mysterious bathroom and found nothing.

At that moment, I thought that I felt a freezing cold chill run down my spine, I felt absolutely terrified. I darted into my room while the floor started creaking. I was trying to forget that terrifying moment. I climbed into my bed and guess what was there? MY CAT!! I was in terror and I know for sure, one hundred percent sure, that the figure I saw was paranormal. I was shivering and shaking out of my mind!

I couldn't sleep all night. When I had to go to the bathroom, I walked into the dark hallway. Luckily, there wasn't a thing in sight.

Ever since that night, I wonder why did I see it? Was it a connection with me? Why did my mom not see it? I learned that I believe there is paranormal activity in this world.

DOUBLE SHOT

by Andrew Mosca

It was a hot night in August, and my family and I were heading to the boardwalk in Ocean City. I was really excited and a little bit nervous because I was anxious to get on the rides.

I was hoping I had the nerve this year to get on a really scary ride called Double Shot. I tried to get on last year but chickened-out at the last minute. My big brother, Matt, laughed at me and started to make clucking sounds like a chicken. I was so mad at him and disappointed in myself. He continued to tease me long after we got home from vacation. I was now a year older so I thought I could finally do Double Shot.

At first, I wouldn't even look at the ride. We started to walk by it and my brother yelled, "Hey chicken, I'm going on Double Shot, see you later." I yelled back "Wait, I'm going too!" My brother started to laugh and said I would chicken out.



As we got in line, I was praying I could go through with it. The line seemed to take forever. As we got closer, I could feel my heart pounding in my chest. As we climbed on, I could hardly breathe. I wanted to jump off, but I was already hooked in. The ride slowly took us up really high and then, with a loud hiss, it dropped us straight down. I closed my eyes and hoped I wouldn't scream or die. As we started to go up for the second drop, I realized it was really fun and not that scary after all. I laughed and kept my eyes open the next time.

When the ride finally stopped, my brother was in shock. I was so proud of myself. I survived Double Shot. I said "Who's the chicken now?" I ran back in line to get on again.

FEELINGS

Anxiety

by Megan Walsh

The feeling comes
From deep down under
And tumbles out terribly tense,
Like thunder
I know this emotion well,
It feels like hell
Its vicious nature causes
An outpour never felt before

Anxiety is a challenge to ignore
It comes with a boom
And continues with more
The feeling comes
From deep down under,
And tumbles out terribly tense,
Like thunder.

As I Walk

by Hannah Stange

Rain drops shimmer on the grass
As I walk along the road
For the breeze is fresh
And the breeze is clear,
And the blades just seem to glow.

“Clouds are fading” says the tree

As I walk along the road
Summer lights will guide me,
As I walk along the road

To the summer fields we go,
Hugging the warm
Summer breeze.
The lavender blooms,
The lilacs make room,
As I walk along we road

“Tis almost sunset,”
Says the bird,
“The sky a brighter red”
Time to rest your head
My little one,
On a bed of quiet green.”

So I lay my head
On a bed of quiet green.
I will now go to sleep.

Sunrise

by Kyrsten Arnold

I opened my eyes to find myself
Lying in a sea of darkness
Everything was swallowed
By the shadows of the night
The green of grass
The tops of trees
And even the stiffness of rocks
Were invisible
Not even the light of the moon
Could compete
With the warrior of the night

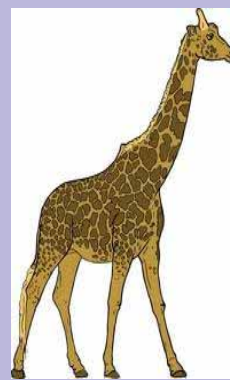
Brave winds whistled and floated
Through the endlessness of darkness
And the crickets cry into the night
Even the small stream beside me
Tried to fight
Against the surrounding darkness
Its tiny waves furiously splashed
/Against the pebbles
Desperately trying
To make its voice heard
All of nature begins to cry
It wants the light of day
Suddenly,
The desperate calls are answered
For the rays of bright light appear
And send streaks
Of bright orange and yellow
Flying through the colorless sky
The darkness dares not question
The force of day and quickly retreats
The tall oak and maple trees rejoice
As the wind dances past them
The awakened birds sing with delight
At the sight of another day
Soon the sunrise is complete
And the world comes alive.



Giraffes

by Jennifer Murdock

My favorite animal is a giraffe.
When they eat they make me laugh.
Their legs are tall and so is their neck.
When I see how tall their babies are,
I say what the heck!
Their heads are huge
And their ears twitch.
When they need to swat flies
Their tails go swish swish.
Their knees are oh so knobby,
Did I mention my giraffe's name
Is Robby?



Their posture is so straight and tall,
All the other animals
Are jealous of them all.
Their feet are so clumpy
And their cheeks are so lumpy.
A giraffe's markings are so unique,
When you look at them
You can't just take a peek.
Their ears are so soft upon their head,
They sleep standing up
When they go to bed.



Hope

By Rachel Hoenisch

*Hope is a blanket that warms me
Hope is the beacon none can see*

*Hope is the one
Who slays the foe,
Hope is the one
Who vanishes woe.*

*Hope is the friend
Who never deserts,*

*Hope is the one
Who heals all hurts,*

*Hope dwells in all who dream,
Mending the broken,
Fixing the seam.*

Memories

Yellow

by Brynn MacDougall

“PAY ATTENTION YOU LAZY STUPID LUMP!” Bob jolted out of his dream, floppy brown hair flying everywhere. His teacher, Miss. Onell, loomed over him, eyes flashing with anger. “This is the third time this week, young man, that you have fallen asleep. You have lunch detention!” Bob began to panic. It was rumored that she hung kids in detention by chains.

But Bob knew how to avoid trouble: act innocent. He made his bright blue eyes as wide as the moon. “Oh but, Miss Onell, I didn’t fall asleep I was writing down the lesson!”

“Move over!” Miss Onell barked.

“What!” Bob gasped more worried than surprised.

Miss Onell observed Bob’s notes. When Miss Onell looked up, her face was bright red, like a stop sign. “Bob Russell, I am calling your parents. This is the last week of school. I have just seen this marking period’s notes for English. Or should I say doodles?” If it was even possible, Bob’s teacher’s face was redder than a traffic light. Before Miss Onell could say any more, a loud BRRRRRRRRRRINGGGG!!!! went off to signal the next class period. Bob was the first one out of the room

“Dude!” called a familiar voice. Bob turned around to see his best friend Michael.

Right as he reached for Ceaser salad, a big, fat, pink, disgusting, slimy, worm wriggled out of his hamburger

“Hey man, what up?” Bob said and high-fived his curly red-headed friend—his only friend. “So the usual lunch spot?” Michal asked.

“Can’t man, Onell’s given me lunch detention.” Bob said dejectedly.

“Too bad. Hope you live for the Halloween party.” Michal said and walked away.

Bob looked around. Where had Michal gone? Oh, Bob realized they had reached the cafeteria and Michal had gone over to the allergy kid line. Bob got a hamburger and moved to the salad line. He hated salad, but he would do anything to lessen his detention time.

Right as he reached for Ceaser salad, a big, fat, pink, disgusting, slimy, worm wriggled out of his hamburger into the salad. Girls started screaming. So did Bob. He probably sounded like Marie, the most annoying girl to ever live. Then without trying to even hold it in, he opened his mouth and his breakfast, a bagel and milk, came out. In other words Bob puked in the Ceaser salads.

Well, Bob thought as his mom came to pick him up, at least he didn’t have to do his detention anymore.

Joyous Necklace

by Kayla Warrell

I got the most beautiful necklace from my best friend that makes me feel so happy. My necklace is sparkling silver with a long lasting gem. Also, my necklace has very rosy and violet writing. However, it has a lot of meaning to me. I love my tiny little necklace. It is very special to me. My necklace is also not immense.

One day in February, I was packing all of my things to move, I got a phone call. It was my best friend! When I answered the phone I was crying because I was moving. She said that she had a special present for me. I was happy that someone would be so kind to give me a good-bye present. She gave me a box and inside it was another half of a necklace that said “friends” on it. Then, I realized that she had the other half. It was a necklace that was split so we know that we will both be another half of ourselves that we will never forget. I realized how a necklace could make me feel so happy.

Dazzling Locket

by Kati Long



When I got my locket, I felt like the most special person in the world. My locket is a gorgeous, stainless steel necklace with a heart-shaped pendent. It has my name and the last day of my elementary school years engraved into it. It also has ridged sides indented with crystals. The date is on the back of the locket, and my name is on the front.

Month after month we rehearsed. As the lead, I had to devote my time to be at every single one of the rehearsals. The practicing started in January, and we were to put on the production of Annie, Jr. in June. After a flurry of costume and prop preparations, it was time to perform. Then, on opening night, I was so excited and nervous.

Once I started, though, all of my fears went away. I sang all of the right notes, and I didn’t miss any of my lines. It was perfect. Everyone in the audience was enjoying it. They were laughing, applauding, and smiling right back up at me. Afterwards, I realized that I loved to act.

To remember the day, my parents bought me my locket. It was in honor of Annie’s locket in the play and my going to middle school. In that moment, I realized that something as simple as a locket could make me feel so special.

Magnificent Pageant

by Gianna Newborg

Wearing my crown makes me feel so proud. My glistening crown sits on my shelf next to some of my small trophies. Every time the sun peeks in from my window and hits my crown, I can see the magnificent, multi-colored reflection on my ceiling. Its dazzling crystals sparkle and shine an exquisite light.

My mom curled my hair and put on dramatic makeup. I slipped on my yellow, rignstoned, ball-gown dress. As I strapped on my heels, I looked in the mirror; I couldn’t believe my eyes. I looked like a beauty queen. My hair looked perfect, my makeup was magnificent, and my dress was exquisite. The backstage manager told everyone to get in order. “Katie, Alyssa, Kelly,” her list seemed like it went on forever. I was number eight. As the line got shorter, I became more nervous. Next thing I knew,

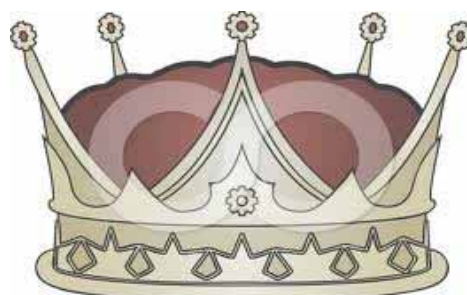
there were only two girls in front of me. Then it was my turn. As I stepped up on stage, I didn’t even have to think; my moves just came to me. I glided across the stage with all the grace and confidence in the world. I stepped offstage with the biggest smile on my face.

The backstage manager gathered everyone onstage for the awards ceremony. As we stood huddled up on the stage, the announcer thanked us for coming and gave us a long speech. He called out everyone’s names to give them a rose and a glittery medal.

A short girl in a sparkly, black dress hands out the trophies for the second and third place winners in the petite and mini categories. When they announced the first place winner, you could tell how happy the winner was. Another girl came over to her to with a crown, sash, huge trophy, and a bouquet of scarlet roses with emerald leaves.

They moved onto my category. My heart was pounding in my chest, and I could barely breathe. Third place went to a tall, blonde haired girl wearing a black and white sequined dress. I was praying my name wasn’t going to be called. Second place went to a short, brunette-haired girl wearing a silky, ivory dress.

It seemed that time had stopped, and I just imagined wearing one of those crowns, wearing one of those sashes, holding those roses, and standing next to one of those immense trophies. The announcer said, “and our Junior Miss. Beyond the Stars winner is... Gianna Newborg!” That same girl came over to me and gave me my awards. I felt like a princess. I realized how a crown could remind me that I am a good dancer.



MEMORIES

Viscous Snaps and Laughs

By Sam Kusters



When some people see a bottle of ordinary sand, they just look then look away and move on with their lives; when I glance at a bottle of sand, I remember the time my dad got snapped by a crab. My petite bottle of sand dazzles in the flickering sun. Bronze is the color of the cork that refuses to release the sand. The smell of the smooth sand makes me gag with just a whiff of its air. The miniature cloud colored shell is extremely exquisite.

Whenever my eye catches a spot of my bottle of sand I received from Fort Lauderdale by the Sea, I have a laugh attack. It all begin on a warm summer day in July. About a year ago while I was on summer vacation, my dad and my brother decided to go crab hunting with only a snorkel, a pair of goggles, and their own hands. I was snorkeling and ended up about 3 feet away from my dad. I saw him rustling through the sand with his hands. He dusted off a figure that appeared to me as a skeleton. It was a medium scarlet crab with immense claws.

You can't pick up a crab by the back, but you can with a lobster. He got a lobster mixed up with the crab.

He plucked it off the ground in a swift motion by its back and its claw and swung it around, and the crab hung on for dear life. He recalled after that incident that you can't pick up a crab by the back, but you can with a lobster. He got a lobster mixed up with a crab.

Finally, he got it off after a lot of cries and laughs filled my ears to the point where they could burst. My dad is mesmerized that a simple crab could leave such a bruise. Later that day, to get even with that crab, my dad ate crab for dinner. I realized that day that my dad doesn't know how to crab hunt.

Unforgettable

by Jared Stonkus

My small golden hammer brings back the most cheerful moments with my grandfather. The hammer is tiny, painted with a beautiful golden color. Most of the time I cheer up when I look at it or hold it. In a few places it is smudged with a smokey gray color. From being so old, it has ebony spots on it where it is dirty.



A few years ago when I was seven, we were visiting my grandparents for the day. It was getting late, and we were getting ready to leave. My grandfather came up from the basement to say good-bye. There were always bangs and knocks coming from down there. I peered around my grandfather and squinted to try to get a peek of what was there. He saw me and asked if I wanted to see his work. I eagerly shook my head to say yes, and we headed down at a blistering pace.

When we finally reached the bottom of the stairs, there were so many things to look at, from racks of all kinds of tools, to piles of paint, wood, and to his beautiful furniture he made. My grandfather showed me what he had been recently working on. It was a bed, with nice wood and fancy carvings on the posts. After I was done admiring the bed, he showed me the rest of his work.

It was amazing. I smiled up at him and he smiled back. It was a time with my grandfather I would always remember. Now I realize how much my grandfather enjoyed me looking at and admiring his work.

Ratty Blanket

by Rebecca Lehman

Holding my blanket makes me feel better about myself. My blanket is very ratty. It used to be white, but now it is a dirty white. My blanket is rectangular and has a lot of microscopic holes in it. My dirty white blanket is very puny and has an irregular shape. If you put my blanket in the wash, it will fall apart because it is very sensitive.

When I was a baby in my crib, my mom would lay a blanket on top of me. When I grew a little older, I would carry it everywhere. One day, my mom and dad took my blanket away because they thought it was getting too ratty. I started to cry because I loved it so much.

My dad took me to the store to buy me another blanket. I did not find anything I liked, so he just bought me a blanket with dogs on one corner of the blanket. I did not like that blanket at all.



A couple of days later, I went into my parents' room. On the floor in front of my dad's dresser was my blanket. I took it and hid it in my closet. Every night I would sleep with it. I tried to make sure my parents didn't find my special blanket. A couple of days later, my mom and dad found out that I had taken it from there room; they finally decided that I could keep it.

Have you ever been on a mountain when it was snowing in June? When I was 4, that happened to me. My Uncle Dave was driving me and my mom to the airport when we decided to go to the Continental Divide on our way. When we got out of the car to look at the mountain range, we could see forever. It was like I was in a daze. After looking at the mountain range, it started snowing. I couldn't believe it was snowing in June. We were shocked! It felt it was the beginning of our vacation.

Earrings

by Sade Browne



Knowing that I still have a piece of my sister lets me remember the good times we had. The gold hearted earrings my sister left behind before she died were her favorite. They are very decorative with pink diamonds. Every time she put the earrings on, they always looked dashing. I think that they were the most magnificent and exquisite gift she ever got.

When I was in second grade, my older sister Nicole died in a car crash at the age of 20. Everyone in the family was devastated, especially me. I felt like there was no one else for me to look up to and that I had lost my best friend, my protector, my teacher, the only one who would ever listen to me. I cried day and night.

My mom was very upset, so upset that she made my dad and his friends move everything my sister owned from her room to the basement. They locked up her room because whenever my mom walked past my sister's room she would break down and cry for hours. I know my mom's heart was broken into pieces like a puzzle, and nothing could ever make her heart whole again.

After two years, everyone was more stable. My dad always came home before mom did, except for this one day that he had to work late. I had to come home to an empty house. After I was done with my homework, I got a little bored thinking about how less bored I would be if Nicole were there with me making jokes and laughing our lives away. I was very emotional and just wanted to feel her presence, so I searched around the house looking for the keys to unlock Nicole's door. Soon, I found them in dad's tool box.

I ran up the stairs to Nicole's room, excited to see it again. When I unlocked her door. it was like heaven. The sun shined through her window. I knew her spirit was there because the site was just so beautiful. In the corner of my eyes, I could see a glistening piece of jewelry. I ran to it with joy in my soul, it was one of Nicole's favorite earrings. I was so happy, and from there on I knew it was left there for me to see from Nicole.

Snowing in June

Jackson Bowman



When I got a glass of gold, I felt like I would never forget this vacation. During my trip to Colorado I got a miniature spherical glass. It was a glass bottle filled with tiny flakes of gold. When you shake it, all you hear is a hushed sound. When I entered the gift shop at the Leadville Gold Mine, I saw a dazzling glass. It looked neat, so I bought it, and it made me feel melancholy inside.

THOUGHTS

Big, Beautiful Butterfly

by Emily Reiser



A lovely little butterfly
 Wrapped in a cocoon
 Growing bigger, stronger and longer
 With knowledge, hopes and dreams.
 Will I become big, bold
 And beautiful with colors
 Well, this varies wide
 It's coming soon,
 The day I will leave this small cocoon
 For the big world
 Where they find out
 If I am big, bold and beautiful
 I hope there is no doubt
 Here I come out of my cocoon,
 Ready for the word to come at me
 I am big, bold, beautiful
 With my wings spread free
 I am free and the world likes me.

Nature's Gift

by Renée Reardon

The way the leaves crumble
 Leaves lightly touch the ground.
 Painted maroon, auburn,
 And brown.
 They glisten
 Like the stars in the sky.

The raindrops burst with light
 As they lie on the leaves.
 Once they lie on the ground
 They die.
 Crumple up crisp and brown.

Perfect pile of Nature's gift
 Naked trees
 Make no more sound.
 They are so crisp
 That now they are all round.
 Mother Nature's pretty painting
 Now shows
 It is so beautiful
 It practically glows.



The Enforcer

by Jesse Rolison

When he gets the call,
 Kicking kids out of the mall
 He puts his life in danger,
 To put food on the table
 Armed with a gun,
 But it's not all that fun
 The policeman is dutiful,
 Courageous, and fearless
 The policeman runs for a robber,
 As a copper
 The law enforcement agent thinks,
 "I'll catch that robber for Mr. Sinks."
 He runs in the line of fire,
 For the old man's desire
 People think, "Thank you
 For saving my home,
 Man in the black attire"

The enforcer always remember
 How he became a member
 How he took a bullet in December
 So of all the heroes out there,
 The police officer is the best of them all
 Dodging things
 From bullets to heavy traffic
 He is a true hero.



Palm Of Their Hand

by Danielle Holt

The door opens
 And in comes something tragic.
 It's now time for the surgeons
 To do their magic.
 They put on their masks
 And on each hand a glove
 As the courageous, brilliant,
 And fearless surgeons
 Try not to push and shove.

With extreme nervousness
 And pounding strife
 They work on the patient
 And try to save his or her life
 Thinking to themselves,
 "If I do something wrong
 It could be their last breath."
 Because they are responsible
 For your life and death.

I am so thankful because
 I wouldn't be here without you,
 You saved my life.
 While the surgeons say,
 "Stay strong,
 I'll help you get through this
 With this surgical knife.
 "Thank you so much,
 The patient's parents say
 I will always think of you
 Each and every passing day.

We are grateful to have
 These surgeons
 With us here tonight
 Because we wouldn't know
 What to do
 Or how to do it right.
 ER surgeons stay strong
 And highly they will stand
 Because it's your life
 In the palm of their hands.

Hero

by Owen Keenan

*The forever fallen hero
 Came floating on home,
 He came home in a box*

*With the flag he died for on top,
 He died for his buds
 Back on the field
 He felt the greatest sacrifice
 Sharp as hard steel.*

*But he stood tall, refusing to fall,
 As he remembered the time
 He bravely answered the call,
 But now he's at home
 Finally at peace
 Slipping into his eternal sleep.*