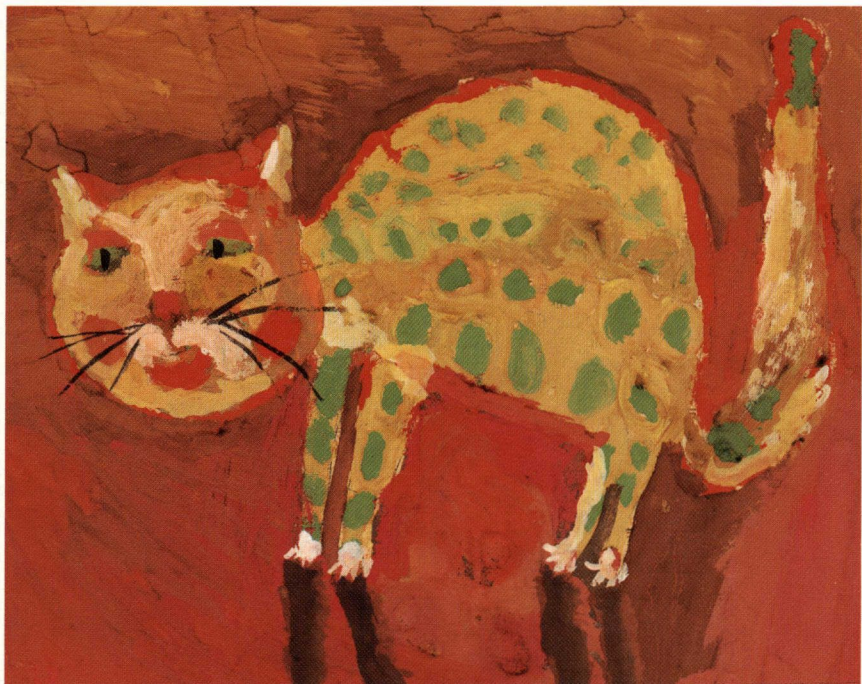


Stone Soup

the magazine by children



"My Cat," by Lena Meshcheryakova, age 7, Petersburg, Russia

HURRICANE INIKI SURVIVOR

Michelle recounts her family's scary experience

THE SWANS

Only Samora can see and understand the swan family

Also: Josh remembers his grandfather in Mexico

More stories from Indonesia

A poem from New Zealand

May/June 1993

\$4.75 U.S. \$5.75 Canada



Stone Soup

the magazine by children

Dear Readers:

Let's celebrate! It's *Stone Soup's* 20th birthday! Since our first issue came out in May of 1973, we've published over 4000 pages of writing and art by children from all over the world. Highlights of our first 20 years have included two special issues — one in 1978 devoted entirely to a 7-year-old's marvelous adventure story, "Crippled Detectives, or The War of the Red Romer," and, in 1989, our Navajo issue, showcasing the stories, poems, photographs, and art of Navajo children living on reservations. We owe a big thank-you to all our wonderful writers and artists over the years — and to our readers too! We wouldn't be here without you. We look forward to bringing you *Stone Soup* for another 20 years!



Sincerely,

Gerry Mandel William Rubel

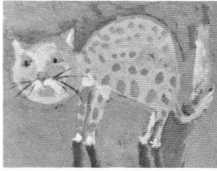
Gerry Mandel & William Rubel
Editors

Stone Soup is published five times a year, in September, November, January, March, and May. It is mailed to members of the Children's Art Foundation. Eighty percent of the membership fee is designated for subscription to *Stone Soup*. In the United States, a one-year membership costs \$23, two years \$40, three years \$55. Rates to Canada and Mexico are an additional \$5 per year. Rates to all other countries are an additional \$10 per year. Copyright © 1993 by the Children's Art Foundation. All rights reserved. Reproduction of the whole or any part of the contents without written permission is prohibited. ISSN 0094-579X. Second class postage paid at Santa Cruz, CA 95060. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Stone Soup*, P.O. Box 83, Santa Cruz, CA 95063. Telephone: 1-800-447-4569.

Contents

Volume 21 Number 5

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The painting on the cover, "My Cat," was loaned to the Children's Art Foundation by the Children's Art Exchange, a nonprofit organization based in Middlebury, Vermont, that is dedicated to helping children from the former Soviet Union and the United States learn more about each other through the common language of art.

Stories

4 The Brother I Never Had

Jim describes a special relationship with his older cousin.

5 Hey, Wait for Me

A close call, seen through the eyes of a toddler.

7 Death

Josh's grandfather leaves him a great treasure — his violin.

8 The Swans

A young girl's love of a swan family earns her their trust.

17 The Runaway

Why is the orphan girl from Sumatra on the run, and who can help her?

21 Fishing for Skates

Dustin enjoys a carefree summer day.

22 Traveling in Outer Space

When you're only four, it's easy to misunderstand what your mom says.

Send Us Your Work!

Stone Soup is made up of stories, poems, book reviews, and art by children through age 13. To get an idea of the kind of work we like, read a few issues of *Stone Soup*. You'll notice that we have a preference for writing and art based on personal experiences and observations. Writing need not be typed or copied over. Art work may be any size, in color or black and white. Mail your submission, along with a self-addressed stamped envelope, to *Stone Soup*, P.O. Box 83, Santa Cruz, CA 95063. We will respond within four weeks. **Stories:** A good story is interesting to read and has a point to make. Characters, places, sounds, and smells are described in detail, and dialogue sounds just like real people talking. Give your story a clear

27 The Swim of My Life

The excitement builds as Lacey prepares for the final race in the Meet for Champions.

28 The Nature of Patam

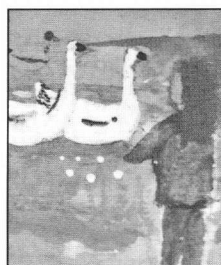
Benjamin describes his family's beach home in Indonesia.

30 Lindy

What's the real reason Lindy spends so much time at Ari's house?

36 Hurricane Iniki Survivor

Michelle learns what it's like to live through a natural disaster.



page 9



page 33

Poems

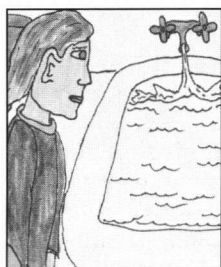
15 The Sea

35 Silver Hair

Book Reviews

16 *Just Like Martin*

25 *Laura Ingalls Wilder, A Biography*



page 40

Color Art

9, 12, 33 & 36 Illustrations

beginning, middle, and end. **Poems:** In a poem a few words must go a long way to explain what you see or feel. Choose your words carefully! When your poem is read aloud, the words should sound beautiful and rhythmical, like music. **Art:** We like pictures that use the whole page. Think about all the details that make up a complete scene. **Book Reviews:** If you are interested in reviewing books for *Stone Soup*, write editor Gerry Mandel for more information. Aside from telling her your name, age, and address, tell her a little about yourself and what kinds of books you like to read. **Illustrations:** If you would like to illustrate stories for *Stone Soup*, send Ms. Mandel some samples of your art work, along with a letter saying what kinds of stories you would like to illustrate.

The Brother I Never Had

THAT DAY STOOD clear in my mind. My cousin Joe and I were taking a stroll in the Jamaica area of New York. We had left my uncle's office at about three o'clock and walked down to Mila's Diner down the street. I had always thought of Joe as my older brother, and today's experience reaffirmed it.

We walked into that neat little diner and ordered onion rings and coke. Those onion rings were the best I had ever had. Joe introduced me to all the regulars at the diner, and then we sat with them for about an hour. They talked and I listened. They talked about college, work, women, and life. My cousin kept trying to get me into the conversation, but I refused to speak.

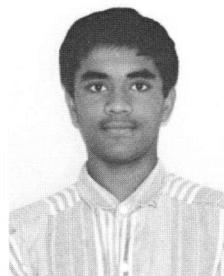
After some time we walked over to the Jamaica Fish Market and looked at all the strange fish they had brought in that day. I tried to pick up a crab out of a basket full of crabs and got pinched. I tried to get some sympathy from Joe, but all he did was smile — not laugh, just smile.

We left the store and headed back to Mila's Diner. We hadn't talked much, just walked. I never had an older brother, and Joe was the only person that was like me and the only one I would consider as my older brother. I wanted to be just like him. He was strong, kind, and caring, and, most of all, he loved me.

Now five years later I'm the older brother of two little people. I try to be the same person Joe was for me. He cared for me, as I care for my brothers. He watched out

for me, as I watch out for my brothers. Joe is now in college and I guess we've gotten a bit farther apart. That's what getting older does to a person. Every once in a while, though, I think about that walk, and I always wonder if we can ever do it again.

*Gim George, 13
Madison, Alabama*



Hey, Wait for Me

"**H**OW ABOUT WE go to Macy's today, Lindsay?" said my mom as she put my coat on.

"Yeah!" I said. My mom picked me up and locked the back door. We went over to the garage and got into the car. My mom strapped me into my booster seat and shut the door. We were backing out of the garage and we got to the top of the driveway.

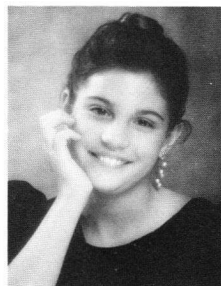
My mom felt her coat pocket and said, "I forgot the money in the house. Stay here and I'll be right back." My mom got out of the small tan car. She left me in the car with the motor running. All of a sudden it looked like the house was walking away from me. I didn't

know what was going on. My feelings were all mixed up when finally I realized I was going down the long, twisted, muddy driveway in the car alone. My mom came out of the house with the wallet and saw me going down the driveway. She started yelling, "Wait for me!! Wait for me!!" because she had pressed reverse, but I didn't.

I looked over at the steering wheel. It was moving like someone was in there with me driving the car, but not a single soul was there.

It felt like forever, but finally I got to the bottom of the driveway. After five seconds my mom was at the bottom of the driveway too. She took me out of the car and gave me a hug. My mom put me back in the car and strapped me in my booster seat, and off to Macy's we went!

*Lindsay E. Washick, 9
Conyngham, Pennsylvania*



Death

A FEW YEARS AGO during Christmas vacation my two brothers and I went to Mexico. I had been to the borders of Mexico and the U.S.A. but never to Mexico itself. We went to visit most of our relatives in Mexico. The drive there was long and boring. It took hours to arrive.

We first visited my great-grandfather. He was loving, kind, and gentle. He was a very good expert at the violin. He influenced me to play it when I went back to school in Modesto. We had fun there with my great-grandfather. My great-grandmother had died before I was born, but we did meet some of my great-aunts and my grandparents. We stayed a couple of days to get acquainted with them. Then we left to visit others and eventually vacation was over. We had to drive back home.

Grief struck a year later. My great-grandfather died peacefully in his sleep at the age of ninety-two. Even though I only met him once for a few days, I felt like a piece of my heart died with him. I felt I'd known him forever. He was a kind, gentle, caring man.

"Mom, why did he die?" I asked.

I knew it was old age but I wouldn't accept it.

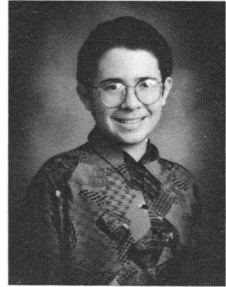
"Because it was his time to go. He was old and got sick," she answered.

I started crying. "Why, why?" I kept saying in between sobs.

Now I know it's better for him in heaven. A few weeks after his death a package arrived for me. It was

his violin. I'll never forget him. I'll always remember him as the best violin player I ever knew.

*Josh Espinosa, 12
Merced, California*



The Swans

Chapter One The Swans

SAMORA IS EIGHT years old. She is in the third grade. She loves to read and write, but most of all she loves to feed the ducks.

Today was the kind of day that was filled with surprises and Samora bumped into one. It started when she went to feed the ducks. The ducks were happy to see her as usual. She began throwing left-over bread. The ducks crowded in like always. But strange as it is, the ducks formed two straight lines. Two white birds strode in the middle of them — they were lightly cooing in their sleep. It sounded like the wind rippling in the water. Samora touched one, and it felt like a pearl.



The sun was rising. Her parents would wake soon. She ran quietly home, took off her cloak, and slipped into her pajamas. Then she got in bed. Her mother came in. "Lazy head!" she said.

That was a relief, but she could not stop herself. She began talking of her trip to the swans. Then her mother said, "What?"

"Oh, just my dream," she said.

Samora ate her breakfast, and this time she saved the whole loaf of bread. When she got to the pond the swans were entering the middle of the lines of the ducks. She began throwing bread.

The swans gracefully put their beaks into the water. Then they pulled out three fish and gave them to Samora in return for the bread. She ran home and showed her parents the fish. She said nothing of the beautiful swans that she had seen. Instead she said she had gone fishing. Every day the same thing happened. She would give the swans bread and in return the swans

would give her fish. Then she would tell her parents she went fishing.

One day the swans were gone. She ran to the market and saw the meat man had two birds. Luckily they were ducks. She ran to the damp grass by the lagoon and one of the swans was crying. Its wing was shot. Samora ran to a nearby tree and picked a leaf. Then she got it wet and placed it on the swan's wing. A shriek came from the swan, then she calmed down as the cut soothed.

Samora thought she would take a nap next to the hurt swan. When she woke up she found that she had slept overnight and it was now morning. She looked around until she saw the swans gracefully getting into the pond. The hurt swan was looking mournfully into the sky because she thought that she might never fly again.

Chapter Two

The Healing Plant

Samora felt sorry for the swan, but she also felt someone tap on her shoulder. Samora turned around to see who it was. It was her mother. "Look at the beautiful swans!!" she said.

"What swans?" asked her mother.

Samora turned around and once more the swans were gone.

"You must be sick. Let's go home."

As they walked through the wet grass, Samora turned and watched the swans slowly come back. But she thought she better not tell her mother because for some reason the swans did not seem to like older people who

were thirty, thirteen, and older. The swans were like friends to Samora. She treated them like any ordinary friend.

When Samora got home, she drank some tea and took a long nap. When she woke up it was time to feed the ducks. On the way, Samora cut herself. Luckily, nearby there was a plant with leaves. It was the only near thing with leaves. So she picked a leaf and carefully placed it on her cut. Two minutes later she got to the pond. She took the leaf off her cut. Oh what a surprise! The cut was gone! Then she had an idea. She would place the leaf on the swan's hurt wing.

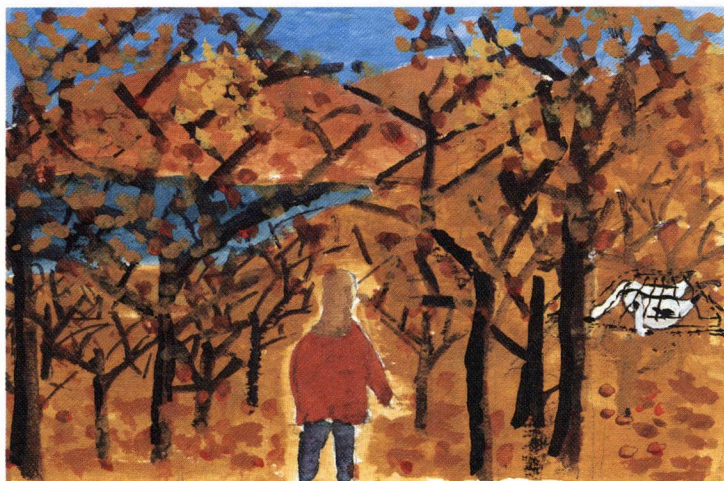
The next day, Samora ate breakfast in a hurry. Then she ran to the pond. She was definitely late for she saw in the swans' eyes that they had been waiting for her. Today she was going to put one of the special leaves on the swan's wing.

Samora began throwing a trail of bread behind her. The swans began to follow the bread. When the hurt swan was close enough, Samora placed the special leaf on the cut. She was surprised when the swan was calm about it. No shriek or cry. Just quietness. The swans did not eat the bread, but instead the cob cupped his wing as his mate pushed the bread in with her beak.

Chapter Three

Fall

Winter would be here soon and everything was busy getting ready, including Samora and her mother and father. Samora was spending more time working than seeing the swans. The swans were busy too for they



would be leaving soon.

The leaves on the trees were turning all different colors, and as Samora walked under a tree a leaf fell on her nose. All of a sudden the quietness stopped and Samora heard a cry that seemed to be coming from the swans' home. Samora ran to see what was wrong. When she got to the lagoon she saw the swans trapped in a net. She carefully took out her sewing scissors and cut a hole just big enough for the swans to climb through.

Chapter Four

The Swans Are Ready

The swans had a small cygnet who was exactly like her mother. She was especially loved by her mother and father. The swans had finished packing but were not leaving until they said goodbye to Samora.

The cygnet was excited to meet a new friend. She thought that the name "Samora" sounded gentle.

"What would you like to be named?" asked the mother swan.

The cygnet thought for a minute and decided on the name "Samora." Samora the human came trotting along and saw the cygnet named Samora and her mother. The mother swan looked up from washing her young one and cooed with joy. She was very happy but in a way very sad because she and her family would have to leave tomorrow.

Samora had such a fun time with the cygnet she did not notice how late it was getting. It was exactly eight thirty-five when Samora human heard the sound of her mother's voice calling her. "Goodbye," she called as she ran home.

"Cooooooooo," the swans all cried out goodbye.

The swans had one more egg which hatched in three hours. The swans decided they would give their second cygnet to Samora human. The best gift a swan can give, the swans thought.

Chapter Five

The Goodbye

The swans brushed and combed their second baby swan. Then they tied a red ribbon around his neck. Then the mother swan wrote a card that went like this:

Dear Samora,

We went south so we won't freeze. This cygnet is a goodbye present. Take care.

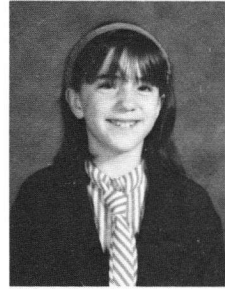
Love,

Swan Family

The next morning Samora got up to see the swans. When she got there, the swans were taking off. Samora put her present in her pocket. As she waved goodbye she called out, "Thank you!"

She felt sad the swans had left. But she knew they would be back next summer, and besides, she had a swan for company.

*Andrea Hoe, 8
Missoula, Montana*



*Illustrated by Sarah Stoner Duncan, 10
Bolinas, California*

The Sea

The mist smudges out
Kapiti Island

the hills curve and rise
like loaves of bread

the sun sprinkles glitter
on the sea

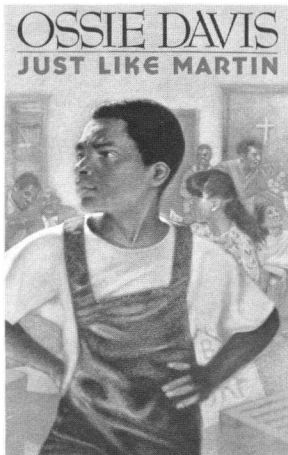
the wind is writing
what it knows
in lines along the water.



*Laura Ranger, 7
Wellington, New Zealand*

Book Review

Just Like Martin by Ossie Davis; Simon & Schuster: New York, 1992; \$14.00.



THE main character in this book, Isaac Stone, wants to be just like his hero, Martin Luther King, Jr. Stone, as Isaac's friends call him, heard Reverend King preach in his own church, and he has taken a vow — like King's — to fight racism by being nonviolent.

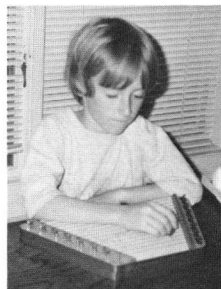
But Stone has lots of problems staying nonviolent. His own friends tease him and play tricks on him to make him angry so he will break his promise. In Alabama, where Stone lives in 1963, there is lots of violence. Racist white people sometimes threaten to hurt black people, like Stone and his family. Once, some white men try to run his Dad's car off the road. Even Stone's father doesn't want Stone to keep his non-violence vow. His dad thinks Stone should fight back if white people try to hurt him.

I admired Stone's struggles to keep his promise. When two of his friends are killed by racists, instead of just getting angry, he decides to lead a children's march to stop hatred. Hundreds of black people and a few white people join in the march.

I felt angry and scared when their children's march became a riot. Why did the racists attack peaceful marchers? This book made me do a lot of thinking about questions like that. Plus, it made me think about how I treat people in my class and my neighborhood. Stone has to think a lot in the book to figure out how to solve his problems. And I think his choices show thinking can be more powerful than fighting.

I recommend this book to all readers of all ages. It helped me, and I hope it helps you, to try to be more like Martin.

*Nathan Vogel, 8
Columbia, Maryland*



The Runaway

ONE THURSDAY, a sunny September afternoon in the Riaw Islands of Indonesia, I hurried down to our Batam Island beach to chat with a friend I had just met about four days earlier while swimming.

"Hello, Ani," I cheerfully greeted her.

"Hello," she mumbled.

Ani, a Batak girl from the large island of Sumatra, about fourteen years old, was only as tall as I though I'm two years younger.

Her short, typically-black hair was pulled back into a shiny ponytail. A white-flowered shirt and a once red skirt covered her skinny frame. On her archless feet hung faded, torn pink sandals. Limply, Ani grasped a huge pink plastic bag bulging with her few clothes wrapped carefully in old, used newspaper.

Feeling awkward just standing there on the tan, shell-covered beach, I suggested we run up to the driftwood rope swing. As I led Ani up the dirt stairs by our red brick house, my mom, on the porch, asked what was jingling in the enormous bag Ani was lugging along.

"*Cuman baju, Bu,*" Ani answered unconcernedly. This means, "It's only clothes, ma'am," in Bahasa.

After climbing up the steep path we breathlessly arrived at the rope swing. Flopping down on the dry red-dirt ground, my new companion remorsefully began pouring out her story in Bahasa. I slowly pulled the well-used swing under me and pushed off.

In a mournful voice she began, "I came on a long walk to get here and I was scared of the viney, monkey-filled jungle. Because I saw your dad drive by on the motorcycle, I found my way. At the house where I work they call me names and hit me all the time, so I ran away. If I can stay here until Saturday I'll go to my relatives at a far away island called Sambu."

I was so shocked I just swung silently for a while. Then I inquired if she would like to swing too, since I didn't know what else to say.

"No, thanks."

"Where do you live?"

"In Sekupang, but I come from Medan (central Sumatra), and I'm an orphan. My sister still works for someone there, but I was brought here to babysit a rich family's children. If the kids cry, I get the blame."

After going to the cement stairs of my friendly house and jabbering some more, Ani caught her breath and suddenly flew like a shadow back down the dull gray steps. Not knowing what to expect, I curiously followed her around the corner.

"Don't tell that man with the red shirt that I'm here, O.K.?" whispered wide-eyed Ani from inside an old rusty barrel.

"Why?" I naively asked. Hurriedly, she informed me that he was looking for her to take her back home.

At this point I thought I'd better tell an adult what was going on. I crashed inside and explained the matter to my sympathetic parents. Their advice for the moment was to take Ani to our Indonesian friends on the beach next to ours who were building a *kalong* (fishtrap). However, Ani didn't think staying with eleven guys was a very good idea, since there weren't any girls.

Flopping down on the stairs again and listening to Ani's chatter wasn't what I felt like doing all day, so I suggested we go play at the beach. Unlike me, Ani loves to tease crabs but is scared to death of harmless sand-colored starfish. After chasing herds of light-gray and bright-orange crabs for nearly an hour, we trotted back home.

Smelling cookies, I walked inside, leaving Ani squatting on the well-warmed stairs. In a few minutes I

returned, balancing a plate of fresh spice cookies and two overflowing glasses of water. These soon disappeared, so we began playing games at the front of the house. I handed a purple rock to Ani, and she began to draw the squares for hopscotch on the rough concrete driveway.

Seemingly out of nowhere a small fat man shot up the steep driveway. Giving a triumphant shout, he grabbed my surprised friend. Poor startled Ani jumped a foot high and stopped talking abruptly, as suddenly as if someone had slammed her mouth shut. She didn't utter another word.

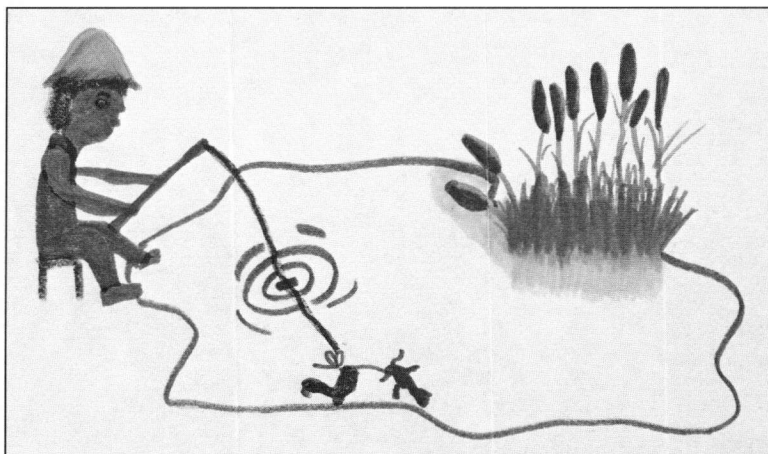
Over and over the newcomer declared, "I have never hit her, not ever."

Ani stamped off and returned dragging her bag. The interfering intruder whispered to my dad that she had stolen some money. Seizing the bag, our enemy disappeared with Ani.

It all happened so fast that my family and I just sat numbly for a while. Praying helped a lot. I don't know where Ani is now, but whenever I think of her I pray for her.

*Jedi Bethea, 12
Batam, Indonesia*





Fishing for Skates

ONE SUMMER MORNING I decided to go skating. I suddenly remembered I lost one of my skates in the pond yesterday.

I changed into my old overalls, without a shirt. Barefooted, I went to the cellar to get my fishing pole. I loaded the pole across the front of my handlebars and rode to the pond.

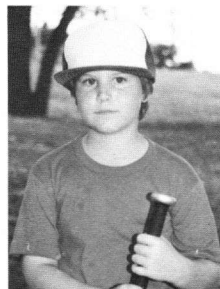
The pond was clear, and I could see the fish swimming around. I spotted my skate near the edge with a small catfish circling around it nibbling at the laces.

Using my cane pole, I slowly lowered the hook into the water. Luckily, I snagged it on the third try, easing it slowly out of the water so as not to drop it back in. Finally I dragged it up onto the bank. I began to dump the water out, and a frog leaped out. He hopped twice,

but it was away from the water, and I was soon able to catch him. I petted him a few times and stuck him in my pocket. I went home with both my lost skate and a new pet. I think summer is fun, but Mother says that fall is her favorite time of the year. I wonder why?

*Dustin Weathersbee, 8
Rotan, Texas*

illustrated by the author



Traveling in Outer Space

MY MOTHER ALWAYS takes my sister and me on different day trips. She's done this ever since we were babies. At least once a month we go to New York City. I get to see different museums, plays, zoos, and lots of other things. One day I thought I was going to travel to outer space for real.

We were going to New York City to the Hayden Planetarium. My mom said we were going to see a special slide show about the sky and that before we left to go home we would go and weigh ourselves on different planets. I got so excited thinking about going on all the planets. I even got a little bit scared, but I knew my

mom would never take me anywhere dangerous. I remember walking in the planetarium and thinking about what the people on the other planets looked like. I remember thinking if they were people or creatures. I was wondering what it would be like to fly in the rocket ship. I was afraid that I might get lost in space forever! I remember thinking that I wanted to take my own bed in case we had to stay away for a while. I knew I never was in outer space before, but I knew it was far away because we looked at the sky a lot from home. I had a lot of different feelings. I was wondering about the space suit I would have to wear and I was worried that I wouldn't be able to see out of my helmet.

Before very long we were done with the slide show and we were walking around the planetarium. My mom showed us lots of photographs of the different planets, and of the sun and the moon too. Then she said it was time to get weighed. We walked up some steps and I got very nervous, and then she asked which planet did I want to get weighed on first. I asked her where was the spaceship, and the astronaut that would fly us, and I asked if it was O.K. if I couldn't see out of the helmet. She must have known how frightened I was because she hugged me very tight and told me all about the scales that the planetarium had that were set for the weights that scientists had found out about. She talked to me for a long time because she realized what I was thinking! After a while we all laughed! We laughed a lot and then we talked about what it would really be like if we could fly into space. My mom had told us that someday it would really be possible for people like us to just fly to the moon or maybe some other planet.

We finally did weigh ourselves on the different planets, but we did it on the scales! I remember being really heavy on the sun, and even fatter on Jupiter. I was so young then, and I was very tiny, so I didn't even have a weight on the moon or on Venus.

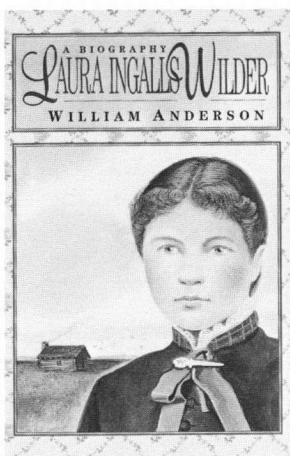
We had a great day, even though I had scary thoughts. I was almost four years old then, so you can see why I thought I was going to get weighed *on* the other planets. We've gone to the planetarium lots of times since then and someone in my family always remembers to think of that day when I really thought we were going to outer space.

*Narielle Robinson, 10
West Caldwell, New Jersey*



Book Review

Laura Ingalls Wilder, A Biography by William Anderson;
HarperCollins: New York, 1992; \$16.00.



ALTHOUGH I've never read a book about homesteading in the frontier days, reading about the day-to-day struggle for survival and the restless wanderings in covered wagon by Laura Ingalls Wilder made me want to learn more. Her biographer did extensive research to bring to life and give authenticity to her story.

Laura did not begin to chronicle her times until she was in her early sixties, though she wrote occasionally for country newspapers. Her daughter Rose was the one who encouraged her to write books. She had become a well-known and highly paid writer in California and came home often to visit her parents. During these visits and by mail she proof-read her mother's writings and advised her. I know how important encouragement can be because my mother encourages me to write.

Laura wrote eight books, but her most famous one was *Little House on the Prairie*. It was woven from the memories of her parents and her sister Mary because she was too young to remember the house they built

accidentally on Osage Indian territory in Kansas. Her other books describe the other places they lived as they tried their luck in the Dakotas and Wisconsin. Married to a farmer, Laura also told of her husband's childhood in New York state in *Farmer Boy*. Concluding her tales of frontier life was *Those Happy Golden Years*.

Laura's life was not always so golden, however. Her family endured cold harsh winters riding for hundreds of miles in a bumpy wagon. They seemed constantly uprooted as they searched for their ideal homestead. Along the way her little brother died, her sister Carrie became blind, and Laura had to forego graduating from high school in order to work and save money to send Carrie to a college for the blind. Laura worked as a teacher for one year before her marriage because in those days teachers had only to pass an exam and be at least sixteen years old and single. At one time her family became so poor that a family in one of the many towns they settled in took Laura into their home to help them out. The family stayed together rather than lose Laura to adoption. Her story shows the strong family values of the people who settled the frontier. Laura's brave and unselfish life has been an inspiration to several generations.

Many libraries have been named for Laura Ingalls Wilder, and there is a museum in DeSmet, Missouri, to visit and see the relics and manuscripts which belonged to her.

Laura's books won many awards with several published as Newbery Honor Books. People around the world have read her writings, and the late General MacArthur was among her fans. Even though she died

in 1957 at the age of ninety, her message continues in her work about the meaning of the lives of those who expanded the United States to the west.

*Micia Reedy-Banazadeh, 13
Houston, Texas*



The Swim of My Life

IT WAS A typical Houston day in the summer, hot and humid. The insects kept buzzing in my ears and sweat dripped down my forehead like ice cream melting and running down a cone. I got to splash into the water, but, although it felt good, I couldn't swim for fun. This was the Meet of Champions and I had to show my opponents what I was made of. I had six chances to place and swim for a medal. Every time I jumped into the water, I had to swim to my fullest extent. Stroke after stroke was stronger and stronger. It was a race against the clock.

After a swim I would jump out of the water soaking wet, look around, and check with my coach to see if I had placed. Two out of six times I had placed. I was so excited I could barely hold it all in.

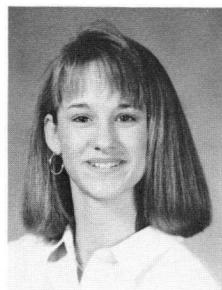
I was sitting on the ready bench waiting nervously to swim. I would be swimming the stroke that was my natural stroke, breast stroke. I had so many butterflies in my stomach I thought they were having a family reunion!

"All thirteen-fourteen girl breast stokers to the edge of the pool!" the monotonous voice of the intercom spoke out. I was shaking from nervousness.

"Down and ready," the gunsman yelled, and then the shot was fired. In I jumped. I swam the fastest swim of my life. I was a dolphin and the water was my home. I touched the wall third and had broken my record!

Victory at last!

*Lacey Clayton, 13
Katy, Texas*



The Nature of Patam

RIGHT NOW I'M sitting cross-legged on the big gray porch at our Patam beach house. The bright shining sun and hot day make me feel lazy.

The shadowy light-and-dark-green jungle to the left of me has tall, light-brown trunks of trees everywhere.

To the right a coconut tree with its palms spread out looks like a parachute. Brown and gray monkeys chatter away as small green crickets sing. Different colored dragonflies flutter and glide so fast in every direction I can't see what color they are!

Lively waves leap to and fro on the pure white beach, while salt water and rock bash noisily together. An airplane rumbles slowly away. Across the bay trucks rattle loudly as they haul tons of brown dirt dark as chocolate.

Boats are all over the water! About three miles out huge tankers loom above the deep, gigantic, calm blue ocean, with ferries racing past them on their way to Singapore. Another boat, a small abandoned tan-brown sampan, bobs gently up and down in the gold sunlit waters that seem like enormous masses of lemon candy. I think Patam is just the place for me.

*Benjamin Bethea, 9
Batam, Indonesia*





Lindy

I USED TO CRINGE each time our doorbell rang. Nine times out of ten the person on the other side of the door was Lindy, the girl from a few houses down the street.

"Can you play today?" she'd ask.

"No, I'm doing homework," I'd say, even if I wasn't.

"Can I help your mom with the baby?" she would ask next.

Before I could say no, there was my mom inviting her inside again.

"Where's the baby?" Lindy asked. She asked that same question every time she walked inside the house. And the answer was always the same.

"He's in the family room," my mom would say, smil-

ing as she watched me silently mouthing the words along with her.

My baby brother, Kelly, liked Lindy. He liked her a little too much, if you asked me. He'd squeal and laugh when she made silly faces at him or tickled his feet. To make matters worse, whenever Lindy played with Kelly, she'd take out every one of his toys. You can guess who would have to put them away later on.

While she was busy with Kelly and my mom, I'd sneak out of the room. But no matter where I went, Lindy soon found me. It was as though she had radar. "I'm bored," she'd say.

Why don't you go home then? I thought to myself, but I never could say it out loud.

Most of the time she would just stand there and stare at me until I asked her to play Nintendo. She would talk and talk all through the game, especially when it was my turn to play. She talked so much that it ruined my concentration. I lost a lot of lives that way.

If she had not been such a pest, I might have liked her visits. After all, she was quite pretty. And she always let me be the first person to sign her casts. Usually ten-year-old girls like flowers and silly stuff like that, but Lindy thought my pictures of black widow spiders were pretty cool.

I remember drawing my first spider. That was the day I met Lindy. I had wanted to bring some interesting insects to school the next day but found only two sow bugs in my own yard, and one of them was dead. I put both of them in a shoebox. I decided the pickings had to be better around the neighborhood. Instead, I was the one who got picked.

"Hey, boy with the glasses, what are you doing?" Lindy yelled.

"Looking for bugs. Got any good ones?" I answered even before I spotted her sitting on her front step.

"I don't know. We just moved here last week," said Lindy. "I'll help you find some bugs, but first you have to sign my leg cast."

Since I was getting quite desperate for bugs, I agreed. Neither of us had anything to write with, so I went home to get a marker. My mom said I could borrow her red and black pens as long as I returned them and didn't get the ink on my clothes.

I decided to make a drawing of a black widow spider because it was the only thing I could think of that is red and black and pretty easy to draw. Lindy liked it. She said it looked almost real. (When Lindy broke her arm a couple months later, I drew two black widows. And the time she broke her finger, I made an itsy-bitsy spider.)

Then she asked if she could see my bugs, so I opened the lid of the shoe box. When I looked inside, I couldn't believe my eyes. Next to my two sow bugs, Lindy had placed two stink bugs, a ladybug, and a couple tasty-looking leaves for all of them to eat.

"We do have some good bugs here after all," laughed Lindy.

I thanked her for the surprise. It was almost dinner time, so I said goodbye to Lindy and told her to come over to my house sometime.

The problem was Lindy wanted to be at my house all the time. She was always hanging around my house. I used to ask my mom, "Why doesn't she stay at her own house?"

"Maybe she likes you," my mom would say. Then she laughed when I scrunched my nose. That would get me madder.

Sometimes Lindy wouldn't even have to ring the doorbell for me to know she was around. One time I got a strange feeling and looked out the window.



Guess what I saw. Yes, it was Lindy. She was helping my dad wash his car.

I liked helping my dad wash the car, but I didn't want to do it with Lindy there.

"She has a family. Why does she also need ours?" I asked my dad when he finally came in the house.

"Now, be nice," my dad said.

I didn't like that answer.

One day, not so long ago, I went outside to get the

mail from the mailbox. I saw two patrol cars parked outside Lindy's house. I was curious, so I sneaked around some bushes and waited.

Two policemen came out of the house. Lindy was with them. Her mother came out of the house. She was crying. Then two more policemen came out of the house. They had her stepfather in handcuffs.

"He didn't mean to hit her that hard," yelled Lindy's mother.

Lindy wasn't crying, though. She was just talking (as usual) to the cops. They opened the police car and she started to get in. Then she spotted me.

"He's my best friend," she told one of the officers as she pointed directly at me. Then she smiled and waved.

I waved back. And I kept on waving as the patrol cars sped away and out of view.

The doorbell doesn't ring too much anymore. But when it does, I run to get there first. I am always hoping it will be Lindy.

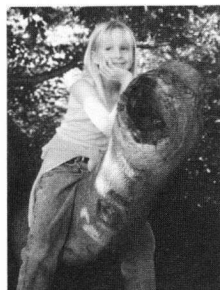
*Ari Rubin, 11
Monrovia, California*



*Illustrated by Kristin Trayer, 11
Springfield, Virginia*

Silver Hair

You see her walking out in the distance.
She doesn't look back.
She doesn't wave.
You remember her shining silver hair
And her dark brown eyes
And her lips the color of berries.
She fades away.
You remember the good times you had with her
When you went on walks at midnight
And how her hair reminded you of the moon.
She fades in the distance
But not in your mind.



*Kathleen Hughes, 8
Lenox, Massachusetts*



Hurricane Iniki Survivor

MY SISTER, CHRISTINA, and I were sitting in front of the Nintendo playing Super Mario Brothers one night after dinner. It had been a terrific day. Everything had gone well in school, and Christina wasn't being a pest like she usually is. Actually, she was being kind of nice.

"Oh, shucks!" Christina threw down the controller in disgust. "I died on those little bomb-bugs, again!"

I giggled. "For the last time, they're not called bomb-bugs! They're called bomb-ombs!"

"I don't care!" said Christina. "The point is that I was on the last level and now my game's over!"

I stood up and turned off the Nintendo. "Come on,"

I said, "I've had enough Nintendo for one night."

Christina stood up too and followed me into the kitchen where my mom and dad were listening to the news and talking worriedly. When they saw us, they hid their worried frowns and smiled.

"Hi, honey," said Mom. "You'd better start getting ready for bed. It's a school night, you know."

"Is something wrong?" I asked. "Why were you guys acting so worried?"

Mom looked at Dad. "We might as well tell them, Joel. Well, we've been listening to the news, and there's a hurricane — a small one — approaching the Hawaiian Islands. It's headed for Kauai."

Suddenly, everything great about the day turned horrible. Christina started to cry. I couldn't believe it. A HURRICANE?! Heading straight for our island? Maybe it wouldn't have sounded so terrible if Florida hadn't just gone through a major hurricane and pictures of flattened houses weren't on the front page of every magazine.

"What?!" I shouted. "A hurricane?!"

"Honey, calm down," said Mom. "On a scale of one to ten in powerfulness, it's rated a four. Besides, I'll just bet that during the night it will change course and head somewhere out to sea."

That gave me a spark of hope, but just a tiny spark. I went to bed that night and slept a restless and uneasy sleep. I kept thinking of what we would do if our house got flattened. Would we move back to Fort Worth, Texas, where I was born? So what if the hurricane was only rated a four. Florida's hurricane was rated a four too, I think.

I slept very lightly that night. Any rustle of leaves or creaking of our old house would wake me with a start. That's why the boom and wail of the hurricane siren had me sitting up in bed, my heart thumping in my throat and my eyes wide with fear. I looked at my digital clock. Five-thirty a.m. I wondered when the hurricane would hit. Jumping out of bed, I ran into the kitchen where Mom, Dad, and Christina were watching the news and listening to KONG radio at the same time.

"Hi, Michelle," said Mom. "Well, the hurricane's changed its course all right. Instead of having the eye of it pass right through the channel between Oahu and Kauai, the eye of it will pass directly over us. Also, weather experts have changed its rating to a five instead of a four. We have a lot to do this morning. We've got to tape windows, fill bathtubs with water since we won't have running water for a few weeks after the hurricane, take pictures off walls, move patio furniture. . . ." Mom saw my scared face and softened. "It's going to be O.K., honey. Our house is strong. It survived Hurricane Iva, the hurricane that hit Kauai ten years ago."

"So?" I asked. "Iva was only rated a one."

"Emergency shelters around the island will be set up," said the newscaster. "Koloa School, Kalaheo School, and the Princeville Hotel will be used as shelters. All people who live on the beach must evacuate their homes. All schools on the island are closed for the day."

"Mom," I asked, "can we go to a shelter? I know you say our house is strong, but it might be safer for us in a shelter. We'll take our most valued things — our

money, our picture albums, our cats. . . ."

I stopped short when I saw that Mom was laughing. "Honey," she said, "it's not going to be that bad. We're not going to die and this house will not blow down. Quit your worrying."

I felt angry. How did she know? She'd never been through a hurricane before. I would never forgive her if our house *did* blow down on top of us.

I didn't have much time to think that day. Our friendly neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Town, came over and told us that if we needed anything their garage door would be open. They also said that they had had their house built hurricane-proof. Mr. Town was more realistic than Mom and told me what was *really* going to happen, that it would be a very bad and dangerous hurricane, just the opposite of what my mother had told me. I believed Mr. Town more.

Our next problem was that we had guests staying in our bed-and-breakfast. Yes, Mom owns a bed-and-breakfast, and this couple was staying on Kauai on vacation from California. They came over, and Mom told them not to worry, the same thing she'd told me. The man, Brian, was very understanding. His wife was another story. She was a total mess. She couldn't believe that there was going to be a hurricane on *their* vacation and almost blamed it on us. We sent them back to their apartment, telling them how to prepare for Iniki, the hurricane's name, meaning strong, piercing winds.

I took a roll of tape and did my best to help, taping up all the windows and glass doors in the house. By this time it had started to rain, and I went out in the rain to help Mom move patio furniture under the house where

it wouldn't bang against things.

After Dad got back from the mile-long (I'm exaggerating a *little* bit) line at Star Market — he was buying things like batteries, bottled water, etc. — I helped him fill up bathtubs and all our empty cartons with water, for the hurricane would probably wreck the water pipes and we wouldn't have water for days after Iniki.



I want to be a writer when I grow up, and I did not want all the books I'd written to blow away during the hurricane, so I hid them under my bed and hid a special one called *The Diary of Mathew Morgan*, that my mom had helped me edit and was all ready to send to a publisher, in my bathroom drawer and taped it shut.

Christina and I took pictures off walls and hid them in the oddest places. I took a notebook and a pencil

around and wrote where we hid everything just to be on the safe side.

Christina put all her stuffed animals on a shelf and taped up the opening with masking tape and cardboard. Can you believe it? I mean, we should have been thinking about our lives right then, not about stuffed animals, right?

I also made sure that the family scrapbooks and my purse were in a safe place too.

By this time, Mom had packed a lunch of sandwiches. She explained what the plan would be. We'd all hide in my closet, and if the roof started to cave in we'd all go out and hide in the van. (Ooh, that part was scary to hear.)

Suddenly, there was a click and the electricity went out. We listened on our battery-run radio, and Ron Wylie, the reporter on KONG radio, said that he had to go, that the hurricane made it not safe for him to be talking anymore. I made a silent vow right then and there never to become a radio reporter.

Hurricane Iniki was under way. I could hear winds whipping through trees, stripping them bare of their leaves. The whole family gathered in the music room, the room where we kept the piano, bookshelves, and Mom's desk. It was in the middle of the house with no walls around it.

"Mom," I asked, "can we go in my closet now?"

Dad and Mom just stayed there. "Nah," said Dad, "not yet. It's really amazing just watching the hurricane from here."

"Is it going to get much worse?" I asked.

Mom held my hand. "Honey, I hope you don't think

this is bad because it's going to get *much* worse. This is only the beginning."

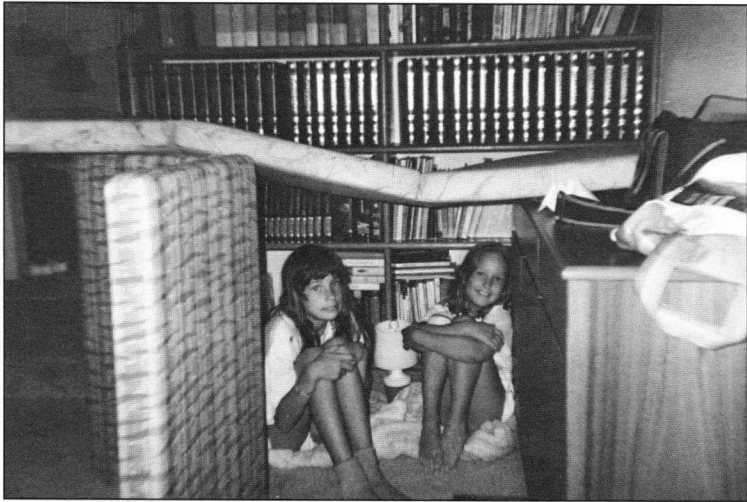
My lip trembled and I fought back tears. "There's still time to go to a shelter."

My comment was ignored. "Whoa!" shouted Dad.

"What is it?!" My head shot up. "Is our house falling down already?"

Dad laughed. "No," he said, "but someone's roof just flew by our window and was about as big as the music room floor."

"No kidding?" asked Mom. Christina burst into tears. I hid my face in my shirt. Maybe Dad shouldn't have told us.



Michelle and Christina in their hurricane shelter

Suddenly I had an idea. We'd brought into the room with us two futons, two sleeping bags, Christina's stuffed teddy bear, and my diary that I wrote in every

day. With the two futons and sleeping bags I quickly whipped together a little fort. It had a little opening for a door and a sleeping bag ceiling and floor.

"There!" I exclaimed. "A little shelter!"

"Yeah!" said Christina, and climbed inside.

Mom smiled. "Well, it might really work," she said and climbed inside with us.

Dad was brave, though. He stayed outside the shelter, watching fences, roofs, and shingles fly by our window.

Soon the hurricane got really bad. Wind was madly tearing through the sky, ripping everything in its path to smithereens. At least our house was still there, and I was thankful for that. We had many leaks though, and Dad hurriedly ran to put trash cans under them, and when our VCR crashed to the ground, Mom helped Dad carry it and the TV to a safer place. I stayed put.

About fifteen minutes later, Brian and his wife ran into the house. "The apartment's a mess!" they shouted. "We left the glass sliding door open so it wouldn't break, and water's pouring in!" Mom and I were dumbfounded. Who with brains would leave a glass sliding door *open* during a hurricane?

Brian and his wife stayed in the house for a while. It got pretty boring and sweaty hot while the grown-ups sat around talking, and I had nothing to do but sit and watch houses fly away. Christina and I soon began to gain confidence and wandered around the house a little but scooted back to our shelter as soon as there was a big gust of wind. Soon Brian and his wife left, with the order to *close the glass door*.

By now, Hurricane Iniki was getting to be at its worst point. The shelter I'd made was pretty flimsy, so Mom,

Christina, and I huddled together in my closet. Dad stayed in the music room. How could he be so brave? A window could break and shatter to pieces any minute!

A few minutes later, Dad came in. "Katie," he said to my mom, "come quick."

Mom got out of the closet and followed Dad, and she didn't see me creep behind them. When we got to the music room, I saw what Dad was talking about. Our neighbors' house was totally flattened. Iniki had taken half the house with it and left the other half in smithereens. I knew what Mom and Dad were thinking, and I thought the same thing — that our house would be next.

For the next five hours I cried, prayed, and tried to get some sleep (unsuccessfully), and finally, around six-thirty p.m., the hurricane died down. Winds were still blowing, but it was really declared "over." Dad went to check on our neighbors whose house had blown away, and I saw many other people come out to look at their damaged houses. To my surprise, the only bad thing about our house was that the breakfast room floor was flooded three inches deep with water, and Mom and Dad's door to their room was in pieces at the bottom of the stairs. Otherwise, we were really O.K.

Dad came back soon and said that he'd banged as loud as he could on our neighbors' half-demolished door, but no one had answered. He also said that our neighbors' dogs were locked in their car, barking away.

That night was horrible. Since my parents' room was almost ruined, everyone slept in my room, which, except for a few posters blown off my walls, was in perfect shape.

Our cats, Socks, Chloelina — Chloe for short, and Ribbons, slept with us. Socks and Chloe had been inside during Iniki. Chloe was chicken and had stayed with us the whole time, but Socks had wandered around the house and had even put her paws up on a window and looked out. Poor Ribbons had been left outside. We searched and searched for her before the hurricane but just couldn't find her. She'd come meowing at our door afterwards, and it was a miracle how she'd survived.

The months after Iniki were worse than the actual hurricane, I think. The National Guard — or "the army dudes," as we called them — passed out free MRE's to everyone. MRE stands for Meals Ready to Eat. They came in lots of different kinds, and I think they tasted really good.



"... we drove past our old house."

All the beaches on Kauai were devastated. We used to live on the beach, and we drove past our old house. The whole house had been lifted up and driven into the house next to it by waves. Also, the second floor was now the first floor, and the first floor was somewhere in the ocean or in the pool.

Yes, we had a pool then. There were *fish* swimming in it, and a palm tree had fallen in it.

Also, every window in the house was broken. It's a good thing we moved out when we did.

On the morning after Iniki, we saw the Frashers, our neighbors who'd lost their house. They said that they'd stayed in their car with their dogs and must have been asleep when Dad came over. They said that they were going to try to rebuild their house, which I thought was crazy and impossible.

After the hurricane, the Frashers, the Towns, the Ventos, and our family had many barbecues together, since there was no electricity. The Ventos, along with many other people, had bought a generator, which was driving us crazy with its noise.

My school was totally demolished, so a different school let us use their gym to have classes in, which I think is really nice of them.

There's a girl in my class named Lindsey who lives right on the beach, and she said that her house and yard were fine, like a hurricane never came whipping through it.

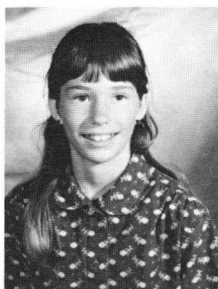
Our yard is another story. These two really nice men came and asked to clean it up for us for fifty dollars a truckload to the dump. Now our yard looks empty, with no trees except for the big avocado tree near the house

which survived.

A big cheer went up through our neighborhood once we got water. Every day, Mom and I had made trips to the fire station or wherever else they were giving out fresh water to drink. Our neighborhood was also one of the first roads to get electricity.

Now it's been about three months since Iniki hit, and things are pretty much back to normal. Every shirt store has "I Survived Hurricane Iniki" shirts. I made a shirt that said "I Survived Hurricane Iniki" on the front, and on the back "But My School Didn't." We're back at our old school (I actually like the other school building better), our neighbors are starting to rebuild, and I'm feeling really proud that all Kauai pitched in to lend a hand to make this island beautiful again. Hurricane Iniki has brought family, friends, and neighbors closer together, and I think that the Aloha spirit is really starting to show on Kauai.

*Michelle M. Gooch, 10
Koloa, Kauai, Hawaii*



*Illustrated by Andrew Ujifusa, 11
Chappaqua, New York*

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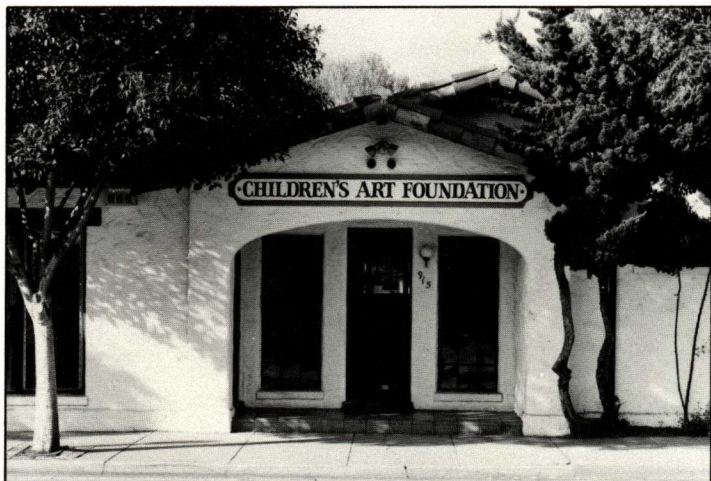
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