

# Stone Soup

*The Magazine by Young Writers & Artists*



*"Flower Show," by Tamali Das, age 11, Calcutta, India*

## RED COMET

Granddad gives Philip a gift he will treasure forever

## THE COLOR OF HONOR

A young black doctor faces prejudice in a rural town in 1960

*Also:* A new story by Canadian author Megan M. Gannett

MARCH/APRIL 2004

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*The Magazine by Young Writers & Artists*

VOLUME 32, NUMBER 4  
MARCH / APRIL 2004

## STORIES

**The Kingdom of Stones** by Megan M. Gannett ..... 5

Rochelle's fantasy life takes her mind off the problems at home

**A Beautiful Memory** by Emma Loizeaux ..... 12

Emma is introduced to a family ritual

**Red Comet** by Philip Grayeski ..... 15

A boy and his grandfather share the joy of flying

**Piccadilly Dreams** by Audrey Crockett ..... 22

Jessica has found the perfect horse, but her mother disagrees

**A Shaken Garden** by Monica Del Toral ..... 29

It's December 7, 1941, and Pearl Harbor is under attack

**The Color of Honor** by Andrew Lorraine ..... 37

Two little girls help their mother overcome her prejudice

**Rider's Paradise** by Amy Cheetham ..... 45

For a horse lover, nothing compares to a day at Pendragon Farm

## POEMS

**I Ripped It** by Andrea Begin ..... 11

**Morning Walk** by Mark Roberts ..... 26

## BOOK REVIEWS

**The Sight** reviewed by Talia Lester ..... 20

**Alia Walking** reviewed by Holly Kuestner ..... 34



page 5



page 15



page 29



page 45



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# Stone Soup

*The Magazine by Young Writers & Artists*

**W**ELCOME TO ALL OUR READERS, old and new! We've had the pleasure of publishing *Stone Soup* for over 30 years. It is our belief that, by presenting rich, heart-felt work by young people the world over, we can stir the imaginations of our readers and inspire young writers and artists to create.



*Jessie Moore, 12*

## Contributors' Guidelines

*Stone Soup* welcomes submissions from young people through age 13. For our complete guidelines, please visit our Web site at [www.stonesoup.com](http://www.stonesoup.com).

**Story and poem authors:** Please do not enclose a self-addressed envelope

with your submission. Send copies of your work, not originals. If we decide to consider your work for a future issue, you will hear from us in four to six weeks. If you do not hear from us, it means we were not able to use your work. Don't be discouraged! Try again!

**Book reviewers:** If you are interested in reviewing books for *Stone Soup*, write editor Gerry Mandel. Tell her a little about yourself and the kinds of books you like to read. Enclose an SASE for her reply.

**Artists:** If you would like to illustrate for *Stone Soup*, send Ms. Mandel some samples of your art work, along with a letter saying what you like to draw most. Enclose an SASE for her reply. We need artists who can draw or paint complete scenes in color. Please send color copies of your work, not originals.

**All contributors:** Send us writing and art about the things you feel most strongly about! Whether your work is about imaginary situations or real ones, use your own experiences and observations to give your work depth and a sense of reality. Send your work to *Stone Soup*, Submissions Dept., P.O. Box 83, Santa Cruz, CA 95063. Include your name, age, birthdate, home address and phone number.

**Cover:** "Flower Show" is part of *Stone Soup's* permanent collection of children's art. It was originally created for a contest held by the Nehru Children's Museum in Calcutta, India. Visit [www.stonesoup.com](http://www.stonesoup.com) to see more work from *Stone Soup's* international collection of children's art.



# The Mailbox



I would like to thank you for publishing "Swaying in the Breeze" by Megan M. Gannett [November/December 2003]. It is the most beautifully descriptive story I have ever read. The way the maple tree is described is so correct and beautiful. It reminded me of an alder tree that I've been to up in the mountains with the "sun's delicate fingers" climbing through the leaves. Megan's writing is encouraging and beautiful! Megan, when you publish a novel, I want to have a copy for myself. Thank you *Stone Soup*!

**ELENA FRINK, 13**  
Rocklin, California

Megan's new story, "The Kingdom of Stones," appears on page 5.

I read a touching story on your Web site, by the name of "Silver Blue" [January/February 2003]. This story was sad, yet joyful at the very end. I remember when I was about three, I lost my cat, Sam. He was just gone one morning. He was a very feisty mean cat, quite antisocial, but I was still sad in a way, because I had only been three, and he was my first cat. I would like to say, keep up the good work!

**EMMA GAMBOA, 11**  
Vancouver, Washington

I love this magazine! I read each issue at least twice. I got the subscription as a gift from my parents. I loved the story "Star of David" [May/June 2003]. Emily E. Hogstad did a great job and the picture was wonderful! I truly hope to publish a story in *Stone Soup* someday.

**BONNIE RICORD, 10**  
Columbus, Ohio

I thoroughly enjoyed "The Moment of Decision" by Kevin Zhou [September/October 2003]! Though I am not a big fan of baseball the story is captivating. The story also taught me a lesson: Always tell the truth. My dad says this story is generally based on a real-life event. The very talented author tells this story in three separate levels. One is a good baseball story, two is that some parents are willing to lie for sports and the coaches look the other way, and three, the most important thing is the integrity of Jesús who wanted to tell the truth in spite of the consequences. I look forward to more wonderful stories by talented authors.

**KAYLYN KAVI, 8**  
Bridgewater, New Jersey

I would like to thank Eesha Dave, whose review for *Girl of Kosovo* was featured in the September/October 2003 issue of *Stone Soup*. I finished reading this review in tears and even more determined than previously to help the Afghans who continue to suffer under the current living conditions. Ms. Dave rightly emphasizes the importance of recognizing and respecting other cultures in the world; we cannot allow one person to create our image of an entire country. Thank you, Ms. Dave, for helping citizens of the US realize the world doesn't revolve solely because of our nation; for stressing the importance of having an open mind; and for encouraging others to speak out against the wrong.

**ELIZABETH MOORE, 14**  
San Rafael, California

You can read all the work mentioned in *The Mailbox* on our Web site: [www.stonesoup.com](http://www.stonesoup.com)

**Note to our readers:** Send us your letters! We are especially interested in detailed comments about specific stories, poems, book reviews, and illustrations. We'd also like to receive anecdotes (150 words or less) about interesting experiences you'd like to share with our readers. Send letters to The Mailbox, *Stone Soup*, P.O. Box 83, Santa Cruz, CA 95063. Include your name, age, address, and phone number.





*"Hello, there," I called from the gate. "Could I come in for a second?"*



# The Kingdom of Stones

By **Megan M. Gannett**

*Illustrated by* **Nina Prader**

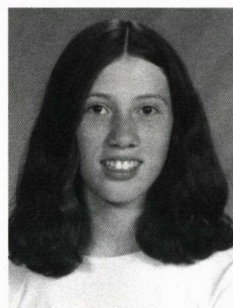
**E**VEN AS A YOUNG CHILD, I had an inclination to watch people. Not in a bad way; I didn't gossip or be judgmental, I just observed. The ways of people interested me greatly.

When I was about six, a new family, the Burkes, moved in beside mine. Just watching them carry their things into the big blue house made me curious. I decided that day to be friends with their daughter, who was my age—surely nothing could be better than to have a friend who lived next door! But I had my own friends to be preoccupied with, and as the years passed by the right moment to befriend her never seemed to come.

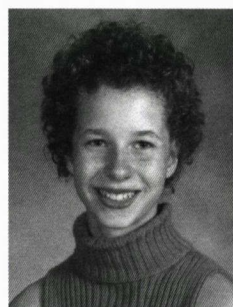
Mr. Burke was a small, stocky man with a visible harshness and anger toward the world. He would grumble continuously as he stomped up and down the walk, carrying groceries or a briefcase. His wife was a plain, sad woman whose forehead was never free of wrinkles. I rarely saw either of them smile.

Because of what I saw in her parents, I would have expected their daughter Rochelle to be long-faced and sullen herself. And she was . . . sort of. But she was different. It was as if she was a step further away from reality, lost in a world of her own. Something was never present in her face. From what I could see, she never looked sad or angry, just distant. Expressionless.

Rochelle had large, mysterious gray eyes, the color of the sky on a cloudy day. They were like foggy, translucent pools that made her thoughts and the real person she was barely recognizable. It made that inner personality just a blurry silhouette seen



Megan M. Gannett, 13  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada



Nina Prader, 13  
Washington, D.C.

through frosted glass.

Rochelle's stringy, light brown hair had a silver tint to it, and hung limply over her back and shoulders, a shadow around an oval, pale face with no jarring features. She was slender, and moved with a grace I can hardly describe—free and floating, but like a sleepwalker. It was often obvious that she was unaware of the world around her.

I thought she was beautiful, a strange sort of beautiful, yes, but beautiful nonetheless. Not overly proud of my own short, round figure and short, dark hair, brown eyes and freckled face, I decided one day when I was eight that if I could change my looks I'd look like her. Something about Rochelle's intriguing yet mysterious appearance drew me to wonder about the person it was hiding.

One Saturday in September when I was eleven, I saw Rochelle playing outside in a corner of her yard from our living room window. It was one of those drizzly, depressing days when I usually stay inside and read or play solitaire, but Rochelle didn't seem to care about the weather. I had seen her many times in that corner under the Burkes' rowan tree, busy at some unknown activity. We were still strangers to each other after five years; she went to a different school than me and I think inside I was a little nervous about approaching her. Why did I need her, anyway? As I have said, I had many friends of my own.

But that day the sociable person I was couldn't be bothered to phone up those

friends. Maybe, I thought, staring out at Rochelle, this was my chance to get to know her. And I have to admit I was dying to know what she was doing out in the yard. Tiredly, I pulled myself up off the couch. I found my mom doing laundry in the basement. "I'm going for a walk," I told her, hoping she wouldn't question me.

But she looked at me as if I was crazy. "A walk? You? Ida, hon, tell me what mischief you're going out to do now."

"I'm going to make friends with the Burke girl," I said, sighing. My mom would question me less if I told the truth.

"OK, then," still looking at me curiously.

Ducking around her I mounted the stairs and rushed to the door. Pulling on a sweater, my windbreaker and rubber boots, I raced out of my yard and over to Rochelle's.

"Hello, there," I called from the gate.

Startled, she looked up and stared at me.

"Could I come in for a second?"

She didn't say anything, so I unlatched the gate, went through and walked over to her. For a minute we just stared at each other, and then I said, a little weaker this time, "I'm Ida Kennedy." My courage was beginning to droop, running out rapidly like sand through a sieve—Rochelle's stare was penetrating, and a little haunting. "I, uh, live next door."

"I know that," uttered Rochelle faintly. "I've seen you many times."

"I was wondering . . ." I swallowed, and continued. "I was wondering if we could be friends."



"I have no friends," was the simple response. The girl's voice was strained and high-pitched, yet the tone was accepting. She glanced down at the ground, and I looked too.

Before her lay rows upon rows of flat little stones. Most were gray—they reminded me somehow of Rochelle's cold, drawn face—but others were sprinkled with red, purple or green little specks. I estimated that there were one hundred stones there.

Slowly, our eyes met.

"What are those?" I questioned, without thinking.

"They're stones," Rochelle informed me coldly.

"I mean, what are they for?" I said quickly.

"I don't know," said Rochelle in a far-away voice. "What are you for? What am I for?"

"Oh." I felt stupid. "Well, I'll go now." The light pitter-patter of rain roughened slightly.

"OK." Rochelle turned her head away, and I left.

I couldn't believe it. Never in my whole life had I failed to make friends with someone. I was used to getting along with my peers, if I wanted to. What a nasty shock!

After that, I didn't bother Rochelle again. I watched her from my bedroom window, though, as she played with those stones. Sometimes I felt angry toward her for treating me the way she had, but mostly it was just pity.

"IDA! SOMEONE'S at the door for you!" My older brother Simon's loud voice broke into my thoughts. Quickly, I put down the book I was reading and hurried downstairs. It was April, only days before my twelfth birthday.

"Is it Sarah?" I asked Simon as I went through the kitchen to get to the door.

"No," he answered. "It's someone else."

It turned out to be *Rochelle*! I gawked at her as she stood in the doorway. Her feet were bare and she was wearing a sweat-shirt and sweatpants. She looked more real than she usually did; there was color in her cheeks and her eyes were brighter, almost blue.

"Hello, Ida," she said quite pleasantly. There was a hint of shyness in her voice but her face didn't show it. "Come out and play."

I raised my eyebrows. What did Rochelle mean by "play" exactly?

"All right," I said, slipping on my rubber boots. After calling to my dad that I was going out I followed her through the door. She led me straight into her yard.

"Look." Rochelle's voice was soft and gentle. "It's spring."

She was right about that. I could hear Canada geese honking in the sky, announcing their arrival, and the constant drip of water from trees, rooftops, everything.

"Let me show you something." Rochelle brought me over to the rowan tree. I could smell the fresh, rich soil that squelched beneath her muddy feet.

"Look." She pointed to the place beneath the tree where she kept her stones.

A snowbank against her house was melting and a tiny creek had been formed down to the tree. It rippled and sparkled in the warm sun. But that wasn't all. Every stone had been perfectly arranged on either side of the stream, placed in clusters.

Wonderingly, I looked up at Rochelle.

"Those are my pebbles," she explained. "They are a kingdom. I have had them since I was eight. They are my family."

Her family? A kingdom of stones?

"They all have names, but I can't tell you those."

"You have names for every one of them?" I interrupted, amazed.

"Of course," she said, and a dreamy smile blossomed over her face. "They're all different, like people. They all have different personalities, too."

"This is the queen." She bent over and held up a small purple one. "She's kind to the people, and so is the king. They have a daughter." The princess stone was a tiny white one. "But my favorite is the princess's best friend. She's poor, but very nice." She kissed the stones and returned them.

I had a million questions on my mind, overwhelmed by Rochelle and her world of stones. But the words that escaped were exactly what I didn't want to say. "Um . . . Rochelle . . . why wouldn't you be friends with me last fall?"

Rochelle sighed, and her thin shoulders sagged. "I don't know." She said no more, but looked sad until I awkwardly asked her something else about her stones.

But from then on, we were friends. I came every day I didn't have too much homework and we played with the stones. Sometimes we went inside, but Rochelle didn't seem to want to be near her parents, so most of our time was spent out in the bloomy spring world. Often on cold days I'd invite her over to my house, but she always refused with some feeble excuse. The two of us became close, though, and after some time Rochelle even told me the names of some of her stones.

I continued to see my other friends, but soon began to find them boring. I told Sarah, one of my best friends, about Rochelle, and she wanted to meet her, but Rochelle wouldn't have anything to do with anyone but me.

Sometimes I found myself thinking it odd that two people like us should be friends. I enjoyed being around people and loved a crowd, but Rochelle was quiet and a loner. We were opposites.

One day in the summer I went over to find her crying and running the stones through her fingers.

"Oh Ida!" she wailed when she saw me. "Normally I'd send you away if I was like this, but . . ."

"It's OK." I went over and put an arm around her. Inside I was alarmed, even if my voice was calm. I had never seen her like this.

"Ida," she wept, "my parents have divorced."

"Oh . . . I . . ." For a person who watched people I felt very ignorant. "I'm sorry."





*"Those are my pebbles," she explained. "They are a kingdom"*



"My father's been planning on moving out for years. They fight so much. But he only did just now."

"So . . . where did your father go?"

"To an apartment downtown. I will stay with him for half the time."

I imagined her trying to play with her stones in an apartment. "I'm sorry," I repeated.

"You don't have to be," sniffed Rochelle. There was a pause. "These stones are just stones. Sometimes lately I've gotten so mad at them I think I'll chuck them down the gutter. I probably will sometime. They're not as good company as you."

Her words touched me, and I hugged her tighter.

THE NEXT DAY Rochelle left to stay with her father for a week. I was bored to death the whole time she was away.

"What's the matter with you?" demanded an exasperated Sarah at a sleep-over at her house. "Ida, what has your friend Rochelle done to you?"

The day after Rochelle came back I went over to see her. I found her sitting by the rowan tree, stock still and staring into space.

"Go home, Ida," she ordered icily, without turning her head. "Don't come near me. I'm not in a good mood." Her eyes were empty, and her mouth was drawn in a thin, tight line.


I stumbled backwards, stunned. I had no idea what to make of this unwelcome reception.

That's when I noticed that there were no stones arranged painstakingly on the ground. The grass was bare. Rochelle had disposed of her kingdom of stones.

I went back to my house, seeking refuge in my bedroom to think.

I was sure she'd want me back again. She had said not long ago that I was very important to her. Yet, underneath my knowledge, I was hurt.

But Rochelle was Rochelle, and deeper down I didn't want her to change. In a way, she was like the moon, white and beautiful, but never exactly the same as I'd seen her last. She had so many different phases; she could be a thin sliver, a majestic white globe, or sometimes, I couldn't even find her in a sea of black. She could be cowering behind the clouds, then gleaming brilliantly, suspended among the stars.

She is, to this day, the queerest person I've ever met. 



# I Ripped It

*By* **Andrea Begin**

I remember  
Once  
By mistake  
I ripped a map  
It was on my kitchen table  
And I was looking for you

Buildings were split in half . . .  
And my road  
Led to yours

Wouldn't that be great  
If it were real?

I'd rip a map  
And I'd be right next  
To you, again . . .

My friend . . .  
My long lost friend

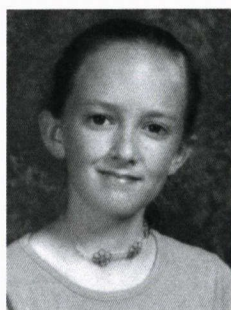


Andrea Begin, 12  
Winnipeg, Manitoba,  
Canada

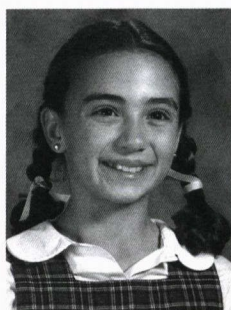
# A Beautiful Memory

By Emma Loizeaux

Illustrated by Leslie Osmont



Emma Loizeaux, 11  
Hyattsville, Maryland



Leslie Osmont, 12  
Colts Neck, New Jersey

**T**HIS SATURDAY MORNING I slept in. I knew I didn't have to get up for anything except a tennis lesson at one o'clock. When I finally rolled out of bed at eleven, I stumbled downstairs to get breakfast. Today it was hard-boiled eggs and toast. I ate thankfully, for I was hungry, as I often am in the morning. After I had my fill, I wandered upstairs and remembered I had homework. I had to read, do a geography worksheet, and write a flashback piece. I sat and thought about what I would write, and eventually went back to my delicious breakfast. Then I remembered a certain day not too long ago, when I did a certain thing that I'll never forget . . . and ate a certain breakfast of hard-boiled eggs.

It was a chilly morning, as the mornings in the Adirondack Mountains so often are, and the moon was full and bright. Beep, beep, beep, beep . . . "Oy! Stupid alarm clock." I snuggled farther down into my covers. BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP. "All right, all right!" I turned it off. I relished that last moment under my covers, and made a brave dash out of my bed, and fairly leapt into my jeans, two shirts, two sweatshirts, and heavy socks. I shivered. Yes, it was a cold morning. It was also four-thirty AM! I did about ten jumping jacks to get my body heat up and blood moving. I streaked for the bathroom where I quickly brushed my teeth, and pulled my hair up into a messy ponytail. I jumped out in a minute and laced up my hiking boots. I climbed the stairs two at a time and found three other people in the kitchen, all looking slightly fatigued. The first was my mother, who was





*Then I remembered a certain day not too long ago . . .*

dumping hot water and tea bags into the thermos. The second was my grandmother, who was hurriedly packing our breakfast into a couple of backpacks. The third was my grandfather, who was puttering around trying to make himself useful, and generally getting in the way. It was quite a hustle and bustle with a lot of shushing to Grandpa because he was “surely going to wake Bill,” my dad—the lazybones!—who couldn’t pry himself out of bed at that

hour. Soon I pushed everyone out the door, whether they were ready or not. It was five already, and we wanted to get to our special destination in time. We piled into the car and drove off.


We had all been staying in my grandparents’ house, their summer house. We love that house. It is so big that sometimes all eight of my cousins and my aunts and uncles stay there for a little while. The house is on a lake called Piseco Lake



in the small town of Piseco, New York. At one end of the lake is "The Club." That's what all the old-timers and those who have been going there all their lives call it. Its fancy name is "The Irondequoit Inn." It has a tennis court, a big field full of grasshoppers, four cabins that are rented, lots of rooms, and a beach where we swim and fool around. About a half mile out on the water is an island, which—very originally—we call "The Island." It is a very nice island with a twisty narrow path through it and one small beach with a sharp drop-off. Mountains, some small, some big, and one called Panther, surround the lake. A road rings it too, and on that road our car was speeding along about five-fifteen that morning.

There is a small dirt parking lot on the side of the road. We pulled into it. After unloading the car of all our gear, we started the ascent. We had flashlights to light our way, for it was still dark. We climbed and climbed. On the way, I found out that we were doing something that Mom did when she was my age, but not since, and something that Grandma had done when she was eleven, and again when Mom was my current age. We concentrated on the path, for it was easy to wander into the forest if you weren't paying attention. I led the group, acting as "McDuff" or so my dad often says. It started to get a little lighter out, and we nervously looked over toward the eastern horizon and walked

more quickly. Up near the top, I had to turn off the flashlight from time to time and stick it in my pocket so I could clamber up the rocks. Though not at this time of day, I had climbed this mountain many times, and I knew the tricks of the trail, where not to step because it is often muddy, and which trees are sturdy enough to hang onto.

Suddenly, we came out onto a big flat rock on the top of the mountain. We sat down, exhausted. We opened up the thermos, and poured tea to warm ourselves. Grandma opened the bread bag and out came cinnamon-sugar-and-butter sandwiches. She opened the last bag, and eight hard-boiled eggs emerged. We ate, pouring bits of salt from the little packets on our eggs and catching pieces of crumbly yolk in our laps. Around six-ten, the sun started to rise. A brisk wind blew up, and we huddled together to keep warm. Then a sliver of brilliant peach-colored light poked out from behind the horizon. The light grew. Gray rocks and dark green pines began to take on color. The breeze softened as the darkness disappeared. We watched the mist swirl, uncurl, and disintegrate, as if by magic. As the mist went, the lake below and its forested surroundings revealed themselves. Around seven, it was all over, and we moseyed on down Panther Mountain with a wonderful memory of a sunrise and hard-boiled eggs in our minds. 



# Red Comet

By Philip Grayeski

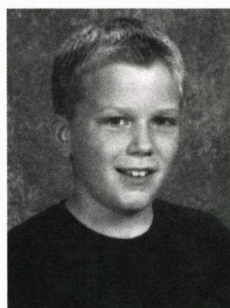
Illustrated by Devon Cole

**T**HE SOARING RED SPARKLER flew over my head with clouds chasing behind. I gazed up and pondered what it would be like sitting in the Red Comet, wind rushing at your face, an old greasy leather cap on, with goggles bigger than your eyes, and you're just looking ahead feeling so free.

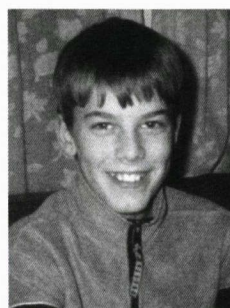
My granddad landed the plane as smoothly as a feather falling. When he was gliding down the engine purred like a cat. He hopped out of the plane he received as a gift from the Air Force, the Red Comet. No one ever was allowed to ride in it because he wanted it to be so clean because he believed that it's important to take care of things close to you. The Air Force gave it to him because he was the best pilot in the world. At least that's what he said. He did many tricks that would make your stomach fall like you were on a roller coaster.

My granddad and I are more like friends than family. He always says I'm his favorite grandson because I'm his only. We always watch TV together. We love to watch basketball at night, especially when the New Orleans Hornets play.

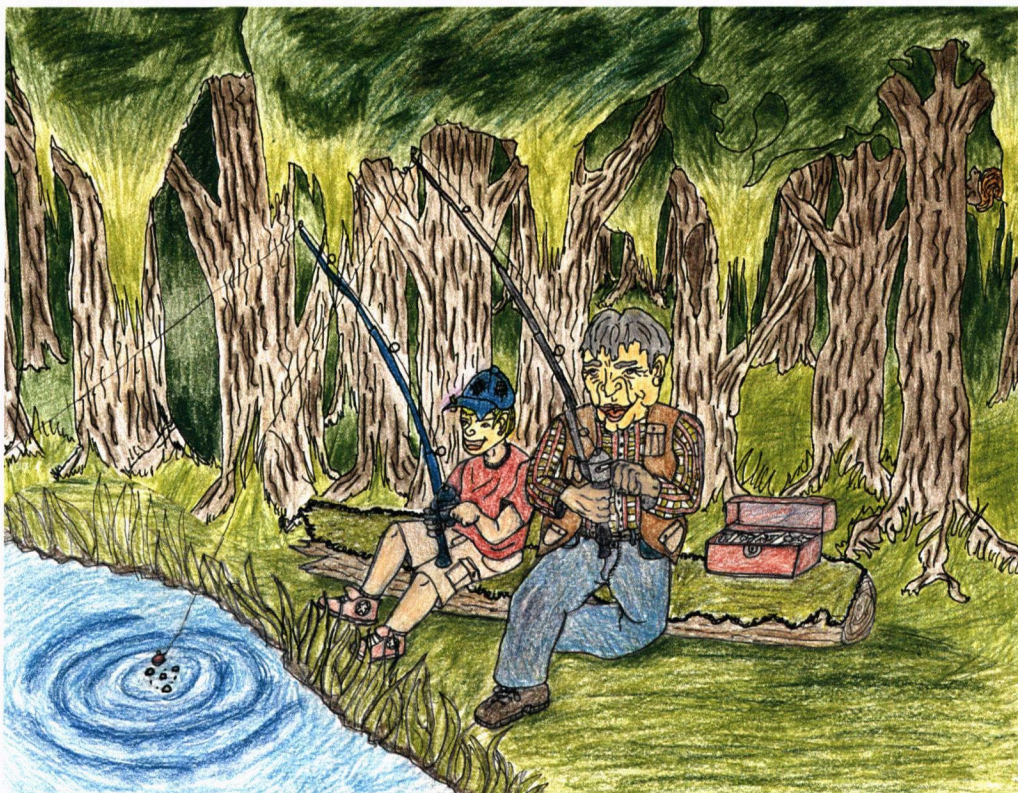
I feel bad for my granddad not only because Grandmom died last year, but because he has cancer. He knows it but he's trying to make the best out of it like very few people would which is what I look up to. He said he doesn't worry because he'll see Grandmom in the heavenly skies above. Questions fly through my mind when he says that. I wonder things like are you sure? I also wonder what is heaven? I want to ask will you come back later? It's tough and I'm scared.



Philip Grayeski, 11  
Raritan, New Jersey



Devon Cole, 12  
Monroe, Maine



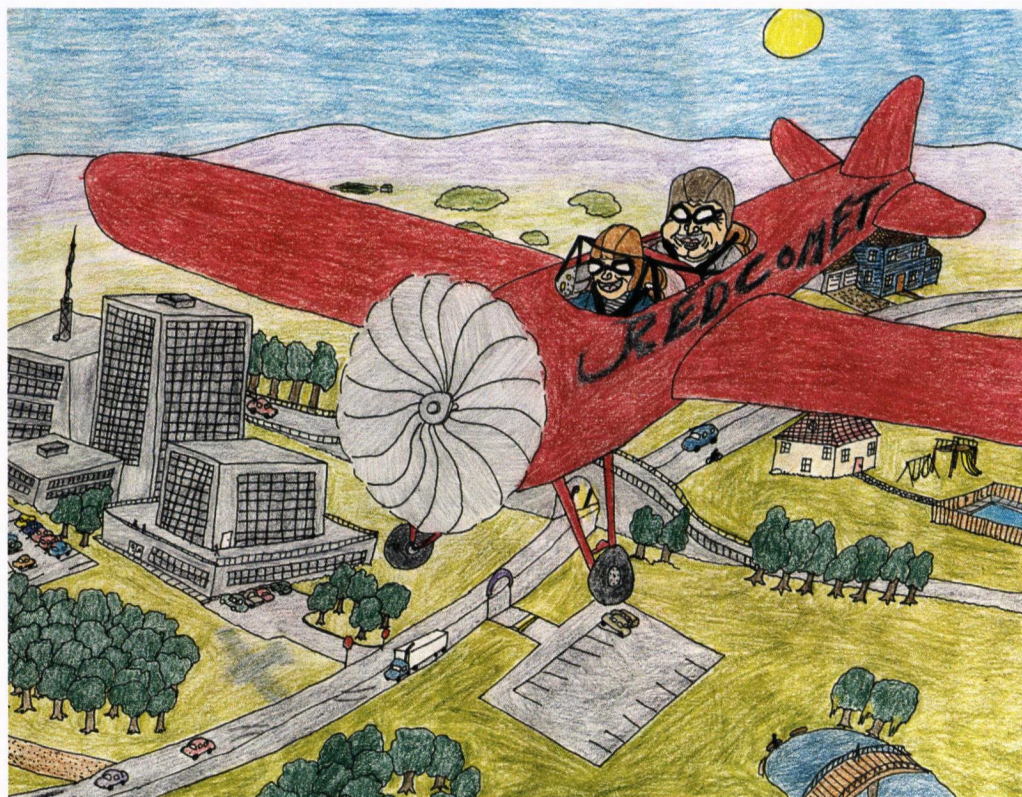
*We went out fishing in the great Mississippi woods*

Granddad lives across the street so I go over a lot. It's great living close to your family. We went out fishing in the great Mississippi woods. Fresh pine smell swirled in my nose, sticks tangled in my laces, and branches clung on my raggedy hat that had a little fishing hook stuck on from when I caught my first fish. Granddad gave it to me. When we got to our little lake the log that we sat on was like a couch with no back because of all the moss grown on. Granddad said it was a birthmark of the forest. As I cast out, glimmers from the fishing line sparkled into my eyes as the line sank into the water.

When we finally finished we caught twelve fish. He said I caught more than him, but I saw him add to my pile. That night we had fish. It was great. Hard work would fill in my mouth with every bite I took. I asked my mom if I could sleep over because it was a Friday. She said, "It's perfectly fine." When I was tucked into bed I remembered the wetness of the lake below my feet, the moss couch where I sat, and the delicious fish still in my mouth. Wilderness was still around me even in my sleep.

When Granddad tucked me in he said something very serious, "Your parents





*It was the most magnificent thing I have ever felt. My soul just soared*

probably told you I have cancer, but I really don't want you to worry because at this age you already have enough things to worry about. But when I do go will you promise me you'll take care of my plane in the outside shack?"

At that moment my emotions were jumping everywhere from happy because I get to have his plane to an all-time sad because he was slipping through my fingers and I couldn't let him go. But I replied with a tear hanging in my eye, "Yes."

The next morning I walked down the cabin floor and into the kitchen where I

saw Granddad cooking me a slapperjack, which is two pancakes smashed together with jelly and syrup in the middle. It's kind of like a morning sloppy joe. It's our favorite.

While we were eating breakfast I thought about what he had said last night and it made me really uncomfortable. Granddad looked at me and questioned, "Why do you have that awful stare? Was it about what I said yesterday?"

I lied, "No."

After I gobbled up my slapperjack, my granddad guided me to the shed and slid open the creaky old wooden door. The



shine from the polished red plane gleamed into my eyes like the morning sun. A thick-knotted rope was tied to the plane so my granddad could pull it out. When he took it out on his runway he said to me something I will always keep in my heart, "Hop in." My eyes smiled with my mouth as he spoke those words. He tossed me an old greasy leather helmet and I put it on. I slid right in the cockpit while my granddad's arms secured me as we headed for takeoff. My fingers were shaking with joy.

The pitch-black runway streamed by us while the glistening propellers started spinning faster and faster as the front wheels rose. My stomach rose with them. I looked up in the brilliant blue sky as if heaven's hand was reaching down to touch me. The wind tickled my face just like how your mom would do when you were a little baby. I felt like I could do anything. I could grasp my dreams. It was the most magnificent thing I have ever felt. My soul just soared.

A little bit of my soul would be contained in this plane forever. I looked over my shoulder to see my granddad. He looked like a kid again because of how much fun he was having. His soul soared with mine. We just looked at the tiny cars below our feet and the tall business buildings starting a new day. Eventually we landed the plane. The tires screeched as they tapped the ground. Then we smoothly let the tail down.

I got out first and tugged off my helmet. I ran my fingers through my hair but

something strange happened. Granddad grabbed his chest really hard and his face turned pale.

I got nervous and asked, "Granddad, are you all right?" He couldn't hear me. He barely made it out of the plane. Then he fell on the ground and closed his eyes.

I cried, "Granddad! Granddad! Can you hear me?" A tear fell out of my eye onto his face like a dove sent from heaven as I shook him but he still didn't wake up. The world started spinning all around me. Sweat started to drip down my face, but the only thing I thought to do was run to my parents' house. I darted across the street. A car hit the brakes hard as I flew past it.

I pushed open the front door and screamed, "Granddad fell! He won't wake up."

My dad rushed to me with a phone in his hand. He grabbed my hand and started running to Granddad's house and asked, "Where is he?"

I said, "On the runway." When we got to Granddad, I saw fear in my dad's face. He quickly dialed numbers on the phone. Seconds later sirens rang all through the neighborhood. All I saw was red-and-white blurs of light flash through the tears in my eyes. The ambulance crew put my granddad on a stretcher and rushed him in the ambulance to the hospital. My heart fell and my face turned somber. I ran to hold my granddad before they left, but two police officers held me back. My arms squeezed through their blue uni-



forms as I yelled, "Granddad, I love you!" Tears of hope and sorrow rushed out my eyes. My hand reached out but they still held me back. I just ran to my dad and hugged him.

Our heads hung low in grief as we walked to our house. The ambulance left tire streaks where they stopped. I just sat by the window and wondered how such a beautiful day can turn into such a nightmare. My dad came in and put his arm around me as we sat on the couch. We both stared blankly. My mom came in and she also looked depressed. I guessed my dad told her. The phone finally rang as my dad went to get it. All I heard were mumbled voices and then he came in and told us, "He's all right. He just blacked out. We can see him in the morning." My heart rose an inch, which was just enough for me to finish my day.

The next day we headed to the hospital where my granddad lay. The halls had a weird smell and people cried in agony. I started to tremble. As I went into his room I saw tubes going into his body and monitors all around him but that would not stop him from keeping his glorious smile.

He whispered to me, "What's going on, champ?" I just smiled back. The grown-ups started talking so I headed to the window. The soft clouds swirled around the hospital like someone was watching down on us from the spacious skies. I wondered if my granddad would watch out for me if he went up into the skies. Would he hold my hand or be resting his hand on my

shoulder through hard times?

I just gazed out the window on the car ride home. Days passed by while I played with friends in the neighborhood. The phone rang as my dad picked it up. I was just watching "SportsCenter." My dad quietly came in teary-eyed as he spoke, "Granddad passed away last night. He told them to tell you to go in his house and on the kitchen counter will be a note. Please don't cry now; he is not in pain anymore."

I just said, "I know." I jogged across the gravel driveway to his house. It felt like there was one big bump no one can get across and that bump was letting someone go. I found the note on the island counter with a set of keys as I read:

Dear Grandson,

Over the past few days, life revealed that when you cross the barrier of friendship you then find love even in the smallest of hearts. You have showed me that. I never thought I could let go of Grandmother but now I let her rest in the blue skies above. I will love you forever. Love doesn't make the world go around. It's knowing that you can, so will you take these keys and soar through the clouds and over the wavy seas for me? My hand will always be on your shoulder.

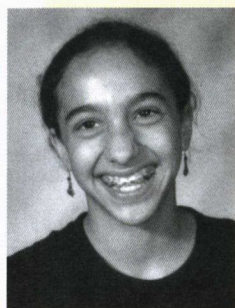
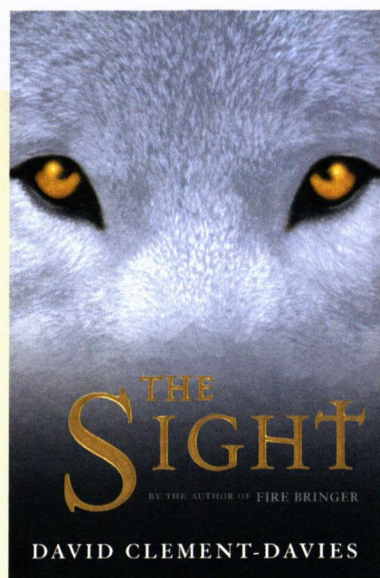
Love, Granddad

I closed the note as proudly as I could. I gazed at the keys for the first time while I read the imprinted words "Soaring Eagle." My heart would be set in these keys forever to pass down to my grandchildren as they pass it down to theirs. ❁

# Book Review

By Talia Lester

*The Sight* by David Clement-Davies;  
Dutton Books: New York, 2002; \$21.99



Talia Lester, 12  
Los Gatos, California

WHEN I SAT DOWN to read *The Sight*, I was expecting a predictable good-against-evil, weak-against-strong, love-against-hate type story. Boy, was I wrong. As a writer, I find the greatest challenge in writing stories is developing a plot that is unpredictable, unique, and fraught with problems for the characters in order to leave the readers wondering what happens next. This is clearly not a problem for David Clement-Davies, the author of *The Sight*. From the opening scene where the alpha wolves Huttser and Palla are searching for a place to den to the poignant and dramatic conclusion, the wolf pack encounters problem after problem. The way that these obstacles are presented does not frustrate the reader: it excites him or her.

Larka, Huttser and Palla's female pup, is the main character of the story. As a well developed character should, she has some trouble dealing with the hardships she encounters. Larka grows and she begins to show signs of having the Sight, a mysterious and rare gift possessed by only a few wolves. Morgra, the villain of the story, is a loner with a dark past. She is one of the few wolves with the Sight. Morgra is determined to take Larka and use her to fulfill an evil prophecy that would change the life



of all wolves. If I was Morgra and I was lucky enough to have the amazing gift of the Sight, then I would not waste it on fulfilling evil prophecies. In the story, however, that is Morgra's goal. The wolf pack refuses to admit Morgra into the pack, as any sane human or animal would do. Unfortunately, Morgra curses them.

Palla and Huttser are sure that this so-called curse is not real, until the pack begins to fall apart. The wolf pack faces trial after trial, and eventually only a few wolves remain. As the small pack traverses over icy, barren land, they are forced to walk over the ice, which is thin in some spots. Fell, Larka's brother, falls through the thin ice, and ends up underneath a transparent pane of thick ice. Huttser is forced to watch his son die, literally in his grasp, because the pack is unable to penetrate the ice. I can relate to this situation, because when I got my braces, it was hard for me to play my flute. Songs that had been so easy for me were a struggle to play. In this way, I have had my own goals be very close, but I was temporarily unable to reach them. I was able to play my flute properly very quickly, so the ice separating me from my music was thin. I am sure everyone has come up against an imaginary wall in which the goal or reward is in sight, but getting to it is like trying to get through the thick ice that separated Huttser and Fell. Larka, who blames herself for the pack's corruption, runs away after the loss of her brother, Fell. If I was Larka, I would not blame myself for what was not my fault. I might feel bad if I knew that the root of the pack's problems was Morgra's coveting my gift, but I would also try to understand that I could not help being what I was.

Another brilliant twist in *The Sight* is the ending. In most stories, the hero or heroine is completely victorious. *The Sight* includes a dramatic and stunning conclusion that keeps you on the edge of your seat until you read the last gripping words. ❁

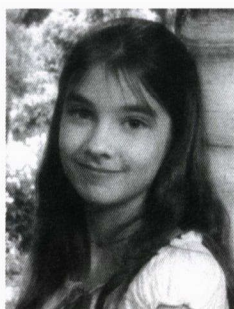
# Piccadilly Dreams

By **Audrey Crockett**

*Illustrated by* **Morgan Wolf**



Audrey Crockett, 12  
Fort Collins, Colorado



Morgan Wolf, 12  
Eagle, Idaho

I WALKED THROUGH THE AISLE of a stable called Danbury Farms. It had once been well known to everybody in this county who jumped, a place where young jumpers dreamed of riding.

However, the farm had fallen on hard times. The manager had moved to England to be with his girlfriend, and the farm had collapsed. As a result, the owners of the farm, Mr. and Mrs. Smith-Jones, were selling all of their top-flight jumpers dirt cheap, and my mom had agreed to buy me one.

My mom, who was calling me over to look at another horse, interrupted my thoughts. "Jessica, dear, come and look at this Arabian mare, Silvershadow." I started to turn toward her, but another stall caught my eye. It looked empty at first glance, but when I walked over to have a second look, I saw that a little colt, his coat a fiery chestnut, almost red, occupied it.

I read the stall plate. "Piccadilly Dreams," I said to him, "Quite a big name for such a little fellow, isn't it?" Despite being a year old, according to the birth date on the stall plate, he was rather small.

He stretched his neck a little so he could put his head over the stall door, and I put my hand on his forehead, covering the small, white, lopsided circle that was there. Looking into his liquid brown eyes, I knew that this was my horse, my partner.

"Excuse me," I said to a passing groom, "could you tell me about this little guy?"

"Sure," he answered, putting down the water bucket he was





*Looking into his liquid brown eyes, I knew that this was my horse, my partner*



carrying. "He's half thoroughbred, half Arab, bred and born right here on Danbury Farms. His dad was that massive stallion we sold to Whiteberry Stables, remember him?"

I nodded.

I remembered seeing him unloaded while I was doing my job as a groom there. He was a fiery red terror. Whiteberry was just down the road from my house, and the owner, Lydia Carpenter, taught me to ride in exchange for work.

"His mom," the groom continued, "was that pretty girl over there." He pointed to Silvershadow, the mare my mom had wanted me to see, and I looked at her in a new light.

She was dusky black, with the dished face that was typical of Arabians, strong hindquarters, and an intelligent look in her large brown eyes. She would be a good jumper, I thought.

"May I go into his stall?" I asked.

"Sure," the groom said again. "He got his dad's color, but his mom's temper, thank goodness, or he'd have been a holy terror."

I opened the stall door carefully, so I didn't scare him, then let him sniff my hand. After he could recognize me by smell, I crouched down and ran my hands over his legs, checking for straightness. Good. They were straight. Sloping shoulders? Check. Strong hindquarters? Check. Good attitude? Check. He had all the things he needed to be a champion jumper.

I stood up again, and looked right into my mom's face. "Mom," I said. "This is my

horse."

"No," she answered. "He's too young, untrained, and you won't be able to ride him for a long time. No. I'm sorry, but this is the way it's meant to be. There will be other horses."

I wish my mom wasn't so superstitious. Sometimes, when she thinks something's "meant to be," there's no way to change her mind.

There was nothing I could do. I walked away slowly, every step taking me further away from my horse.

All the way back home, I sat in stony silence. I was sorry to make such a big deal of it, but she was wrong.

As soon as the car stopped, I ran into the garage and grabbed my bike. I got on it and biked swiftly to the end of the road, to Whiteberry. Lydia was waiting for me. As soon as I had stopped, I said, "Lydia, I found the perfect horse, but my mom won't let me buy him!"

While I was saying that, she said, "Jessica, I found the perfect horse for you!" I stopped talking.

"You go first," I said.

"OK. You know that barn across town, Danbury?"

I nodded but didn't say anything.

"Well, they just closed down and are selling all their horses real cheap. You know that massive terror of a stallion I bought, Piccadilly's Devil? He was from there.

"Anyways, I went up there again to look at a mare of theirs, and I found out she had a colt! He's one year old, which is a bit



young, but I can help you train him. He's also actually the son of my stallion! Isn't that cool? Now, what did you say?"

I stared at her. "Well," I said, "I found the same colt, but my mom won't let me buy him. I'm sure he's the horse for me!" While Lydia was speaking, my face had flushed with excitement that she thought Piccadilly was a good horse for me, too, and I had had to resist the urge to jump up and down. I needed a breather.

"Wait a sec," I said, "I gotta run to the bathroom."

When I got to the bathroom, I splashed my face with cold water, glad that Lydia had forked out the extra money for running water. In despair—I wasn't going to get to buy my horse, after all—I stared at the pictures of Lydia jumping her horses. A spark of an idea formed in my mind. The question was, would it work? I ran back to where Lydia was standing. "I have an idea," I told her.


"What?" she asked. I told her my idea.

"Yes!" she said. "Go for it!"

I biked home in the gathering darkness. When I got to the house, I went to bed, falling asleep instantly.

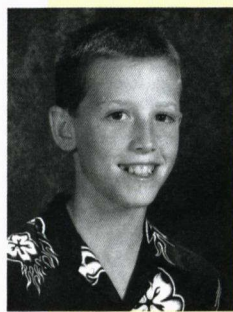
WHEN I WOKE up the next morning, my mom was standing over me. "Come on," she said, "get dressed and grab a donut, the box is on the counter. I had a dream about you and Piccadilly jumping a four-foot jump. We're going to get your horse!"

Yes! I thought, so my plan had worked!

During the night, after my mom had fallen asleep, I had got out of bed, and drawn a picture of me jumping Piccadilly over a very large fence. Then, I had half woken up my mom, and held the picture in front of her. Since I had drawn on a piece of poster board, my drawing completely obscured her vision. Because she was only half-awake, her mind registered it as a dream. Because she's so superstitious, she believed that it was "meant to be." OK, so my plan was desperate-sounding, but it worked, didn't it? 

# Morning Walk

By Mark Roberts



Mark Roberts, 13  
Windsor, California

Mark wrote this poem  
when he was 11

The acorn woodpecker's  
Thump on the tree  
And the owl's hidden hoot  
Fill my ears as I walk  
Through forest on a  
Sun-filled morning

Canadian geese calls  
Sound like laughter  
As they fly into the  
Lake with a splash  
And swim peacefully  
One after the other

Manzanita trees and bushes  
Are a deep red-brown  
Covered in lichen and moss.  
Storing the sun in their veins,  
Green leaves are lit from inside



Towering oak trees  
Stand in silence, moss  
Like an old man's beard  
Hanging from aged branches.  
Poison oak climbs the trunks,  
"Leaves of three, let it be"

Everything is part of everything  
And I am the tree, soil and sun.  
Breathing in, I inhale  
The life around me,  
Breathing out, I reach to meet myself

To live in this moment  
Is to be grateful  
For what I have and love and am





*Kenny spoke in a faraway voice, "They finally got us, we've been bombed"*



# A Shaken Garden

By **Monica Del Toral**

*Illustrated by* **Natalie Chin**

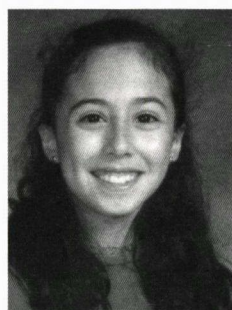
**G**LYNIS HYATT WALKED BLINDLY down the street. Fragments of shrapnel crunched under her shoes. Glass mixed, making mosaics with the rubble on the ground. The smell of smoke littered the air, thick and foul-smelling.

The reality of war had hit at full blast, and many people were still in shock. The surprise bombings had caused so much trauma and heartbreak. Glynis kept walking down the street and around the corner. In plain view was the hospital and Glynis quickened her pace.

It had all happened so fast. It was 7:30 AM, and she was getting ready to go to her shift as a telephone operator. She had just started working this summer after graduating from high school. She quickly put on a starched dress, and sat down to breakfast. She looked out her window and saw a clear blue sky. It's going to be a wonderful day, she thought.

Soon she heard planes, which she pushed aside since the air station was under construction. Suddenly, Glynis heard loud explosions all around her. Screams seemed to arise from nowhere, and rubble flew everywhere. The windows bent inward and shattered, shooting glass all over. She crawled under the table to avoid being hurt. Glynis stared at the swirling chaos around her. The pungent smell of gas from the bombs filled her nostrils. The screams continued and became more violent among the deathly roar. Then it all seemed to stop; the world became silent.

Glynis crawled out from under the table and stood up shakily.



Monica Del Toral, 12  
Chicago, Illinois



Natalie Chin, 11  
Bellevue, Washington

She walked silently through the glass on her wood floor. Her door was off its hinges and lying in splinters on the floor. Glynis walked straight out of the house and onto the once-beautiful lawn. The little town was almost unrecognizable, with shrapnel and objects that had not been tied securely to the ground. Roof tiles and aluminum siding from all over the neighborhood littered the streets and yard. Glynis Hyatt walked over to the area where the fence that had separated her garden from others had stood and looked at her precious Eden. Her beautiful gardens of lush gorgeous plants, gone. All her ravishing ginger plants, with their huddled petals, had withered and left the petals ripped and twisted. Her vividly colored gladiolus had lost all their color and they seemed to look blankly at her from their position on the dark ground. The ti plant's bright red petals had been ripped, and were strewn amongst the other flowers as if they were bleeding. She stood and looked at what was left of her flowers and then gazed toward her neighbor's house.

Kenny Eldrich had lived on Oahu for 45 years and knew everything in Hawaiian history. Standing on his back porch, he stood gazing out at the destroyed houses. One thing that made Kenny different from other Polynesians was that he did not have the traditional dark hair and eyes. His hair was blond and he had green eyes. Ever since Glynis had emigrated to Hawaii with her older brother, Kenny was there for her, like the father she left back

in Japan. Standing on his back porch, he seemed so alone and devastated to see his little town torn apart. It seemed to have torn him apart as well. Glynis broke the silence. "What happened?"

Kenny spoke in a faraway voice, "They finally got us, we've been bombed."

Glynis's world seemed to fall apart. Piece by piece her world was shattering.

"Where did they bomb us?" she asked tearfully.

"The dock. *Oklahoma*, *Raleigh*, the heart of our military."

Glynis felt as if she had been slapped. "The dock" rang in her ears, painful and loud. Tolby, her brother. Tolby working on the *Oklahoma*. The *Oklahoma's* bombed, gone.

Glynis screamed painfully and started running in the direction of the dock. Kenny, still standing on the porch, watched her run, silent tears streaming down his face.

Glynis cried as she ran, her feet pounding hard against thrown pieces of wood. Her heart seemed to beat louder until she heard it in her ears. Out of breath from all her screaming and crying, she collapsed on the street. Tears mixed with sweat and her nose was running. Glynis felt ready to throw up, not only from exhaustion but from worrying for her brother as well. In her mind, she kept seeing Tolby's body being tossed among the waves, his beautiful hazel eyes open toward the sky, never to find rest among the eternally rolling waves. Although Glynis's mind kept telling her Tolby was dead, something in her



heart told her she had to be wrong. She scrambled up to her feet, and instead of feeling distraught she was fresh with determination: she had to find her brother.

As she got closer to the dock, the destruction became more obvious. Along the roadside, a car had stopped. Both the car and the men inside were destroyed. In the front was an American shipyard worker. It was clear to see that he was dead. The driver's head was pressed against the top of the steering wheel. His dark hair was bloodily plastered to his forehead. The passengers seemed dipped in red and were staring upward. The reason for his death was unmistakable: his car had been peppered by shrapnel, and was still smoking. She continued running, trying not to be disrespectful to the dead by staring. At last, Glynis arrived at what was left of the dock. The smoke dyed the air a deep gray and it was difficult to see through the billowing pillars. Even though much of her vision was impaired, the outline of the capsized *Oklahoma* was distinct, as well as other ships.

Glynis ran wildly around the dock, hoping to see anyone that resembled her brother, but she saw no one, only the bodies that rolled on the waves. Glynis almost broke down again, but something told her to pull together and be strong. There was no way, if she did not have a clear mind, that she would be able to find her brother. When she looked harder, Glynis saw some young men near the bottom of the beach with bodies slung on stretchers. She ran down the hill with the last of the

strength in her legs and nearly fell to her knees before them.

"Please," she gasped, "have you seen a Japanese man?" She realized how silly this sounded. At the shocked look on the men's faces, she tried again.

"Please, he was working for the Americans. His name is Tolby Hyatt. He has brown eyes, he's five foot eleven and has a birthmark on his cheek," she said, almost pleading.

The men seemed to react at once. "We're sorry, ma'am, but we have seen no one of the likes of him."

"Why don't you try the hospitals? The men have been spread out all over. We're taking in the last of the men right now."

Glynis tried her best not to cry, holding onto a flicker of hope for her brother. She thanked the men and ran off in the direction of the nearest hospital. As she ran, she began wondering about the shocked looks on the men's faces. Although there was an obvious answer, something seemed to dig deeper. It was the way they looked at her, something that made her look incriminating. Soon the hospital was in sight, and Glynis quickened her pace. She pushed through the shattered glass doors of the hospital and saw that the hospital was in no better condition than any other building.

When she walked in, she received many fascinated stares. But the hardest and cruelest stare came from the nurse's desk where a hardened-looking woman was standing.

"I wouldn't think you Japanese would





*No one could hurt her, she was American and that was that*

wander out so soon after what you did to us and all. It's your fault what you did to us."

Glynis immediately understood where the hard stares and astounded looks had come from. So many had blamed her for the faults of her people and her culture. With that thought, she began to wonder, Who am I? Japanese or American?

When Glynis had emigrated from

Japan with her brother, she had Americanized her name and immediately felt at home. But was that enough now? Her heart pulled one way and then the other. Was she Japanese because she was born and raised there or American because she worked hard to become one?

Glynis was lost in thought, and was jolted out by another cruel comment from the nurse. "You should be getting



back down to where you belong.”

Glynis let this slide, as much as this hurt. She would not let a woman, or anybody for that matter, bully her around for something she did not do or condone. No one could hurt her, she was American and that was that. In the thinking of the words, Glynis suddenly realized she had heard some similar words before in *My Day*. Eleanor Roosevelt had once said, “I never understood it until I reached the age when I suddenly realized that there was nothing to fear.” Glynis realized she had reached this point, and she felt it added to her courage.

“I need to know if you have who I am looking for,” she said in a commanding tone, letting this hard-hearted woman know who was in charge.

“We don’t have a list yet,” the woman said bitterly, “but you can check in our wards.”

Glynis felt immensely proud of her personal victory and found the courage to face what was coming. Although she wished she had more time to savor the moment, her brother came back into her mind. She prepared herself for the gore and anger she was about to witness in the medical wards. As the nurse led her through the long corridors, she heard moaning. In the rooms she saw many nurses bent over beds. As she rounded the corner, she thought she saw a familiar face. A man with crutches and a bandaged head continued down the hall. Could it be? Could it be Tolby? She quietly hurried

away from the lady who was leading her toward the wards and followed the young man who had just walked out of sight.

“Tolby? Tolby?” she rasped, hoping the young man would answer her. For some reason, she felt she had to see his face. He must have turned another corner because he was nowhere in sight. “Tolby? Tolby?” she called, her voice echoing through the long corridors. There was no response. Glynis was getting worried as to where this young man could have disappeared. Pushing through steel double doors, she saw him once again and this time ran after him. “Tolby?” she practically screamed. The young man turned, and Glynis held her breath. Seconds later she released it in a whoosh of joy. There stood Tolby, looking older and more tired but just as joyful. Glynis gave him a flying hug, being careful of his injuries, and began to cry into his shoulder.

“I was so worried about you, Tolby,” she sobbed. “I thought you were dead.”

As they comforted each other, Glynis realized she had become an independent woman on this journey. She had learned that no matter what the problem, there is always a solution, though it may be hard.

#### EPILOGUE

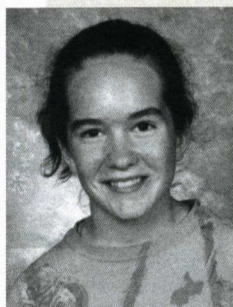
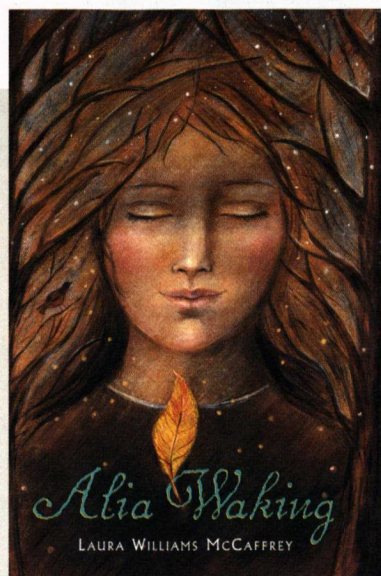
IT WAS ARRANGED that Tolby would stay in the hospital for another two weeks, so his broken leg and head lacerations could heal. During this time Glynis returned to her job as a telephone operator and slowly began to rebuild her garden. ❁



# Book Review

By Holly Kuestner

*Alia Waking* by Laura Williams McCaffrey;  
Clarion Books: New York, 2003; \$15



Holly Kuestner, 13  
Bothell, Washington

**Y**OUR LIFELONG DREAM dangles before your eyes. You reach for it and almost grasp it, but alas, you still have to watch the baby for your mother and scrub the floors. If there's extra time in between chores, you might find an opportunity to sneak off for a bit and chase that fantasy. Not that it's likely you'll get anywhere at that rate.

This scenario is true for Alia Cateson in *Alia Waking*. For all her life, Alia has wanted to become a warrior, a keenten. However, her mother needs help with the chores at home, and Alia has to spend almost all her time mending clothes and doing other household duties. She'll be thirteen soon, and that's the age when keentens choose girls to join them. If she isn't chosen, she might have to spend the rest of her life cooking and cleaning.


War has plagued Alia's world for years. Her kingdom, Trant, is at war with a neighboring land called Beech. All of Trant despise Beechians, and when Alia and her friend Kay find two Beechian children in the woods, they're immediately thought of as spies. The Beechians are locked up, and everyone assumes they'll be executed. I thought it was horrible that the villagers all thought it would be OK to kill children.



Prejudice is an issue in *Alia Waking*. The Beechian children found in the woods are supposed to be spies simply because of where they come from. I think this is very similar to some of the issues happening right now. Since the September 11 terrorist attacks, Arab Americans are being discriminated against because of the way they look.

Peer pressure also comes up in this book. Alia wants to help the Beechian prisoners when they're ill, but Kay disagrees. The boy has a hurt foot, so Alia wants to bring him rags to wrap it up. It's wintertime and the prison is cold. Kay says, "Would they have done the same for your brothers?" Alia's elder brothers died fighting Beechians in the war. But Alia brings rags and gets a healer for the sick girl, anyway. Kay becomes extremely angry with her and hangs out with another girl instead of with Alia. The two whisper together and play games Alia and Kay once did. Alia knows she did the right thing, but can she make Kay understand? And if Kay refuses, can Alia let her best friend go? I think Alia was really strong to stand up to her best friend, and I admire her courage throughout the book.

I found it annoying that all the housework is left to the women and girls in *Alia Waking*. I know real life was like this for a long time, but it was still frustrating that Alia had trouble following her dream because of a huge workload, while her brothers did whatever they wanted. Reading this book makes me appreciate how lucky I am that chores are spread out in my family and that whether you're a boy or a girl, you still have an equal amount of work to do.

This book is filled with values, from acceptance of people regardless of race to standing up to peer pressure. All the conflict Alia experiences really pulled me into the book; I wanted to know how it ended. If you're looking for a good read, try *Alia Waking*. 





*Byron hung the sign where Doc Carter's sign used to be. It fit perfectly*



# The Color of Honor

By Andrew Lorraine

Illustrated by Noel Lunceford

## CHAPTER ONE

**B**YRON JONES PARKED his beat-up, old, black Chevy in the driveway and stared at the house in front of him. All of his hopes and dreams lay before him in this green house with the pale yellow shutters.

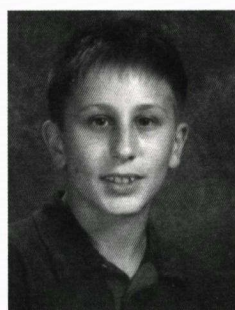
"This is what I have been working for," he said to himself, "my own office, my own home."

It was the summer of 1960. Byron was a family doctor. He had been working at a big Philadelphia hospital, when word came that a new doctor was needed in rural Ambler, about twenty-five miles outside the city. Old Dr. Carter was tired and sick. He decided to retire and go live with his daughter. The hospital recommended Byron as his replacement and he jumped at the chance. Now, he was finally here, ready to start his own practice.

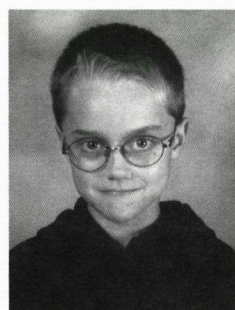
He got out of the car and stretched. He let his eyes wander around the pretty front yard. Neat rows of purple pansies sprouted in a flowerbed near the big, wooden porch. Bright red geraniums bloomed in a pot at the wide front door. There was another pot of geraniums at the bottom of the porch steps and one at the side yard.

"Doc Carter must have dabbled in gardening," again Byron talked to himself.

It all looked so homey. His mama would love it. He thought about her and about his sixteen-year-old brother, Keats. Mama loved poetry and had named her boys after her favorite poets, Lord Byron and John Keats.



Andrew Lorraine, 13  
Blue Bell, Pennsylvania



Noel Lunceford, 10  
Grandview, Missouri

Byron leaned back against the car and let his thoughts wander back to the family he loved so much.

Byron had grown up dirt poor. Most of his clothes were hand-me-downs and a couple of sizes too big. They came from the oldest boy of the rich white folks his mama kept house for. Byron never had his own bike, or even a wagon. But his mama made sure that their tiny apartment was always filled with books. He read the classics, like *Moby-Dick*. He read history books, and even the poetry books that his mama loved so much. When he was eleven years old, he read a book about George Washington Carver, a black scientist who was the son of slaves. From that time on, Byron knew he could make something of himself. His love of reading certainly didn't come from his father. For as long as Byron could remember, his father had drifted in and out of his life, like the ocean tide. Byron resented his comings and goings. He always upset Mama and disappointed Keats, who worshipped him. He was loud and rude and mean. He only came for money and a hot meal, and then he was gone again. Three years ago, Mama got a letter postmarked from Florida, telling them their father was dead. That's all Byron knew. His mama had cried and burned the letter, and they never talked about him again. Byron didn't care, but Keats was hit hard. After that, Keats started getting in trouble. He skipped school and hung around with a bad group of boys. Byron had just finished medical school, and started his hospital training. He had

no time to help out. Keats would probably be in some sort of reform school, if it weren't for Dr. Harrison Peabody III. Dr. Harrison Peabody III was the man his mama worked for. He was a kind man and had already helped Byron get into the Jefferson Medical College, where he himself had gone to school. When he found out Keats was in trouble, he helped get him into a better school outside the city. Now his little brother was actually talking about becoming a doctor, like Byron. Finally, things seemed to be looking up for the Jones family.

## CHAPTER TWO

BYRON WAS so lost in his thoughts that he didn't see the two little girls standing on the sidewalk at the bottom of the driveway. Two sets of the same bright blue eyes stared right at him. The bigger girl stepped forward.

"Hi, mister. What are you doing in Dr. Carter's yard? You're not stealing anything, are you?"

Byron laughed. "That's not likely since this is my place now. I'm Dr. Byron Jones. I'm the new doctor, who is replacing Dr. Carter. How do you do?"

The girls' eyes grew bigger. "You look way too young to be a doctor. Doc Carter had gray hair, and lots of wrinkles. Even his ears were wrinkled! My name is Lucy. I'm six. This is my little sister, Carol. She's three. Say hi, Carol." Lucy stopped to take a breath. Carol continued to stare with her thumb in her mouth. She had blond curls and a big blue bow in her hair, the



exact color of her eyes. Lucy was about a head taller, and had the same blond hair pulled back into a ponytail. Her two front teeth were missing, and Byron thought she looked adorable when she smiled.

"Do you give lollipops?" little Carol asked. "Dr. Carter always gave me a lollipop after my checkup."

Before Byron could answer, an angry-looking woman came running down the sidewalk.

"I thought I told you girls to stay in the yard. You forgot our rule again, too. No talking to strangers." She emphasized the word "strangers," and gave Byron a nasty look.

Byron stepped forward and held out his hand. "I hope we won't be strangers for long," Byron said, smiling. "I'm the town's new family doctor, Byron Jones. I'm happy to meet you," he added.

The woman looked at Byron's outstretched hand as if it would bite her. "We already have a doctor in the next town, mister. When Dr. Carter left, we started to see Dr. Potter in Horsham. We don't need your kind in this neighborhood," she sneered. "Let's go, girls. Never come back here again," she ordered as she dragged the little girls away.

Byron felt sick. "Is this what it's going to be like living here? Will people think I'm not good enough to be the town doctor?"

Then his optimism returned when he thought of what his mama would say. "One rotten apple doesn't make the barrel bad. Hold your head high and be proud."

He felt better. Byron opened the trunk of his car and took out the going-away present his buddies at the hospital had given him. It was a sign to hang in his new front yard. It read:

DOCTOR BYRON ANDREW JONES  
DOCTOR OF MEDICINE  
ALL FAMILIES WELCOME

Byron hung the sign where Doc Carter's sign used to be. It fit perfectly. Then he took his suitcases out of the car, and carried them inside. Byron didn't bring much more than his clothes and some personal belongings. Doc Carter had left the place fully furnished. Just as well, because Byron wasn't much into decorating. After a quick meal, he took a shower and went to bed. He was looking forward to tomorrow, his first day on the job.

Byron awoke to a bright, sunny morning. On his way down to the kitchen, he passed the living room window and couldn't believe his eyes. He raced to the front door, threw it open, and immediately slipped on something wet and slimy. The porch was splattered with rotten-smelling tomatoes and other garbage. The sign that he had so proudly hung up the night before lay smashed into pieces on the front lawn. In its place hung another, which said in ugly black letters, "GO HOME STRANGER."

Byron sat down on the front step, his head in his hands. He could only think of one thing: "What a way to welcome a man to a new town."

### CHAPTER THREE

A FEW MONTHS had passed since Byron was “welcomed” to his new home. Although he had let the police know what had happened right away, Byron wasn’t surprised that the culprit was never found. It had taken a week for him to clean up the mess and replace the sign that he had hung so proudly. In the meantime, Byron knew that he had to face the facts. He had gotten Doc Carter’s job because he was a good doctor, but he was also black. In this mostly white town, he wasn’t trusted because of his color. He remembered the first day he parked in the driveway of his new house. Two little girls had come up to talk to him when a nasty-looking woman came and dragged them away. It was clear that she didn’t want her daughters to talk to a strange, black man. Byron had since learned that the mother of the two little girls was named Mary Orchard. Her husband was the town’s most prominent lawyer. The Orchards were pretty influential around here, so Byron supposed this was why most of the white people traveled to the next town with their illnesses. Plenty of patients came to his office from the large black community on the town’s east side. They welcomed him into their homes and their church too. But so far, only a few white folks ventured into his office.

When Byron finished medical school, he took an oath to use his skills to help all sick people, white, black, or green!

“How am I supposed to do that, if I’m not the right color for these people?” he

wondered out loud.

Byron knew he had faced little discrimination in his life. He was always so wrapped up in his studies that he didn’t pay much attention to the terrible way some whites treated the blacks. It really didn’t affect him much anyway. He had grown up in a God-fearing black community, where neighbors helped each other out. Now Byron faced real discrimination for the first time in Ambler. So far, his mama didn’t know all of what had happened. She thought Byron was still settling in. He knew she would love his little green house with the decent-sized yard where she could garden. He wanted to make life easier for her, the way she had for him and his brother all these years. But how could he bring her here, when he was not welcome?

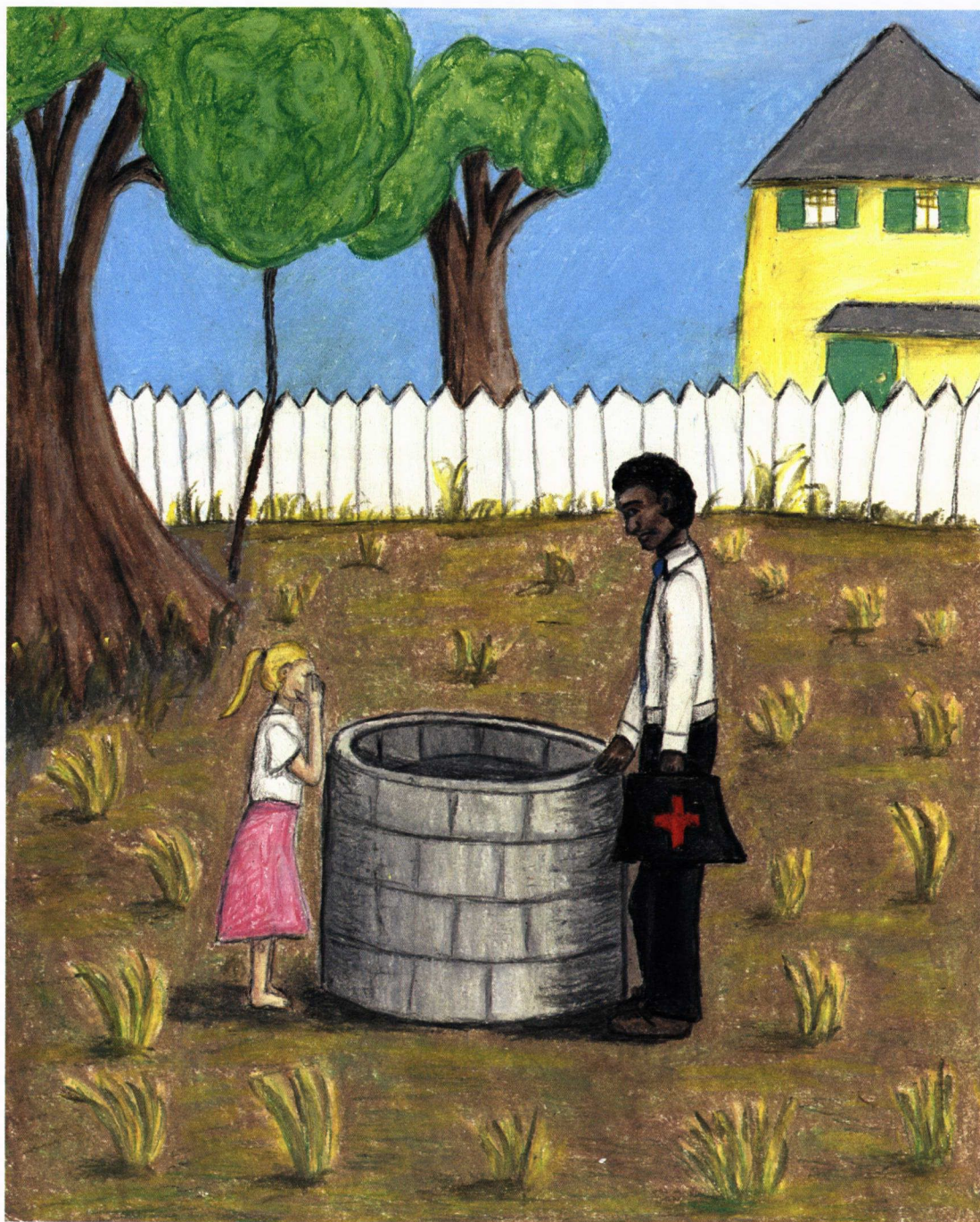
Byron didn’t know that things would soon change!

### CHAPTER FOUR

BYRON WOKE to a blue, cloudless sky and birds chirping. He got dressed and had his usual breakfast, coffee and toast. He threw the bread crusts out to a hungry squirrel waiting near the kitchen window and smiled broadly. He could still hear his grandma Ettie coaxing him to eat those crusts, when he was a kid. She told him that it would put hair on his chest! He was still chuckling to himself, when he heard a loud pounding on the front door of his office.

“No one is scheduled to come in until nine o’clock. I’m giving little Ezra Smith





*Lucy was still crying as they reached the well*



his tetanus shot. I hope he doesn't try to bite me like he did the last time he was in here. Well, let me see who it is."

Byron opened his office door and a little girl came tumbling in. It was six-year-old Lucy Orchard! He hadn't seen her since that first day. She was coughing and panting.

"Hold on now, Lucy. Stop and catch your breath, then tell me what's wrong." Byron put his hand on the girl's shoulder, and he could feel her tremble.

"Doctor Byron, you gotta come quick! It's Carol. It's not my fault! I told her she couldn't go get her baby doll but she did it anyway and now she's stuck and she can't get out!" Lucy started to cry.

"Lucy, what are you talking about? Where is Carol stuck? Why didn't you tell your mom and dad?" Byron asked.

"Mommy told us never to play near the well. Carol fell in the well. She dropped her doll down there and went after it. I told her Mommy would get mad, but she didn't care. Now she's down there and she said her foot is stuck." Lucy started to cry even harder.

"Let's go. Take me to the well." Byron grabbed his medical bag and they raced out the door.

Byron followed Lucy to an old, weeded lot down the street near the Orchards' house. Lucy was still crying as they reached the well. Byron was afraid of what he would find, but he got up some courage and looked down. There was Carol, sitting on a ledge about twenty feet down. She was waist deep in water and clutched her

baby doll as she cried softly. While Lucy had gone to get Byron, Carol had managed to climb up onto the small ledge and free her leg.

"Carol, are you all right?" yelled Byron down into the well.

"Who's there? Lucy, is that you? I want Mommy and Daddy," Carol whimpered.

"Carol, it's me, Dr. Byron. Lucy is here too. Are you hurt? We're going to get you out."

"My leg hurts a lot. It's wet and smelly down here, too. My baby doll is wet and hungry," Carol sniveled.

"Carol, can you move your leg?" asked Byron.

"It hurts really bad. I can't move it much. It hurts!" Carol started to cry again.

"Just hold on, Carol. We'll get you and your baby doll out." Byron looked frantically around the old lot, searching for something to help pull Carol out.

Lucy yelled, "Look over there, Dr. Byron, over on the tree." Byron turned his head and spied a rope hanging down from a thick branch of a tall elm tree.

"Good work, Lucy! That will do the trick!" said Byron with relief. Byron got out his pocket knife and cut the rope free. Byron made a bowline knot and dropped the rope down to Carol.

"Carol, I want you to do exactly what I tell you. Do you think you can help me?"

"I don't think I can. I'm really cold and I can't feel much in my leg," Carol whined.

"Carol, I'm going to get you out of there. Just take the rope and slide it



around your stomach.”

“OK, I’ll try. I have the rope around my tummy.”

“Good. Now pull the end of the rope and make it as tight as you can.”

“It’s as tight as it can be. What do I do now?” called Carol.

“Just hold on. I’m going to pull you out of the well.” Byron started to tug the rope up.

Carol started to yell, “Oh, my leg. Ow, ow, ow. It hurts! Stop pulling!”

“Carol, this is the only way I can get you out. As soon as you get out, I’ll fix your leg.” Byron started to pull Carol up again, ignoring her cries. After what seemed like an hour, Carol finally appeared and Byron set her gently on the grass. In the meantime, Lucy had disappeared.

Byron carefully checked Carol over for any bruises or cuts, and then he looked at her leg. As Byron was about to move Carol’s leg, she screamed, “Don’t touch me! You’re hurting me!”

Just at that moment, Lucy came running back with her mother, who started to shriek at Byron, “Get your hands off my baby! Get away from her! Oh, Carol, what did he do to you?”

“Mommy, Mommy, he saved my baby doll and me. She fell into the well and I had to go get her. Dr. Byron pulled us out. My leg hurts so bad, but he promised to fix it.” Carol grimaced in pain.

“Mrs. Orchard, Carol’s leg isn’t broken, but it’s badly sprained. I’m going to splint

it for her and then we should get her over to the hospital,” Byron said. “She is a very lucky little girl. Lucy was a big help too,” he added.

“Is this true? Were you girls playing near this well? Lucy, why didn’t you come get me when Carol fell?” Mrs. Orchard asked.

“I was scared, Mommy. You said we shouldn’t be playing here because we could get hurt. I was scared that you would be mad. Are you mad at us, Mommy?” Lucy took a breath and kept talking. “I knew Dr. Byron was a nice man, even though you don’t like him. I knew he would help us, and I was right. He lifted Carol out of that smelly old well and saved her baby too. I found the rope for him to use,” she added proudly.

“I guess I underestimated you, Dr. Jones. Thank you for saving my baby. My prejudice blinded me from the honorable man you really are. Honor has no color. We just have to open our eyes to see it,” said Mrs. Orchard. Byron carried Carol over to Mrs. Orchard’s bright blue car.

Word spread all over town about Byron’s heroic deed. He even received a medal of honor from the mayor of Ambler. Soon, people black and white were lining up to have Byron as their doctor. Every single minute of every day was booked. Most importantly, Byron became a leader of the community for blacks and whites. No one cared about his color because they easily recognized the good man inside. ❁





*They were like a rainbow after a storm; silent and perfect, yet beautiful*



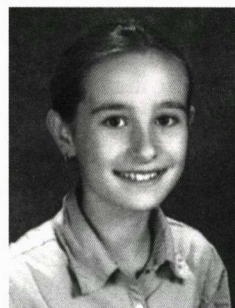
# Rider's Paradise

By Amy Cheetham

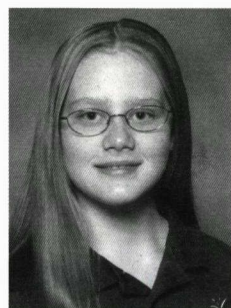
Illustrated by Elizabeth Wright

THE SMELL OF NEWLY CUT HAY wafted in through open windows. A grain bucket clanged against a stall door like a dull church bell. A black, velvety nose pressed against the bars of a stall and sweet-smelling grain dribbled from whiskered lips. A bay horse came down the aisle, her hooves tapping a tune on the rough cement. Stalls stretched away on either side and the air was full of the smell of sweet grain and newly polished leather and saddle soap. Awards and ribbons were hung on stall doors and on a big golden palomino's stall door a plaque read: Individual Gold in Eventing—2000 Olympics. Heads of every horse color imaginable stuck out of stalls, but a few of the stalls were empty. One beautiful chestnut had a mane that flowed like water over her beautiful head. The white star on her forehead shone like silver as she haughtily tossed her forelock out of her eyes and turned to munch on hay. A colt whinnied for its mother; its mother answered it with a soft, low, comforting nicker that would have calmed the wildest colt.

In the corner of the grain room stood a green, shiny wheelbarrow with a pitchfork leaning against it. Grain buckets of all shapes and sizes were piled in a corner, each carefully labeled with the horse's name. Mice scampered about and nibbled on spilled grain. A huge grain bin stood in the corner, its top padlocked against mice and horses. Several brightly colored new grain bags lay on top of it, waiting to be opened and dumped into the bin. There was a sink in the corner and in it grain scoops and



Amy Cheetham, 11  
Monroe, Maine




Elizabeth Wright, 13  
Las Vegas, Nevada

dirty buckets were stacked in a towering pile. On the counter in the corner of the room there was a bag of mineral salt licks and next to that there was a bag of regular white salt licks. In another room saddles were stacked neatly on holders, and bridles of all shapes and sizes were hung on shiny metal hooks. Brushes and hoof picks were thrown in buckets and were sitting quietly on a dusty shelf. A leather crop lay on a wooden chair and a tack trunk stood quietly waiting to be opened. The floor was dirty and the now potbellied mice scampered around like naughty children. A soft, velvety nicker rang through the air, splitting the silence into a million pieces. Another soft, low nicker answered it and then there was silence again.

The arena at the end of the barn was huge. Its long sides stretched away for what seemed like miles. At one end an observation deck stuck out obstinately like a poorly fitting hat, and at the other end there were two huge wooden doors that led into the barn. A tiny black pony and its equally tiny rider cantered around and around, now and then gracefully taking the big, green cross-rail jump in the middle of the arena. The pony's hooves drummed on the soft, sandy footing: ded-der-dum-ded-der-dum. Swallows flew overhead, their wings whiffing and buzzing like bees in the air as their tiny feet fought for a foothold on the rafters. The sand on the floor created a musty but sweet-smelling aroma and the sun

streamed through the clear panels on the roof. The doors from the barn swung open and a girl leading a big, chestnut pony stepped into the arena. The girl looked at the tiny black pony and then slowly mounted. She began to trot around the ring, but paused at the jump. She walked her pony up to it, showing it to her from every angle. Then she steered her pony away from it and urged her into a canter. The canter was slow and graceful, like flowing water. The girl turned toward the jump. Her soft hands and legs guided the pony carefully over the jump. They took the jump together in perfect unison. They were like a rainbow after a storm; silent and perfect, yet beautiful.

There was a little door on the side of the arena that led out into the winter paddock and the lush, green fields out behind the barn. The fields stretched away for miles in either direction. Hay bales dotted the fields in the distance and beautiful horses grazed in the closer fields. Miles of board fence surrounded the fields. Beautiful, beautiful fields and horses! A chestnut colt romped in the far paddock, its sparkling mane and tail flying in the light spring breeze. A black mare rolled and shook off the dirt with a snort. A gelding pawed the air and whinnied to another horse in a neighboring paddock. In an outdoor arena a tall, blond girl lunged her beautiful bay thoroughbred. It was the beginning of another day at Pendragon Farm. 



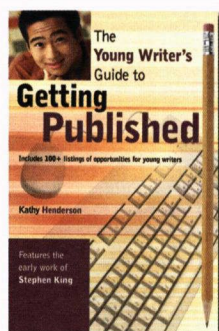
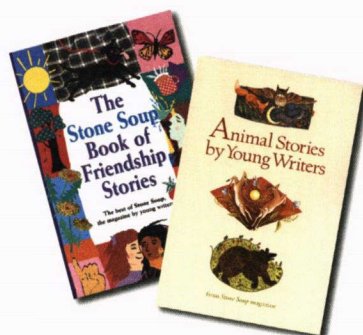
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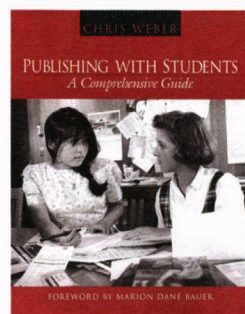
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