

Quiet Beginnings

THE TRAIN

At night I lie and listen to the train whenever things are quiet. I hear it down by the river at night. I wonder where the passengers are going and who they will meet. I listen as it slows down and blows the whistle. The train passes every night and sounds go further down the tracks.

~ Sue Glover

THE WIND

It twists and turns,
It frolics and romps,
It swirls and whirls,
It whistles and sings,
It brushes against almost everything.
It bellows and blows,
It shrieks and screams,
It whines and whispers,
It tugs and pulls,
It taunts and plays,
It swoops and sways,
It preys and frays,
It weakens and wanes,
It calls my name ...
Only to fall silent and die, once again to rise.

~ Jennifer Warren

SNOW

Glistening snow falls ever so softly,
Making not a single sound,
Covering the ground in its white beauty,
Producing the brightest reflection of the sun.

Children laugh and play
Grasping handfuls of it and pelting it at each other,
Each laughing as the balls of snow hit their targets
Dispersing their remnants to the ground once more.

I marvel at the immense amount of individual snowflakes
All piled one on top of the other,
Knowing not two are the same,
Astounded by the impossibility of this
And amazed at the ability of nature
to create the phenomenon.

I exhale, watching my breath as it leaves me.
I close my eyes and inhale the cool crisp air
And give thanks that I am yet again blessed
with another winter.

~ Marie Davis

THE OCEAN

Hear the roar of the ocean as the
Waves come crashing in.
Taste the salty beads of dew as it
Gently mists your face.
Feel the peace and tranquility while it
Whispers a nightly lullaby.

~ *Veronica Highfield*

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED

A couple of months ago, I went on an emergency trip to my country. I knew this was going to be the last time I would see my father; it was going to be a very difficult time for all my family.

When I was at the airport waiting for my connecting flight, I had time to sit down and watch people pass by. At that moment, I started to analyze some of them. I was thinking about their lives; were they waiting for somebody, or were they going on an emergency trip like I was? The only thing I felt in them was rush. They didn't seem to care about others' feelings; they seemed to care only about themselves. Of course, they didn't know what was going on in my life either!

At that time I didn't want to hear a noise, a conversation, even a cellular phone ringing. I was thinking – it would be a great idea if the airports or the airlines had special treatment for people who were traveling in an emergency situation, like me at that moment. The airport should have a quiet room where people can relax, or can be by themselves only with their sorrow. That day, it would have been nice if somebody had offered me something, but nobody knew what was going on in my mind. Who cares, I thought, only my family who was waiting for me in my country.

Have you ever lost someone dear in your family? It is a very sad time, but it is worse when you live so far away. It is so hard to know somebody is suffering, and you cannot do anything for them. My father passed away two weeks after I got there.

My father used to smoke for 40 years. He quit 20 years ago, but the damage was already in his lungs. During his

agony, he cried telling my family not to smoke; he was an example of what smoking can do to you. I wish I had a video tape, to show people who smoked the damage they are doing, not only to themselves, but to other people. My mother died 12 years ago, and doctors asked her if she used to smoke. No, not her, not even a cigarette, but she was with my father for 50 years and didn't know she was a second hand smoker at that time.

When I see people smoking, I feel so sorry for them. They don't know what they are doing, not only to their bodies but to somebody else. I wish they would stop it before it is too late.

I hope if you want to smoke, you think of all the people that will be affected by your decision. If you want to die, think about another way to do it, but do not take your loved ones with you!

On my way back home, I was watching people at the airport again, but this time they didn't bother me, I was one of them..... But have you ever wondered how life would be without your loved ones? Don't forget to always say "I love you" to them; you never know if that will be the last time you can say it!

~ *Claudia Cabell*

TWO FACES OF WIND

Wind
Strong, fierce
Destructive, howling, biting
Chilling to the bone
Devastation

Wind
Gentle, warm
Calming, billowy, cooling
Spreading fresh, fragrant scents
Comfort

~ *Students from Pierre Learning Center:*
 Geoun Post
 Carol R. Rudder

LITTLE CHOCOLATE HOUSE

It is early in the morning on a winter day. It's cold outside, and I am very worried about my daily homework. I need to go to work and if it is possible I would like to catch up with work that's been due for a long time. I had my shower; I am in my uniform and ready to start my day of work. Now I have a moment to take a seat and drink my cup of hot chocolate. I feel comfortable and I am only concentrating in the exquisite taste of my cup of hot chocolate. I sense the aroma of chocolate through the house and it brings me great memories with my parents and my brothers, as well as having breakfast in the cottage with my sons. I feel a comfortable sensation when I smell and drink the hot chocolate. I don't want to stop feeling this pleasure that carries me away to many sweet memories of my infancy when our happiness was found in the smallest of details.

My husband and my sons just got up, and they are happy. They want a cup of hot chocolate too. They are not worried about anything, and the odor of hot chocolate invades them. My family joins me, and we sit together to enjoy the moment while drinking hot chocolate. Oh lord, if everything could be just like a cup of hot chocolate on a winter day!

~ *Doris Molina Hernandez*