

Modern Fables



*A collection of inspiring and funny
tales, brought to you by ModernSage.com*

Modern Fables: A Life's Journey

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*How can a 2 pound box of candy
make a woman gain 5 lbs?*

A Woman's Random Thoughts

by Team Modern Sage

If you love something, set it free. If it comes back, it will always be yours. If it doesn't come back, it was never yours to begin with. However, if it just sits in your living room, messes up your stuff, eats your food, uses your telephone, takes your money, and doesn't appear to realize that you had set it free ... you either married it or gave birth to it.

Insanity is my *only* means of relaxation.

A friend of mine confused her Valium with her birth control pills. She had 14 kids, but she doesn't really care.

Reason to smile: Every 7 minutes of every day, someone in an aerobics class pulls a hamstring.

One of life's mysteries is how a 2 pound box of candy can make a woman gain 5 lbs!

My mind not only wanders, it sometime leaves completely.

The best way to forget all your troubles is to wear tight shoes.

The nice part about living in a small town is that when you don't know what you're doing, someone else does.

The older you get, the tougher it is to lose weight because by then your body and your fat are really good friends.

Sometimes I think I understand everything - then I regain consciousness.

A Woman's Random Thoughts (continued)

I gave up jogging for my health when my thighs kept rubbing together and setting my pantyhose on fire.

Amazing! You hang something in your closet for a while and it shrinks two sizes!

Skinny people irritate me! Especially when they say things like, "You know, sometimes I just forget to eat." Now I've forgotten my address, my mother's maiden name, and my keys. But I've never forgotten to eat. You have to be a special kind of stupid to forget to eat.

The trouble with some women is that they get all excited about nothing and then they marry him.

I read this article that said the typical symptoms of stress are: eating too much, impulse buying, and driving too fast. Are they kidding? That is my idea of a perfect day.

A Child's Eye View of Marriage

by Unknown

Here are a few perspectives from the 'mouths of babes' on relationships, dating and marriage that are sure to make you smile.

How do you decide whom to marry?

"You got to find somebody who likes the same stuff. Like, if you like sports, she should like it that you like sports, and she should keep the chips and dip coming."

Alan, age 10

"No person really decides before they grow up who they're going to marry. God decides it all way before, and you get to find out later who you're stuck with."

Kirsten, age 10

What is the right age to get married?

"Twenty-three is the best age because you know the person FOREVER by then."

Camille, age 10

"No age is good to get married at. You got to be a fool to get married."

Freddie, age 6

How can a stranger tell if 2 people are married?

"You might have to guess, based on whether they seem to be yelling at the same kids."

Derrick, age 8

What do you think your mom and dad have in common?

"Both don't want any more kids."

Lori, age 8

What do most people do on a date?

"Dates are for having fun, and people should use them to get to know each

other. Even boys have something to say if you listen long enough.
Lynnette, age 8

"On the first date, they just tell each other lies and that usually gets them interested enough to go for a second date."
Martin, age 10

What would you do on a first date that was turning sour?

"I'd run home and play dead. The next day I would call all the newspapers and make sure they wrote about me in all the dead columns."
Craig, age 9

When is it okay to kiss someone?

"When they're rich."
Pam, age 7

"The law says you have to be eighteen, so I wouldn't want to mess with that."
Curt, age 7

"The rule goes like this: If you kiss someone, then you should marry them and have kids with them. It's the right thing to do."
Howard, age 8

How would the world be different if people did not get married?

"There sure would be a lot of kids to explain, wouldn't there?"
Kelvin, age 8

How would you make a marriage work?

"Tell your wife that she looks pretty even if she looks like a truck."
Ricky, age 10

Eternal Truths

by Unknown

Here are 15 Eternal Truths that even give Murphy's Law a run for its money:

1. Once over the hill, you pick up speed.
2. If it weren't for stress, I'd have no energy at all.
3. Everyone has a photographic memory. Some just don't have film.
4. If you're too open-minded, your brains will fall out.
5. If you look like your passport picture, you probably need the trip.
6. Bills travel through the mail at twice the speed of checks.
7. Some days are a total waste of makeup.
8. Men are from Earth. Women are from Earth. Deal with it.
9. A balanced diet is a cookie in each hand.
10. Middle age is when broadness of the mind and narrowness of the waist change places.
11. Opportunities always look bigger going than coming.
12. Junk is something you've kept for years and throw away three weeks before you need it.
13. Experience is a wonderful thing. It enables you to recognize a mistake when you make it again.
14. By the time you can make ends meet, they move the ends.
15. Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself.

From His Mouth ... to Gods Ears

By Unknown

A minister was walking in front of his church when he heard his five-year old son and playmates 'round back.

He walked back there and noticed the boys had found a dead bird. Feeling a proper burial was in order, they had secured a small box and some cotton batting, then dug a whole, and were now standing around the "grave."

The minister's son was chosen to say the appropriate prayers, of course. With sonorous dignity the little boy intoned HIS version of what he thought his father always said:

"Glory to be unto the Faaaaather, and unto the Sonnnn ... and into the hole he goes!"

Mind Games Dogs Play With Humans

by Our Canine Conspirators

After your humans give you a bath, don't let them towel dry you! Instead, run to their bed, jump up and dry yourself off on the sheets. This is especially good if it's right before your human's bedtime.

Act like a convicted criminal. When the humans come home, put your ears back, tail between your legs, chin down and act as if you have done something really bad. Then, watch as the humans frantically search the house for the damage they think you have caused.

(Note: This only works when you have done absolutely nothing wrong.)

Let the humans teach you a brand new trick. Learn it perfectly. Then the humans try to demonstrate it to someone else, stare blankly back at the humans. Pretend you have no idea what they're talking about.

Make your humans be patient. When you go outside to 'pee', sniff around the entire yard as your humans wait. Act as if the spot you choose to pee will ultimately decide the fate of the earth.

Draw attention to the human. When out for a walk always pick the busiest, most visible spot to poop. Take your time and make sure everyone watches. This works particularly well if your humans have forgotten to bring a plastic bag.

When out for a walk, alternate between choking and coughing every time a strange human walks by.

Make your own rules. Don't always bring back the stick when playing fetch with the humans. Make them go and chase it once in a while.

Hide from your humans. When your humans come home, don't greet them at the door. Instead, hide from them, and make them think something terrible has happened to you. (Don't reappear until one of your humans is panic-stricken and close to tears).

When your human calls you to come back in, always take your time. Walk as slowly as possible back to the door.

Wake up twenty minutes before the alarm clock is set to go off and make the humans take you out for your morning pee. As soon as you get back inside, fall asleep. (Humans can rarely fall back asleep after going outside, this will drive them nuts!)

Information Please

By Unknown

When I was quite young, my father had one of the first telephones in our neighborhood. I remember well, the polished old case fastened to the wall and the shiny receiver on the side of the box. I was too little to reach the telephone, but used to listen with fascination when my mother would talk to it. Then I discovered that somewhere inside the wonderful device lived an amazing person and her name was "Information Please" and there was nothing she did not know. "Information Please" could supply anybody's number and the correct time.

My first personal experience with this genie-in-a-bottle came one day while my mother was visiting a neighbor. Amusing myself at the tool bench in the basement, I whacked my finger with a hammer. The pain was terrible, but there didn't seem to be any reason in crying because there was no one home to give me sympathy. I walked around the house sucking my throbbing finger, finally arriving at the stairway, The telephone! Quickly, I ran for the footstool in the parlor and held it to my ear. "Information Please" I said into the mouthpiece just above my head.

"Information."

"I hurt my finger!" I wailed into the phone. The tears came readily enough now that I had an audience.

"Isn't your mother home?" came the question.

"Nobody's home but me," I blubbered.

"Are you bleeding?" the voice asked.

"No," I replied. "I hit my finger with a hammer and it hurts."

"Can you open your icebox?" she asked. I said I could. "Then chip off a piece of ice and hold it to your finger," said the voice.

After that, I called "Information Please" for everything. I asked her for help with my geography and she told me where Philadelphia was. She helped me with my math. She told me that my pet chipmunk, which I had caught in the park just the day before, would eat fruit and nuts. Then there was the time Petey, our pet canary died. I called "Information Please" and told her the sad story. She listened, then said the usual thing grown ups say to soothe a child. But, I was inconsolable. I asked her, "Why is it that birds should sing so beautifully and bring joy to all families, only to end up as a heap of feathers on the bottom of a cage?" She must have sensed my deep concern, for she said quietly, "Paul, you must remember that there are other worlds to sing in." Somehow, I felt better.

Information (continued)

Another day I called "Information Please." "Information," said the now familiar voice. "How do you spell fix?" I asked.

All this took place in a small town in the Pacific Northwest. When I was nine years old, we moved across the country to Boston. I missed my friend very much. "Information Please" belonged in that old wooden box phone that sat on the table in the hall. As I grew into my teens, the memories of those childhood conversations never really left me. Often, in moments of doubt and perplexity I would recall the serene sense of security I had then. I appreciated now how patient, understanding and kind she was to have spent her time on a little boy.

A few years later, on my way west to college, my plane put down in Seattle. I had about half-an-hour or so between planes. I spent 15 minutes or so on the phone with my sister, who lived there now. Then, without thinking about what I was doing, I dialed my hometown operator and said,

"Information Please."

Miraculously, I heard the small clear voice I knew so well.

"Information."

I hadn't planned this, but I heard myself saying, "Could you please tell me how to spell fix?"

There was a long pause. Then came the soft spoken answer, "I guess your finger must be healed by now."

I laughed, "So it's really still you," I said. "I wonder if you have any idea how much you meant to me during that time?"

"I wonder," she said, "if you know how much your calls meant to me. I never had any children and I used to look forward to your calls." I told her how often I had thought of her over the years and asked if I could call her again when I came back to visit my sister.

"Please do," she said. "Just ask for Sally."

Three months later I was back in Seattle. A different voice answered, "Information."

I asked for Sally. "Are you a friend?" she said.

"Yes, a very old friend," I answered.

Information (continued)

"I'm sorry to have to tell you this," she said. "Sally had been working part time in the last few years because she was sick. She died five weeks ago."

Before I could hang up she said, "Wait a minute. Are you Paul?"

"Yes".

"Well, Sally left a message for you. She wrote it down in case you called. Let me read it to you." The note said, "Tell him I still say there are other worlds to sing in. He'll know what I mean."

I thanked her and hung up. *I knew just what Sally meant.*

Never underestimate the impression you make on others.

And God Said No

by Claudia Minden Weisz

I asked God to take away my pride,
And God said, "No."

He said it was not for Him to take away,
But for me to give up.

I asked God to make my handicapped child whole,
And God said, "No."

He said her spirit is whole,
Her body is only temporary.

I asked God to grant me patience,
And God said, "No."

He said that patience is a by product of tribulation,
It isn't granted, it's earned.

I asked God to give me happiness,
And God said, "No."

He said He gives blessings,
Happiness is up to me.

I asked God to spare me pain,
And God said, "No."

He said "Suffering draws you apart from worldly cares
And brings you closer to Me."

I asked God to make my spirit grow,
And God said, "No."

He said I must grow on my own,
But He will prune me to make me fruitful.

I asked God to help me love others,
As much as He loves me,

And God said,
"Ah, finally, you have the idea."

Just For Today

by Mary Carter Mizray

Just for today
let someone know
'fore this day is through
how very important
they are to you.

Take time to listen
they may need your ear
while others too busy
don't take time to hear.

Give them affection
just take the time
love without action
just ain't worth a dime.

Someone is longing
for words left unsaid
don't keep them guessing
as a book left unread.

Some little favor
expecting no gain
can make the difference
'tween pleasure and pain.

We're not promised
a glimpse of tomorrow
share comfort today
with someone in sorrow.

Open your heart
encouragement's there
shut out the world
enfold them in prayer.

Time isn't money
as some folk portray
spend it on others
just for today!

Keep Your Fork

By J.D. Ellis

There was a young woman who had been diagnosed with a terminal illness and had been given three months to live. So as she was getting her things "in order," she contacted her Rabbi and had him come to her house to discuss certain aspects of her final wishes.

She told him which songs she wanted sung at the service, what scriptures she would like read, and what outfit she wanted to be buried in.

Everything was in order and the Rabbi was preparing to leave when the young woman suddenly remembered something very important to her.

"There's one more thing," she said excitedly.

"What' that?" came the Rabbi's reply.

"This is very important," the young woman continued. "I want to be buried with a fork in my right hand."

The Rabbi stood looking at the young woman, not knowing quite what to say.

That surprises you, doesn't it?" the young woman asked. "Well, to be honest, I'm puzzled by the request," said the Rabbi.

The young woman explained. "My grandmother once told me this story, and from that time on I have always tried to pass along its message to those I love and those who are in need of encouragement.

In all my years of attending socials and dinners, I always remember that when the dishes of the main course were being cleared, someone would inevitably lean over and say,

'Keep your fork.' It was my favorite part because I knew that something better was coming ... like velvety chocolate cake or deep-dish apple pie, something wonderful, and with substance!

So, I just want people to see me there in that casket with a fork in my hand and I want them to wonder "What's with the fork?" Then I want you to tell them: "Keep your fork ... the best is yet to come."

Keep Your Fork (continued)

The Rabbi's eyes welled up with tears of joy as he hugged the young woman good-bye. He knew this would be one of the last times he would see her before her death. But he also knew that the young woman had a better grasp of heaven than he did. She had a better grasp of what heaven would be like than many people twice her age, with twice as much experience and knowledge.

She KNEW that something better was coming.

At the funeral, people were walking by the young woman's casket and they saw the cloak she was wearing and the fork placed in her right hand. Over and over, the Rabbi heard the question,

"What's with the fork?" And over and over he smiled.

During his message, the Rabbi told the people of the conversation he had with the young woman shortly before she died. He also told them about the fork and about what it symbolized to her. He told the people how he could not stop thinking about the fork and told them that they probably would not be able to stop thinking about it either.

He was right. So the next time you reach down for your fork let it remind you, ever so gently, that the best is yet to come.

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My Name is Max

By J.D. Ellis

My name is Max and I have a little something I'd like to whisper in your ear. I know that you humans lead busy lives. Some have to work, some have children to raise. It always seems like you are running here and there, often much too fast, often never even noticing the grand things in life. Look at me now, while you sit there at your computer. See the way my dark brown eyes look at yours? They are slightly cloudy now; that comes with age. The gray hairs are beginning to ring my soft muzzle. You smile at me; I see love in your eyes. What do you see in mine?

Do you see a spirit, a soul inside who loves you as no other could in the world? A true spirit that would forgive all trespasses of prior wrong-doing for just a moment of your time? That is all I ask. To slow down if even for a few minutes to be with me. So many times you have been saddened by the words you have read on that screen, of others of my kind, passing. Sometimes we die young and oh so quickly, sometimes so suddenly it wrenches your heart out of your throat. Sometimes we age so slowly before your eyes that you do not even seem to know, until the very end, when we look at you with grizzled muzzles and cataract-clouded eyes. Still, the love is always there, even when we take that long sleep, to run free in distant lands.

I may not be here tomorrow; I may not be here next week. Someday you will shed the water from your eyes that humans have when deep grief fills their souls, and you will be angry at yourself that you did not have one more day with me. Because I love you so, your sorrow touches my spirit and grieves me.

We have now, together. So come, sit down next to me here on the floor. And look deep into my eyes. What do you see? If you look deep enough we will talk, you and I, heart to heart. Come to me not as alpha, a trainer, or even mom or dad. Come to me as a living soul and stroke my fur and let us look deep into one another's eyes, and talk. I may tell you something about the fun of chasing a tennis ball, or I may tell you something profound about myself, or life in general. You decided to have me in your life (I hope) because you wanted a soul to share just such things with. Someone very different from you, and yet here I am. I am a dog, but I am alive. I feel emotion, I feel physical senses, and I can revel in the differences of our spirits and souls. I do not think of you as a dog on two feet—I know what you are. You are human, in all your quirkiness, and I love you still.

Now come sit with me, on the floor. Enter my world and let time slow down, if only for fifteen minutes. Look deep into my eyes, and whisper into my ears. Speak with your heart, with your joy, and I will know your true self. We may not have tomorrow, and life is oh so very short.

Love, Max

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Only in America

by Unknown

1. Only in America ... can a pizza get to your house faster than an ambulance.
2. Only in America ... are there handicap parking places in front of a skating rink.
3. Only in America ... do drugstores make the sick walk all the way to the back of the store to get their prescriptions while healthy people can buy cigarettes at the front.
4. Only in America ... do people order double cheeseburgers, large fries, and a diet coke.
5. Only in America ... do banks leave both doors open and then chain the pens to the counters.
6. Only in America ... do we leave cars worth thousands of dollars in the driveway and put our useless junk in the garage.
7. Only in America ... do we use answering machines to screen calls and then have call waiting so we won't miss a call from someone we didn't want to talk to in the first place.
8. Only in America ... do we buy hot dogs in packages of ten and buns in packages of eight.
9. Only in America ... do we use the word 'politics' to describe the process so well: 'Poli' in Latin meaning 'many' and 'tics' meaning 'bloodsucking creatures'.
10. Only in America ... do they have drive-up ATM machines with Braille lettering.

Did You Ever Wonder?

by Unknown

Why the sun lightens our hair, but darkens our skin?

Why don't you ever see the headline "Psychic Wins Lottery"?

Why is "abbreviated" such a long word?

Why is it that doctors call what they do "practice"?

Why is it that to stop Windows 98, you have to click on "Start"?

Why is lemon juice made with artificial flavor, and dishwashing liquid made with real lemons?

Why is the man who invests all of your money called a broker?

Why is the time of day with the slowest traffic called rush hour?

Why isn't there mouse-flavored cat food?

When dog food is new and improved tasting, who tests it?

Why didn't Noah swat those two mosquitoes?

Why do they sterilize the needle for lethal injections?

You know that indestructible black box that is used on airplanes? Why don't they make the whole plane out of that stuff?

Why don't sheep shrink when it rains?

Why are they called apartments when they are all stuck together?

If con is the opposite of pro, is Congress the opposite of progress?

If flying is so safe, why do they call the airport the terminal?

Simple Takes a Lifetime

by Unknown

No one can go back and make a brand new start. Anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending. So,

1. Free your heart from hatred.
2. Free your mind from worries.
3. Live simply.
4. Give more.
5. Expect less.

God didn't promise days without pain, laughter without sorrow, sun without rain, but He did promise strength for the day, comfort for the tears, and light for the way.

Disappointments are like road bumps, they slow you down a bit but You enjoy the smooth road afterwards. Don't stay on the bumps too long. Move on!

When you feel down because you didn't get what you want, just sit tight and be happy, because God has thought of something better to give you.

When something happens to you, good or bad, consider what it means. There's a purpose to life's events, to teach you how to laugh more or not to cry too hard.

You can't make someone love you, all you can do is be someone who can be loved, the rest is up to the person to realize your worth.

It is better to lose your pride to the one you love, than to lose the one you love because of pride.

We spend too much time looking for the right person to love or finding fault with those we already love, when instead we should be perfecting the love we give.

The Garden

by Unknown

For the garden of your daily living, please plant three rows of peas:

Peace of mind

Peace of heart

Peace of soul

Plant four rows of squash:

Squash gossip

Squash indifference

Squash grumbling

Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of lettuce:

Lettuce be faithful

Lettuce be kind

Lettuce be patient

Lettuce really love one another

Also, no garden is complete without turnips:

Turnip for meetings

Turnip for service

Turnip to help one another

Finally, we must have thyme:

Thyme for each other

Thyme for family

Thyme for friends

Once you have planted, water freely with patience and cultivate with love. Then there will be much fruit in your garden, because *you reap what you sow*.

The Birdies

by Unknown

On July 22nd I was en route to Washington, DC for a business trip. It was all so very ordinary, until we landed in Denver for a plane change. As I collected my belongings from the overhead bin, an announcement was made for Mr. Lloyd Glenn to see the United Customer Service Representative immediately.

I thought nothing of it until I reached the door to leave the plane, and I heard a gentleman asking every male if they were Mr. Glenn. At this point I knew something was wrong and my heart sunk. When I got off the plane a solemn-faced young man came toward me and said, "Mr. Glenn, there is an emergency at your home. I do not know what the emergency is, or who is involved, but I will take you to the phone so you can call the hospital." My heart was now pounding, but the will to be calm took over.

Woodenly, I followed this stranger to the distant telephone where I called the number he gave me for the Mission Hospital. My call was put through to the trauma center where I learned that my three-year-old son had been trapped underneath the automatic garage door for several minutes, and that when my wife had found him he was dead. CPR had been performed by a neighbor, who is a doctor, and the paramedics had continued the treatment as Brian was transported to the hospital.

By the time of my call, Brian was revived and they believed he would live, but they did not know how much damage had been done to his brain, nor to his heart. They explained that the door had completely closed on his little sternum right over his heart. He had been severely crushed.

After speaking with the medical staff, my wife sounded worried but not hysterical, and I took comfort in her calmness. The return flight seemed to last forever, but finally I arrived at the hospital six hours after the garage door had come down.

When I walked into the intensive care unit, nothing could have prepared me to see my little son laying so still on a great big bed with tubes and monitors everywhere. He was on a respirator. I glanced at my wife who stood and tried to give me a reassuring smile. It all seemed like a terrible dream. I was filled-in with the details and given a guarded prognosis. Brian was going to live, and the preliminary tests indicated that his heart was OK, two miracles in one and of themselves - but only time would tell if his brain received any damage.

The Birdies (continued)

Throughout the seemingly endless hours, my wife was calm. She felt that Brian would eventually be all right. I hung on to her words and faith like a lifeline. All that night and the next day Brian remained unconscious. It seemed like forever since I had left for my business trip the day before. Finally, at two o'clock that afternoon, our son regained consciousness and sat up uttering the most beautiful words I have ever heard spoken. He said, "Daddy hold me" and he reached for me with his little arms.

By the next day he was pronounced as having no neurological or physical deficits, and the story of his miraculous survival spread throughout the hospital. You cannot imagine how we felt as we took Brian home. We felt a unique reverence for the life and love of our Heavenly Father that comes to those who brush death so closely. In the days that followed there was a special spirit about our home.

Our two older children were much closer to their little brother. My wife and I were much closer to each other, and all of us were very close as a whole family. Life took on a less stressful pace. Perspective seemed to be more focused, and balance much easier to gain and maintain. We felt deeply blessed. Our gratitude was truly profound.

The story is not over! Almost a month later to the day of the accident, Brian awoke from his afternoon nap and said, "Sit down, Mommy. I have something to tell you." At this time in his life, Brian usually spoke in small phrases, so to say a large sentence surprised my wife. She sat down with him on his bed, and he began his sacred and remarkable story.

"Do you remember when I got stuck under the garage door? Well, it was so heavy and it hurt really bad. I called to you, but you couldn't hear me. I started to cry, but then it hurt too bad. And then the 'birdies' came."

"The birdies?" my wife asked puzzled.

"Yes," he replied. "The birdies made a whooshing sound and flew into the garage. They took care of me."

"They did?"

The Birdies (continued)

"Yes," he said. "One of the birdies came and got you. She came to tell you I got stuck under the door." A sweet reverent feeling filled the room. The spirit was so strong and yet lighter than air. My wife realized that a three-year-old had no concept of death and spirits, so he was referring to the beings who came to him from beyond as "birdies" because they were up in the air like birds that fly. "What did the birdies look like?" she asked.

Brian answered, "They were so beautiful. They were dressed in white, all white. Some of them had green and white. But some of them had on just white."

"Did they say anything?"

"Yes," he answered. "They told me the baby would be all right." "The baby?" my wife asked, confused.

Brian answered. "The baby laying on the garage floor." He went on, "You came out and opened the garage door and ran to the baby. You told the baby to stay and not leave." My wife nearly collapsed upon hearing this, for she had indeed gone and knelt beside Brian's body and seeing his crushed chest whispered, "Don't leave us Brian, please stay if you can."

As she listened to Brian telling her the words she had spoken, she realized that the spirit had left his body and was looking down from above on this little lifeless form. "Then what happened?" she asked.

"We went on a trip," he said, "Far, far away." He grew agitated trying to say the things he didn't seem to have the words for. My wife tried to calm and comfort him, and let him know it would be okay. He struggled with wanting to tell something that obviously was very important to him, but finding the words was difficult. "We flew so fast up in the air. They're so pretty Mommy," he added. "And there are lots and lots of birdies."

My wife was stunned. Into her mind the sweet comforting spirit enveloped her more soundly, but with urgency she had never before known. Brian went on to tell her that the "birdies" had told him that he had to come back and tell everyone about the "birdies."

The Birdies (continued)

He said they brought him back to the house and that a big fire truck, and an ambulance were there. A man was bringing the baby out on a white bed and he tried to tell the man that the baby would be okay, but the man couldn't hear him. He said the birdies told him he had to go with the ambulance, but they would be near him. He said they were so pretty and so peaceful, and he didn't want to come back.

Then the bright light came. He said that the light was so bright and so warm, and he loved the bright light so much. Someone was in the bright light and put their arms around him, and told him, "I love you, but you have to go back. You have to play baseball, and tell everyone about the birdies." Then the person in the bright light kissed him and waved bye-bye. Then whoosh, the big sound came and they went into the clouds.

The story went on for an hour. He taught us that "birdies" were always with us, but we don't see them because we look with our eyes and we don't hear them because we listen with our ears. But they are always there; you can only see them in here (he put his hand over his heart). They whisper the things to help us to do what is right because they love us so much.

Brian continued, stating, "I have a plan, Mommy. You have a plan. Daddy has a plan. Everyone has a plan. We must all live our plan and keep our promises. The birdies help us to do that cause they love us so much."

In the weeks that followed, he often came to us and told all, or part of it again and again. Always the story remained the same. The details were never changed or out of order. A few times he added further bits of information and clarified the message he had already delivered. It never ceased to amaze us how he could tell such detail and speak beyond his ability when he talked about his birdies.

Everywhere he went, he told strangers about the "birdies." Surprisingly, no one ever looked at him strangely when he did this.

Rather, they always got a softened look on their face and smiled. Needless to say, we have not been the same ever since that day, and I pray we never will be.

Yesterday is history, tomorrow, a mystery. Today is a gift. That's why it's called the present! Live and savor every moment ... life is not a dress rehearsal!

What do Angels Look Like?

by Unknown

What do angels look like?

Like the little old lady who returned your wallet yesterday.

Like the taxi driver who told you that your eyes light up the world when you smile.

Like the small child who showed you the wonder in simple things.

Like the poor man who offered to share what he had with you.

Like the rich man who showed you that it really is all possible, if you believe.

Like the stranger who just happened to come along when you had lost your way.

Like the friend who touched your heart, when you didn't think you had one.

Angels come in all sizes and shapes, all ages and skin colors. Some angels have freckles, some have dimples, some have wrinkles, some without. They come disguised as friends, enemies, teachers, students, lovers and fools.

They don't take life too seriously, they travel light.

They leave no forwarding address, they ask nothing in return.

They are hard to find when your eyes are closed, but when you choose to see, they are everywhere you look.

So open your eyes and count all your angels ...

You will find you are truly blessed!

An Angel Named Crystal

by Maria Elena Martinez Crowe

Was it a case of nervous tension or sheer terror that gripped my soul the day I entered the school for special education students for the first time? At that moment, I believed that I was not destined to teach students with special needs. My only desire was to regain my credentials in order to teach in an early childhood general education setting. I looked at my schedule for the day and realized I would be covering a variety of classrooms. I was determined to do the best job possible.

Upon entering the first class, I took a deep breath and said a prayer for guidance. The children were predominantly strapped to their wheelchairs, unable to speak or walk. They could not hold a pencil or verbally respond to a question. In the corner of the room, I noticed a small chubby boy who held his pointer finger to his left ear while holding his right ear to the speaker of a small tape recorder playing Mexican Mariachi music. As the tape played he smiled to himself. The classroom staff did not seem to notice this unusual behavior as they busied themselves with the daily tasks. The classroom teacher, eager to go on her break, greeted me briefly and ran out of the room.

I was beginning to feel shell-shocked as I opened the door to the second classroom and saw a young man named Jerry sitting there. The blood in my veins began to pump furiously. What was I to do, there was no turning back, I walked in. The staff assured me he had calmed down since my witnessing an extreme tantrum that morning. They explained that the episode that morning occurred because the bus driver and matron had been switched off his bus route, and no one had informed the child. Jerry had autistic tendencies and needed reassurance of every transitional change in his life. This proved to be the best class of the day. Jerry, despite all his disabilities, was cognitively high and enjoyed the story and the activity for Language Arts. The time passed smoothly and I began to relax.

At the end of the day I went home, closed the door to my room, and cried. I felt that I did not have the ability or the patience to endure this type of work. I prayed for God's guidance since I was now nearing the end of a Master's program in Special Education. Where would I get the strength to do this work? I prayed that the school would lose my number and never call me back.

It was two weeks later when the next call for substitute work came from the same school. My instinct for survival told me to turn it down but my spirit would not allow it. Once again I found myself on the way to the special education school. Outside the building I sat in my car taking deep breaths and reiterating the words of the 23rd Psalm, "when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil for you are at my side". A peaceful feeling graced my soul as I exited my car and walked inside.

An Angel Named Crystal (continued)

Entering the first classroom, I found the teacher at her desk and no students in sight. I was informed that between bathroom visitations and therapies we had been left with only Crystal. Looking to the right of me on the mat by the window lay a ten year old girl. She had a tube coming out of her side and a hole in her neck where a tracheotomy had been performed. The teacher told me she was also blind as well as a quadriplegic. How do you teach a child like this?

The thought occurred to me that my pedagogical skills were useless in this situation and I needed to resort to my mothering skills. A mother sings and plays with her children, so I would sing to Crystal and play with her. Reaching over for a rattle toy on the shelf I held it close to her as I sang a lullaby. I was having trouble focusing on this child who was so visibly disabled, so I looked out the window as I sang the song. With my thoughts on the tree outside I continued to sing and rotate the toy rattle. Suddenly my thoughts were interrupted, by a bright ray of light shining from the window, my attention was drawn back to Crystal. The light shone all over her body as she wriggled from side to side in a dancing motion. Her facial expression was transformed by a radiant smile. Joy emitted from her entire body. For a split second, I was in the presence of an angel. As I continued to sing, I was mesmerized by Crystal, and the beauty that emanated from her. God had given me a view into her soul and she in turn had shown me the way to teach a multiply disabled child. Crystal had transformed my life.

From that moment on, the children of this school took on a new form. Disarmed of my fear, I became confident that I could reach them. I was determined to make them smile. Their eyes, that are the windows of the soul, would be where I would seek my answers. I immediately began to reshape my teaching methodologies because it no longer mattered that the students couldn't hold a pencil, respond orally to questions or raise their hands. These things were ephemeral by comparison to what these children had to share. What became eminent was the glow in their eyes as they respond to comprehension questions by pointing or eye gazing. What was crucial was to see their smiles when motivated by visual cues, songs and pantomime.

I began to see that this method of teaching would not only prove productive but also be a great deal of fun. My angel Crystal had given me the understanding that I was destined to teach children with special needs. So now I thank God for this gift and take one day at a time. I try to allow others to see the beauty of these messengers of God. These special children are here as our spiritual guides and teachers. Sometimes angels come into our lives when we least expect them and in forms that are not easily identifiable. As I witnessed the transformation of Crystal from a caterpillar into a butterfly a greater transformation occurred in me. I underwent a metamorphosis.