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Annette's Story

BY ANNETTE BROCKMAN

As a future teacher, I cannot even imagine a classroom without writing. I think it is a wonderful form of expression, allowing a person to communicate thoughts that are not always easily spoken. Writing provides the opportunity for students to "step outside of the box" and explore ideas that they may not otherwise. That's what writing does for me, anyway.

The inspiration for my poems comes from several different sources. I wrote *The Dance* after watching a friend dance with his daughter at her wedding. It made me think of the beautiful relationship that takes place between a father and a daughter. *The Runner* is the testimony of the perseverance of runners, and the insane addiction some of us (I won't mention any names) have to this sport. *Through the Eyes of a Child* is simply a reminder to all of us to step back and enjoy the infinite pleasures that surround us every day. *Tide Pools in Pacific Grove* is the snapshot of a memory I have of a vacation with my daughter in California. It was one of those moments that you wish you could hold onto forever. My greatest inspiration is reflected in my poem *Holly*. This is the story of my daughter and the unbelievable pace at which she is growing up before my eyes.

I plan to share writing with my future students. I will write with them and, hopefully, inspire them to write from their hearts.

The Dance

The music wraps itself around them.

The man and the woman come to each other,
He gently circles her waist and draws her near.
"You've never looked so lovely," he says.
She smiles and looks into his eyes.

The music wraps itself around them.

They see only each other.
"I want you to be happy," he says.
"I am, Daddy, he loves me."
"I know, I can see it in his smile."

The music wraps itself around them.

Her mother looks on from the edge of the dance floor,
Remembering dances in pajamas
With little girls on the kitchen floor.
Her eyes mist over with memories.

The music wraps itself around them.

The young man walks over to them
And places a gentle hand on the father's shoulder.
He turns to the young man
And gives him her hand.

The music wraps itself around them.

He watches as he draws her close.
"Be good to her, love her, for she is a gift."
The young man smiles at his bride "I will, I do."
The father turns and walks away.

The music wraps itself around them.

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The Runner

Mile 1

Daylight struggles to awaken as she steps on to the trail,
 Stretching and inhaling the crisp, fragrant air,
 Breathing out tiny, warm clouds of mist.
 She starts to move, trying to find her pace.
 Everything hurts, and she wonders why she does this.
 Her legs feel heavy as she plods through the dawn.
 She thinks about the people snuggled into their warm beds.

Mile 2

She starts to feel the rhythm of arms and legs moving together.
 The sharp, quick breaths are smoother and deeper now.
 A cautious doe and her fawn look up from their morning feast,
 Watching the curious two-legged creature stride through the woods.
 She watches them too, feeling the luxury of such a sight.
 She patiently waits for the moment
 When this crazy morning ritual begins to make sense.

Mile 3

She thinks about her grocery list.
 She thinks about the errands she has to run today.
 She hasn't called her mother in a while.
 One by one she picks through items that clutter her mind.
 Then, like a wave washing over her, it begins.
 She steps outside of her body and mind.
 And lets the rhythm of the running possess her.

Mile 4

It feels as if her body is taking flight.
 Breathing is effortless.
 Her arms and legs feel weightless as they move in their rhythmic stride.
 Her feet barely touch the ground.
 Energy courses through her body.
 Fatigue does not exist.
 She thinks that she could run like this forever.

Mile 5

She sees the familiar landmarks.
 She knows that this escape will soon come to an end.
 In the distance, her goal comes into view.
 Her body pushes to run harder,
 Her mind persuades her to savor this luxury.
 As she passes her finishing point, she slows down to a walk.
 She thinks about her run tomorrow.

Through the Eyes of a Child

I want to see the world through the eyes of a child ...

I want to wear red plaid pants and a flowered shirt with green tennis shoes
Instead of a business suit, stockings, and heels.

I want to run through a field of high grass, fall down, and stare up at the clouds
Instead of running to the grocery store, the post office, and the dry cleaners.

I want to wrap my arms around you and tell you that I love you forever, and mean it,
Instead of keeping my feelings inside because I fear rejection.

I want to believe in Santa, the Easter Bunny, the Tooth Fairy, and everything magic,
Instead of being skeptical of anything good that I hear about.

I will say, "You're not my friend anymore" then play with you ten minutes later,
Instead of holding a grudge, sometimes until it's too late to say "I'm sorry."

I want see the best in all people, no matter who they are,
Instead of judging people by their race and bank account.

I want to see the dandelions in the backyard as beautiful yellow flowers,
Not as pesky weeds that need to be eliminated.

I want to laugh out loud, sing from my heart, and dance to a song
And not give a care in the world to those watching me.

I want to see every day as a new beginning, an adventure,
Not just another twenty-four hours that I have to get through.

I want to see the world through the eyes of a child ...

Tide Pools in Pacific Grove

We stand on the shore of the ocean,
A cool breeze caressing our faces.
Carefully stepping on the rocks,
We look down
Into the miniature world that surrounds us.
As colorful anemones wave their arms,
And bashful crabs shuffle to a new hiding spot,
We look up
Noticing two sea otters
Swimming closer
Enticing us to play with them.
We know at that moment
How lucky we are to be
Right here, right now.

Holly

As my day come to an end,
I turn out the lights,
I ascend the stairs,
Stepping slightly to the left
On the third step
To avoid the squeak.

My warm bed beckons to me,
Seductively inviting me
To curl up in its softness.
At the top of the stairs,
I pause.
I never make it past this point.

I gently push open the door.
And look around the room.
Dolls and stuffed animals
Have been replaced
By posters of teen idols
And shades of nail polish and lip-gloss.

I quietly move to the side of her bed.
My daughter is sprawled out
In a tangle
Of blankets and sheets,
And her favorite stuffed dog
She calls Sparky.

She breathes deep and evenly.
I lean over
And gently kiss her forehead,
Remembering
All of the years that I have done this.
She smiles in her sleep.

Now I can go to bed.