

# 2010 ACSI CREATIVE WRITING FESTIVAL WINNERS

## A Father's Love

*by Amanda Bresnahan - Grade 10*

With a Father's love  
We were saved through faith in Him  
Have joy forever

## Autumn

*by Olivia Stainback - Grade 10*

Colorful leaves fall  
While warm breezes are dancing  
In the cool fall air

## A Memory

*by Alex Cumbie - Grade 12*

Wishing to find it  
Somewhere deep inside,  
A trace of what I used to remember.  
Searching, I shut out the world  
Hoping that all will pass me by.  
I live in a moment,  
A forgotten memory,  
Trying to make my way back.  
What does lost love,  
lost friendship, lost time mean to me?  
Is there any discerning value found in a memory?  
If a memory haunts, and the past we can't let go,  
How can we move forward? Only time will show.  
I've wasted my time thinking on things that did not last.  
So it is my warning to you, don't get stuck in the past.

## **Orb Metaphor**

*by Caleb Bailey - Grade 12*

To be part of this world today, there are obscene things that you have to recognize and deal with;

There are things you will dare to outgrow and get pale face when you actually can do it.

There are people, who will have priceless things slip right out of their grasp,

Even when the new fallen snow upon the ground will make you smile

There are ways to find pious people in this outbreak moment,

Because they dont realize it is a majestic time in life.

When it becomes so noiseless and over cool,

To numb yourself in love and passion

Love hits you like a puppy-dog

Publishing its compassion

To out-dare yourself

To LOVE

Them

## **My Music World**

*by Chang-hee Lee - Grade 10*

A soft, high tone of violin's vibrato touches and soothes my heart of depression.

A swift, bouncing, keen sound of guitar brings delight from my stress and despondence.

A strong distorted, hard rock, sound of electric guitar diverts my dismal into joy.

As I hear a violin, the sound of a delicacy sweeps my tear and brings me a smile.

As hear a guitar, the sound of a bit and a sharp tone makes me to move.

As I hear an electric guitar, the magnificent sound of a distortion makes me shake like crazy.

## **Waterfalls**

*by Brittney Jones - Grade 10*

So fast, shooting down  
Sounding peaceful all around  
Soothing to the mind

## **Angel Face**

*by Lauren Pritchard - Grade 11*

Some may say along the way  
That there is no one perfect around today,  
But I've seen an angel with a face  
Of perfect beauty and of grace.

She passed my way not but a child  
And over the years was somewhat wild.  
She grew and grew until almost three.  
She was taken away, away from me.

The anger and sadness of watching her go  
Made my heart as cold as snow,  
But through it all I understand  
She was here for a moment to make life grand.

My sister came and went so fast,  
But all perfect things may not last;  
So I wait, wait for the day  
When she may be allowed to pass my way.

And then I will see her angel face  
Of perfect beauty and of grace.

# Torn in Two

*by Erin Matthews - Grade 10*

All my life, I've had two homes. I've had to go back and forth between parents for eleven years. Sometimes, home life can be absolutely dreadful; other times, it's just a routine. My parents try to understand, but they never will. I have no one to talk to who will understand my problems at home. Life can be lonely sometimes, or just a secret. My life is torn in two.

My parents got divorced when I was four years old. I can't recall a single memory when all of us were together as a family. After the divorce, my dad stayed in the house, and my mom got a small apartment. Every week, on Sunday, I switched houses. I still switch weekly, and it's still hard. I remember I used to cry all the time, wishing my parents would get back together, as I tightly clutched a picture of all of us. The realization at such a young age was devastating.

My mom got remarried to my stepdad when I was about six, and I cried at the wedding. It took years for me to get used to him and his son. My dad stayed single for a long time. For eight years, it was just my dad and I. I loved spending time with him when it was just the two of us; I was such a daddy's girl. When he got remarried, it was one of the hardest things I had to endure. I was twelve, and I also cried at that wedding. It was so fast, and such a drastic change from those eight years I spent with him as the center of his life. Then someone else came into his life, and the hardships began all over again.

Switching back and forth between houses has been difficult over the years. Packing my bags on Sundays is like a ritual. It's hard leaving a parent for a week to be with the other parent. It's also hard readjusting to the new environment. I have different bedtimes, eat different food, play with different dogs, sleep in different beds, go to different churches, and spend time with different parents. But over the years, I've gotten used to these differences, and it has become my life. It's a life with hard decisions, loving parents, and difficult times. My parents know that they put me in this situation, and they know it's hard for me. They just don't always understand what I have to go through. They try their best to be good parents, and they always help me along the way. I don't blame them for what happened. Besides, this is the only life I've ever known.

I deal with the difficult times by going to school. Most teenagers hate school, but school is my getaway. I don't have to think about home, wherever that is. I am with my friends, and home-life is a full seven hours away. I forget about my problems. This part of the day is strictly mine, and it gives me some control over my hectic life. School is where I excel the most. When I'm at school, I focus on my work. I put my time and energy into my grades. I share laughs with my friends, who are always there for me. School takes my mind off of everything.

When I was younger, my dad gave me a necklace with the verse Jeremiah 29:11 on it. It says, "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'" This verse has become my life verse. Whenever I would sit in front of my bed, crying and balled up because of something that had happened, I would ask myself why. Why did this have to happen to me? Why did I have to be a child of divorce? Why do I have to go through this? And then I would remember the verse. God has a plan for my life. He will give me hope. The thought that something better is in store for me always calms me down when I'm crying over some incident.

My hideout on bad nights is the bathroom. I feel safe in there. I turn the fan on so that all noise outside is gone. I usually sit on the floor, tears streaming, as I try to dab my eyes dry with toilet paper. These bad nights don't come often anymore, but when they do, it's so hard to snap out of them. I just go to bed, hoping everything will be better in the morning.

I think my parents' divorce really made me who I am today. I've always been very mature for my age, and I think that's because I had to grow up faster. I am very responsible, probably due to going back and forth with my things all these years. I am extremely organized. My dad's theory is that I became organized because it was the only thing I could control in my life. I am also an expert packer. When I go on trips, I know how to pack my luggage efficiently and compactly. The divorce has obviously affected my life, both positively and negatively.

Children of divorce have a complicated and sometimes painful life. I've definitely experienced the hardships over the years. But through them, I've grown stronger. When I get married one day, I hope no argument or quarrel will ever come to divorce. I would never want to put my child through that mess and difficulty. Divorce ruins a family, and the children are left to live with the consequences, forever torn in two.

# Home Away

*by Holly Webb - Grade 11*

There is a warm feeling that you get when you know you're at home. There is a certain comfort, and you just know it when you're in the place called home. I have that feeling, and it is not limited to just one house. I grew up in a Navy family; so yes, I am what they refer to as a Navy brat. Along with my two older brothers, my family has moved a total of eighteen times, even though I only participated in eight of those moves. One move in particular really made an impact on me. It was the summer before my sixth grade year, and I found myself on a plane headed to Naples, Italy.

At the time, I didn't care that I was privileged to move to a foreign country. At the time, I had no idea what atmosphere and cultural experiences I was going to find, and again I did not care. I stepped off the plane and was surrounded by strange people, strange words, and a strange town. Little did I know, I was about to have the best two years of my teenage life.

Casal Di Principe was where I would call my home for the next two years. The town's name is translated into "House of The Prince," and one would think of royalty and high power. There was high power, but it wasn't due to royalty. It was the headquarters of the Italian mafia called the Camorra. The Camorra has a strong control over economical life of the town, and I was lucky enough to live right in the middle of it all. Our very neighbor was greatly involved in the Camorra, as we thought, but he welcomed us into his home for an authentic Italian meal after we moved in, so we didn't ask any questions. This kind of atmosphere took some getting used to, but after a while, it was like second nature. Old men sitting outside their shops, happily watching the world go by, obese Italian children joyfully playing in the small narrow streets - this got to be all perfectly normal for me.

Gradually adapting to my new environment, I started appreciating life in Italy a whole lot more. I started realizing that moving there wasn't such a bad thing after all. I think this all came into play when I first bit into a slice of real Italian pizza...a huge, hot pie, brick oven baked, authentic sauce and that to-die-for real mozzarella. The food in Italy is nothing like the local Olive Garden. From the pasta to the calamari to my personal favorite, mozzarella de buffala, it is one hundred times better.

Adapting was even easier after I started to travel throughout the country. I spent Thanksgiving in Tuscany twice. I lived twenty minutes away from the infamous volcano, Vesuvius and the town of Pompeii. I went to the colorful city of Cinque Terre for a week with my youth ministry. I first learned to ski in the beautiful mountains called the Italian Alps. My favorite place of all time was the Amalfi Coast, which was forty minutes away from my home. It had great food and any shop you could think of. The Isle of Capri was one of the most beautiful places I have ever seen. I had my first vespa ride on the Isle of Ischia. And this was just in Italy!

Having two older brothers, I attended many sporting events, and by this time I was used to them all. But it was different for some reason now, because we got to travel to places like Germany just to watch a two hour high school football game. It was a real change, and I definitely had a new appreciation for sporting events. It wasn't just my brothers who got to play sports in unique places, though. I joined my first soccer and softball league in the sixth grade, and our practices just happened to be held in the crater of an inactive volcano. The Navy turned this crater into a military recreational center called Carney Park. After school I was bussed there to practice for our upcoming games.

Living in a foreign country like Italy, I quickly gained access to travel to places I thought I would never see. I spent my first spring break in London, England, and my second one in Paris, France. While I was in France, I got to visit Omaha and Utah beaches that were stormed in the invasion of Normandy during World War II. I visited Germany multiple times. In addition to a snow skiing adventure in the German Alps, I touched the real Berlin Wall and took a very emotional tour of the German concentration camp called Dachau. Poland and Prague, Czech Republic were exciting places to visit also. All these amazing places were just a short distance from our home in Italy. These were all incredible places to visit, especially for a twelve or thirteen year old.

Given all of my experiences, it was easy to come to my senses and be thankful for the opportunity to live in Italy. I made more life-long memories than I can count. I picked up a new language and got to experience the real Italian culture. Adapting to the culture was easier than I could have imagined, and it was a great place to spend two years of my growing up life. I definitely felt at home.

# Utah: Day of Days

*by Michael Ahlgrim - Grade 10*

It was early morning on the sixth of June  
When Eisenhower's Great Crusade came so soon.  
An amphibious assault on Utah Beach was our only chance  
To free Europe from German oppression, starting in France.  
I geared up quickly and went to the ship's deck  
Where I waited to climb down into my Higgins Boat by the rope net.  
When I got down, I waited in the boat until my officer declared that we were set.  
As we departed, hundreds of these steel crafts dotted the channel's choppy water  
And stretched out into the horizon until I could see them no farther.  
The gray boats bobbed in the water to the shores of France.  
It was now or never for us; no second chance.  
  
To pass some time, I pulled out my rosary to pray  
And asked God to make sure that we would be okay.  
Moments later, my craft reached the coast and suddenly stopped,  
And immediately its steel ramp slowly dropped.  
My unit and I waded to the shore as the Germans opened fire  
And we quickly ran to the coast towards a seawall and some barbed wire.  
From there, I looked back at the shore  
And saw ships, sand and water columns, and nothing more.  
Deftly, we clipped through the twisted wire,  
Moved forward, and engulfed their defenses; their hope was dire.  
Most of the gray-coated soldiers ran, but the others gave in  
To abandon the war they knew that they would not win.  
  
After the skirmish, I glanced at the French coastline again  
And saw more of our boats deploying more men.  
The Utah Beach landing was the military success of the year  
For the American liberation of Europe would start from right here.