

Affection

by Tracey Posluszny

She came to me wearing her cotton white dress. She baked me a pie, but I did not eat the pie. I let the pie drop to the ground. I watched her face fall with the pie. Then I watched her turn around and walk away.

The next day she returned, still wearing her white cotton dress. Her long curly locks were tied, but not tamed, in two blue ribbons. Her soft hands bestowed



another pie: an apple pie. She placed the pie in my palm. I let it drop. Bruised apples, cut by the crust, drowned in their own juices. She bowed her head and slowly stepped away.

In the days that followed, neither did her dress fade, nor her hair lie limp. She continued to bake pies, warm pies, pies with golden crusts. Underneath the crusts breathed an abundance of fruit which floated freely in their juices. The pies still crashed to the ground. Their crusts bled fruit like open wounds.

And her face followed each pie to the floor.

One day, a hunger arose in my stomach—a hunger that only a warm apple pie could satisfy. So I went to her to receive my pie. Where the pies had dropped the previous days, I found a cotton white dress and two blue ribbons—stained with fruit juices. ★

Divorce

by Marissa Evans

There is a word in my house that sits under the stairs, lines the bedroom walls, blankets all the pictures, and cuts like glass. Like a leak from the ceiling, with this word comes water, not rainwater, but a river of memories. Divorce. Why does this have to be the word that runs through my house like carpet?

It began about six years ago, six years of going to see Dad every other weekend, six years of split holidays and vacations. In the little white dress I had named my bride dress, I was set down on the couch with my little sister, still in diapers, and there Daddy in his black suit and Mommy in her green dress told us they weren't going to live together anymore. The pumpkin-faced child next to me just glared, then giggled and turned her back to my parents and started chewing on something. I just stared at both their faces and watched the dim light dance back and forth between their confusing grins.

Six years of lying in bed, looking out across the glowing lights of Boston from my room in Dad's apartment. Six years of gazing up into the moonlit sky from my house, wondering if my parents would ever get back together.

Now I see my dad every other weekend, and the D-word only surfaces when weekends are brought up, or a childhood memory. The word fills my mouth, but I am unable to spit it out.

Divorce has taken a part of my life and turned it upside down. At my seventh birthday it was so embarrassing just to answer the question: "Where is your dad?" Sometimes I would lie and say he was coming, but he never did. My parents couldn't be together anymore.

When I was ten, it hurt so much at my soccer games to watch my friends' parents laughing and cheering together, while my dad stood alone on the opposite side of the field, or my mom stood with a smile on her face, which I knew was fake.

Divorce has changed over time. As I grow up the things that used to mean so much now seem stupid or unimportant.

Lately, divorce has brought these questions: If they were still married, would I come home after a soccer game, or after school, and would my dad be waiting there to take us all out to dinner. Or maybe, if I talked to him on the phone, and my mom would talk, and after discussing our next vacation, or even what we were having for dinner, would they exchange "I love you" and then hang up?

I've always wanted to know what that would be like, to have dinner as a family, or go through a day without thinking that my parents don't love each other anymore.

I am sure in the future divorce will mean something completely different, but for now I have to get by on the little things that mean so much. Even though my parents don't love each other, I will always know that they both love me, and no matter how old I get, and no matter what divorce brings in the future, that will never change. ★

