

Ashford School students received honorable mentions in the 29<sup>th</sup> issue of *Connecticut Student Writers* (CSW) magazine. Here are their pieces.

Emerson Dyer (grade 5)

### Bad Flashback

“Put on your seatbelt quickly!” my mom says as she pulls out of my babysitter’s driveway as quickly but as calmly as she could.

“Why are you in such a rush? Where are we going?” I ask trying to remember if I had a Doctor Weeks appointment for my spacers.

“Because your dad is at the hospital! That’s why we’re rushing!” Mom exclaims, zipping down the road.

“What? What happened to him? Is he okay? Where is he? Is somebody going to take him to the hospital?” I ask worriedly.

“We don’t know, but we’re hoping for the best. His boss drove him to the hospital.” She replies, trying to make me feel better.

“Why, why, why, does this have to happen?!?”

As we drive to Day Kimball Hospital, I get a queasy feeling in my stomach. I don’t know if he was going to be okay or not.

Finally, we arrive at Day Kimball Hospital. We park right in front of the lobby doors, and speed walk into the the waiting room where we find my dad waiting in a chair. I rush to him and give him a hug trying not to squeeze too hard.

“Are you okay?” I ask.

“Yeah. My legs were shaky, and so were my hands. So I told my boss to drive me to the hospital so now I’m here and nobody’s noticed since.” Dad tells us. “*Well that was descriptive,*” I say to myself in my head.

“Well Emmie and I will go get someone. You stay here.” Mom carefully explains to my dad.

He nods his head as Mom and I walk to the front counter on the other side and tell the lady that dad was in the other room. She follows us and grabs a wheelchair. She waves her hand to the wheelchair as if she were a model for *The Price Is Right*. My dad sits in the wheelchair as the nurse walks him down the hallway with us following behind her.

We arrive at a giant room with all these monitors.

“You can lay down right here and I’ll hook you up to these monitors.” the nurse tells dad. Dad lays down while the nurse puts these little circle sensors onto his arms and on his chest. 2 on each arm and 6 on his chest.

“It’s like they’re charging a robot.” mom says as the nurse leaves the room.

3 minutes later, the doctor comes in and says that he had a minor heart attack and that they don’t have the equipment to find out what caused it.

“We’ll send you to Hartford Hospital and you’ll sleep over there for two nights.” The doctor says, as I watch sweat pour down my dad’s face. Mom goes to the sink with a cloth, gets it wet, folds it into a thick rectangle and puts it on dad’s head.

I suddenly, jab my head, (not too hard) into my dad’s side. I felt my tears burning in my throat trying not to cry. But I couldn’t hold it in. Tears stream down my face. I just had the worst flashback ever. I clearly remember visiting my grandma in the hospital and putting a wet facecloth on her forehead. She died in that hospital later. All I could think of is “*Please don’t let my dad die please!*”

After about thirty minutes of waiting, (and crying) the doctor comes in and says, “The ambulance is outside waiting for you. They’ll come in with a stretcher and bring you to Hartford Hospital.”

The ambulance drivers wait outside the room in the hallway. My dad slowly gets out of the bed, walks out of the room, and got onto the stretcher. As they carried my dad out of the hospital and into the ambulance, mom had to fill out a bunch of paperwork. (Which was really embarrassing because I was crying a little.) But after about ten minutes of that, it's almost pitch dark and raining outside. I can finally cry my eyes out. Mom and I run to the car, tears still running down my face. We hop in the car. Mom pulls out her phone and and calls Grammy and Poppop to ask them to come pick me up so mom can go to Hartford Hospital.

Grammy and Poppop arrive. I always remember that it's their car because of their abnormal licence plate 1AFTMO. While we were waiting for them to arrive, mom and I were watching Disney Channel to try to cheer me up. She quickly puts away the phone and hugs me and kisses me on the forehead.

"Everything is going to be alright," she whispers in my ear.

Grammy hops out of the car and gets into the front seat while I get into the front seat with Poppop in his car.

*"I didn't know Grammy was going with mom, how come I can't?!"* But I held that thought in my head.

Mom drives off in her car with Grammy as we follow behind them. But we go different ways. They go left, and we go right. It's quiet the whole way home, well, except for when we went to McDonald's, because he asked me what I wanted. I always used to get Cheeseburger Happy Meals.

Finally, we pull into my grandparent's driveway, and Poppop finally says something.

"Do you want to get your pajamas on and go to bed? You can use one of my long shirts. It's even to long for me!" he says trying to make me laugh. I giggle a little bit and nod. When we get inside, Poppop goes into the bedroom, and gets the longest shirt I've ever seen.

"Wow that really is big!" I said.

"Yep," he replied.

I change into the gigantic shirt in the bathroom while Poppop gets the bed ready. When I'm done changing, I hop into bed right away and close my eyes. The t.v really helped keep my mind off things. I fell asleep very quickly.

My eyes slowly drift open, with a sliver of sunlight from the opening of the curtain blinding me. The other side of the bed is empty. I take the covers off of me, tiptoe out of bed, and into the kitchen where I see Poppop making an omelet for himself.

"Good morning Pumpkin Butt," Poppop says quietly. Pumpkin Butt is a really embarrassing name that he called me ever since I was a baby. ( I was a really chubby baby. 9 pounds and 9 ounces. )

"What do you want to eat? Cinnamon Toast Crunch?" Poppop asked.

"Sure, but I'll make it this time." I replied.

He nods his head as I walk to the pantry and get the box of cereal from the top shelf. As I grab the milk out of the fridge and start making my cereal, I realize something.

*"Yesterday morning, I yelled at Dad because he was embarrassing me in front of my friend. What if he's not okay? I shouldn't have yelled at him."* I realized.

I continue making my bowl of cereal in guilt. I put the box of cereal and the gallon of milk away, sit down at the counter, and start eating my cereal. We both eat in silence. When I'm done with my cereal, I put the dirty dishes in the sink carefully, trying not to bang the dishes together. I sneak into the bedroom, and get ready for the day. When I'm done, I walk out of the bedroom with my UGGS, jeans, and gray YEAH sweatshirt on. Poppop looks up from the newspaper and says

"Well that was quick,"

I giggle, and ask him when we're going to see Dad, Mom, and Grammy at the hospital.

"Maybe somewhere around 12:00," he replies.

I look at the clock. It's already 11:06.

*"Wow, I slept in for that long? Hm."*

I grab my iPhone 5c with my minion phone case and sit down in Grammy's recliner in front of the fireplace. I type in my password and search around my phone. I play Crossy Road, and I go on Snapchat. I go on almost every app on my phone to keep me busy. I look at the clock. 11:12.

*"Wow. Just wow. It's only been six minutes."* I think in my head.

Again, I type in my password and go on YouTube this time. I watch Bratayley (favorite YouTube family), try not to laugh challenges, (a bunch of those. I laughed each time.) Watching all of those probably took up about 45 minutes. I looked at the clock. It's 11:57! After all of the waiting, three more minutes!

"Ready to go?" Poppop asks.

Even though he's early by three minutes, I don't care. I spring out of the chair and head out the door to the garage. We get into the car and head to the hospital. I'm on my phone most of the way. My feet are moving all around in excitement, but stop all of a sudden. A feeling of worries surround me.

*"I'm excited to see him, but what if he's not okay?"* I said to myself.

I was still, for the rest of the car ride.

When we arrive at the Hartford Hospital, there's a bunch of people there. There's nowhere to park. But after about 10 minutes of trying to find a spot, someone leaves and we take their spot.

We walk to the front desk.

"Hi. We're here to visit Tom Dyer." Poppop asked in an uncertain voice.

"Tom Dyer? Room... let's see here...ah, Tom Dyer. Room two hundred ninety-one on the ninth floor." He finally said.

*"There must be a lot of floors,"* I thought to myself.

"Thank you." Poppop said.

We turn right into the hallway filled with elevators. Six elevators. Six! I push the button with the arrow that points up. It turns orange. (At this time, I was nine, which wasn't that long ago, but at this time, for some reason I loved elevator buttons.... And I secretly still do!) We wait about two minutes until the second elevator on the right opened up. It was empty. I love when there's an empty elevator. We step into the elevator and I press the nine button, now watching that, light up orange.

When the elevator stops and we arrive at the 9th floor, my Poppop asks, "Are you ready?"

"Yep," I reply.

We start walking down the hallway until we reach room two hundred ninety-one. I take a deep breath, and open the door. I see my dad's face and my heart stops.

"Dad!!"

I speed walk to the hospital bed, my legs shaking. I hug my dad as hard as possible not caring whether it hurt him or not.

"Hi Emmie! I missed you." my Dad told me.

I want to reply but I'm crying too hard. I wanted to stay in his arms forever so nothing could happen to him. I wanted to protect him. I felt like I was so strong that I could protect him from all the bad things in the world. But I couldn't. I'm not that strong.

I sit there for probably five minutes crying my eyes out. I learned a lesson from those five minutes.

Treat everyday like it's someone's last.

Epilogue

About 6 months later, my dad had another heart attack. But he's okay. You never know when something is going to happen. Be prepared. The world is full of surprises. I don't want to get all deep and stuff, but, I hope you learned a lesson from this story.

Treat everyday like it's your or someone else's last.

Nora Brown (grade 6)

They say that I'm crazy.  
I'm not.  
They say that I'm different.  
I am.  
Does that make me crazy?

My name is Jade. I live in Tibet. Though most of the people in my village have deep, dark hair and skin, I'm different. I'm pale like an old corpse that has been sitting on the side of a mountain for 60 nights. People say that I was once a "normal" villager who was thrown beyond the stars. Just before the life drained completely out of me, I plummeted back to Earth and continued to live my life as a walking corpse.

Of course, these stories are lies... I think. There are many stories about where I came from. There may be more, however I wouldn't know since most people in the village go out of their way to pretend I don't exist.

I often sit at night and imagine. I imagine creatures with wings and scales that glint and reflect moonlight, I imagine places with trees and flowers and little things that dance and play. You see in Tibet it's very cold, and there is only grey grass and stony mountains. They stretch out so far it's hard to believe that there can be more in the world. I only know of things like trees and flowers because of the travelers who sometimes come to my village. To them I'm not a monster, I'm normal. That comforts me. But sometimes I can read their eyes, I can tell that they think there's still something slightly off.

Well not that that really matters any more... travelers seldom come. So I still end up being the monster in a sea of beauty.