

**The Feelings and Imagination  
of a Barefoot Boy  
Still Inside My Head!**



Kevin Carlson

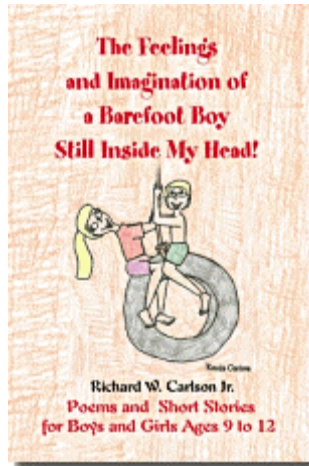
**Richard W. Carlson Jr.**  
**Illustrated by Kevin Carlson**

**The Feelings and Imagination of a Barefoot Boy Still Inside  
My Head!**

**Poems and Short Stories for Boys and Girls Ages 9 to 12**

How can I get my paperback copy?.....	3
Visit Richard W. Carlson Jr.'s web site.....	4
WHAT IS THE BOOK ABOUT?.....	5
ABOUT THE AUTHOR.....	6
ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR.....	7
REVIEWS .....	8
DEDICATION.....	13
EPIGRAPH.....	14
PREFACE .....	15
INTRODUCTION .....	16
POEMS ABOUT LIFE IN STORMVILLE, NEW YORK.....	19
POEMS FROM THE BOOK <i>JEREMY GRABOWSKI'S CRAZY SUMMER IN STORMVILLE!</i> .....	50
POEMS ABOUT LIFE IN TUCSON, ARIZONA.....	67
OTHER POEMS ABOUT LIFE .....	78
SHORT STORIES .....	88
Also by Richard W. Carlson Jr. ....	99
REFERENCES.....	103

How can I get my paperback copy?



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[Barnes and Noble](#)

Visit Richard W. Carlson Jr.'s web site

<http://www.hugsfeelgood.com/>

Sign up to receive the FREE HugsFeelGood.com eZine to keep up to date about Richard W. Carlson Jr. and his books!

## **KIDS!**

Remember: Always get a parent's permission before you give information online and never give out your full name, phone number, or address on the Internet because that stuff is yours and it is private!

## WHAT IS THE BOOK ABOUT?

The feelings, imagination, hopes, and dreams of young people revealed in poems and short stories.

If you want to have fun reading a great book, you'll find it here! This book is a collection of poems and short stories for young readers ages 9 to 12. Some of the subjects include: little brothers and sisters, parents, falling in love, boats, trucks, embarrassment, mystery, imagination, yelling too much, bicycles, cheating, wishes, and kissing. Many of the poems and short stories entertain and teach important lessons. Includes poems from the book *Jeremy Grabowski's Crazy Summer In Stormville!*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



As a boy, Richard W. Carlson Jr. (1971—) lived in an imaginary world of his own. Today, he lives in the real world and uses his vivid imagination to write for young readers. Richard likes to write stories and poems that entertain and teach valuable lessons.

Presently, Richard lives in Tucson, Arizona. *The Feelings and Imagination of a Barefoot Boy Still Inside My Head!* is his second book.

Visit his web site at: <http://www.hugsfeelgood.com/>

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



Kevin Carlson (1978—) is one of the author's younger brothers. Since a young child, he loved to draw. Kevin has a brain disorder called autism. Presently he works at SAGE, a business that employs handicapped people. SAGE sells a variety of crafts and decorative items in their store and through the mail.

## REVIEWS

Nathaniel Adams, age 9

*This was a book of poems and short stories. Mr. Carlson writes really good poems, I liked them all. Some of them were about Jeremy Crazy Summer In Stormville. I thought that was neat. Some were about life in Tucson Arizona. That was cool because I've been there and it was fun to read about a different place. The stories were all great. I liked all of them too. I think you will really like this book. Both boys and girls will.*

*P.S. Kevin Carlson is Richard Carlson's brother. His pictures are terrific! People are really hard to draw, I know, I try to all the time! He does a really great job!*

Danielle Naibert, [TheChildrenBookSite.com](http://TheChildrenBookSite.com)

*A fun book of poems for kids of all ages*

*The reader will be delighted with all the poems in this fun adventurous book of poems for children. Carlson has four categories of "poem themes" and even a few short stories for children to enjoy. The book is also filled with fun illustration by Kevin Carlson. Kevin Carlson is the younger brother of the author with a brain disorder called autism. His illustrations are beautiful and fun, even if you weren't into poetry, I would recommend this book just for the illustrations alone.*

*The poems are just plain fun. One of my favorite poems is titled, The Frog Dad Brought Home From Work. What kid wouldn't be attracted to read something about a frog...and mostly dad bring it home from work. Other poems that are fun for parents, like about yelling and screaming too much.*

*If you are in the process of introducing your child to poetry, this is the book I highly recommend. The titles, the themes and the illustrations will bring the child into the new and delightful world of poetry.*



Beverly J. Rowe, MyShelf.com,

*Carlson's unique voice with his original word usage and unusual phrasing make this book a real treat to read. Here is the power and fascination discovery from a ten year old's point of view and Richard captures it perfectly. That barefoot boy does indeed still live inside his head. What a shame we can't all retain that wonderful childhood curiosity and imagination. I had forgotten how it felt until I read this book. It is a great read aloud book for younger children too.*

*The poems and stories are about subjects that all children are familiar with; friends, school, toys, the bogey man in the closet, and how we hate broccoli. The selections are entertaining and laced with lessons in friendship and doing the right thing.*

*Illustrations by Richard's autistic brother, Kevin Carlson, captures the emotion and adds zest to the stories and poems in charming line drawings.*

Cindy Penn, editor of WordWeaving

*I imaginative! Very highly recommended*

*Author Richard W. Carlson Jr. Brings echoes of maturity to freshly imaginative short stories and poetry in THE FEELINGS AND IMAGINATION OF BAREFOOT BOY STILL INSIDE MY HEAD. The sparkling ingenious voice of remembered youth sparkles, recapturing the best of childhood and strongest of memories in a startling original record certain to please young readers. The rhythm and rhyme keep the tempo steadily on high, recreating runaway frogs, black eyes, broccoli and walking barefoot with equal vividness. Accompanied by simple, yet skillfully drawn illustrations (by the author's younger brother), this marvelous lark comes highly recommended.*

Rita Hestand, a mother, grandmother, and children's book author

*What a delightful book of childlike poetry. Every poem will make you giggle, think, ponder, and ask why?*

A reader, Hoku Ho

*A wonderful book by a worthy author.*

Donald Wayne Mitchell, a management consultant in Boston, and co-author of  
The Irresistible Growth Enterprise and The 2,000 Percent Solution

*Poems and Short Stories from a Young Man's Perspective*

*Many books written for youngsters have a problem. To get the skill to create the work, the author has had to practice . . . and that meant getting older and further away from feelings of the young readers. Richard W. Carlson, Jr. has overcome that problem here in a powerful way, and brought me back in touch with experiences I haven't had in over 45 years. The interesting poems and short stories carry important lessons for the practical and moral development of the reader. The youthful perspective is perfectly captured in the poetic style that successfully mimics what a talented 10 year old might produce while having extra smoothness most of the time. I especially liked the illustrations by Mr. Kevin Carlson. Mr. Carlson has an ability to capture stories, emotions, and situations in simple illustrations that make the point of the stories clearer. The poems and stories are very short, well-suited for the attention span of youthful readers. One interesting element is that the book contains both poetry about Richard W. Carlson, Jr. as well as fictional versions of the same incidents describing Jeremy Grabowski's Crazy Summer in Stormville. You and your children can enjoy talking about which versions you like better, and what roles fiction and nonfiction play in helping readers.*

*I generally liked the poems about discovery best. When we are young, everything that happens (even setbacks) is absolutely fascinating. Junk and joy go together just as well as gold and joy.*

*I also liked the way the short stories took the potential for fright and turned it into potential for fun. Mr. Carlson has an unusually positive attitude that anyone can learn from. Children need more encouragement than criticism, and he carries that point forward rather well.*

*I suspect that most readers will take even more delight upon rereading the book than upon first reading it. I hope you will take the opportunity to do both. Although written for children, the book has much of the appeal of *Who Moved My Cheese?* for adults.*

*"Who lives in your world that's wonderful and so much fun?*

*You might be the only one!"*

*Those two lines may be the best encouragement for budding writers that I have ever seen. Be sure your children have the chance to read them.*

*After you finish this delightful book, I suggest you think about why you no longer find discovery as fascinating as a little boy picking up his first horny toad. How can you recapture that delight and its benefits? How can you be sure that your children and grandchildren delight in discovery even more than you did at their age?*

*Retain the mind of the three year old . . . and your mind will be always filled with riches.*

[Jennifer LB Leese, ASTORYWEAVER'S Book Reviews](#)

*THE FEELINGS AND IMAGINATION OF A BAREFOOT BOY STILL INSIDE MY HEAD by Richard W. Carlson Jr. is just as the title suggests-- feelings and imagination, as well as hopes, dreams, and just plain fun wrapped into one book!*

*His wonderful poems were a treat to read to my children, and the charming hand drawn illustrations caught and kept my children's attention as I read, bringing forth tons of questions about the picture.*

*Mentioning frogs, wishes, brothers, sisters, yelling, cheating, animals, first kisses, and black eyes, would only scratch the surface of all the comical poems and short stories within the books pages. All of Mr. Carlson's poems and short stories in THE FEELINGS AND IMAGINATION OF A BAREFOOT BOY STILL INSIDE MY HEAD will surely entertain and delight the children, as well as the parents. I know we loved it!*

*The author, Richard W. Carlson Jr. known to live in an imaginary world of his own as a boy, he now lives in the real world and successfully writes book and poems for children that teach valuable lessons. He lives in Tucson, Arizona.*

*Mr. Carlson's vivid imagination runs wild in each fascinating tale. The important lessons, both realistic and proper, are taught in a fun and attention-grabbing manner. They are exactly what the youth of today need, and what they will enjoy reading at the same time.*

*His ability to tell it like a child is something that every child's book writer struggles for. The poems aren't too long, and drug out, nor are they preachy--perfect for the age of children it is intended for.*

*My favorite poem: I LOVED TO WALK ON MY BARE FEET is about a little boy who loves to look at his bare feet as he walks.*

*Find your favorite Richard W. Carlson Jr. poem today!*

*ASTORYWEAVER'S Book Reviews highly recommends THE FEELINGS AND IMAGINATION OF A BAREFOOT BOY STILL INSIDE MY HEAD by Richard W. Carlson Jr. for you and your children.*

## DEDICATION

TO *YOU!* DO YOU THINK ABOUT WHAT  
YOU SAY *BEFORE* YOU SAY IT?

Listen carefully to what you hear and watch what you say.  
You will be held responsible for your actions *every* day.  
Everything you do,  
Could be used against you.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/18/00)

## EPIGRAPH

"Think very carefully about what comes out of your mouth *before* you say it!"

## PREFACE

The small town of Stormville is a real place in New York. It's in the beautiful New England country. I lived there from 1976 to 1980. Tucson, Arizona is in the beautiful southwest. I've lived there since 1980.

Kevin Carlson, an autistic savant, drew the illustrations. Suzanne Carlson took the author's photograph.

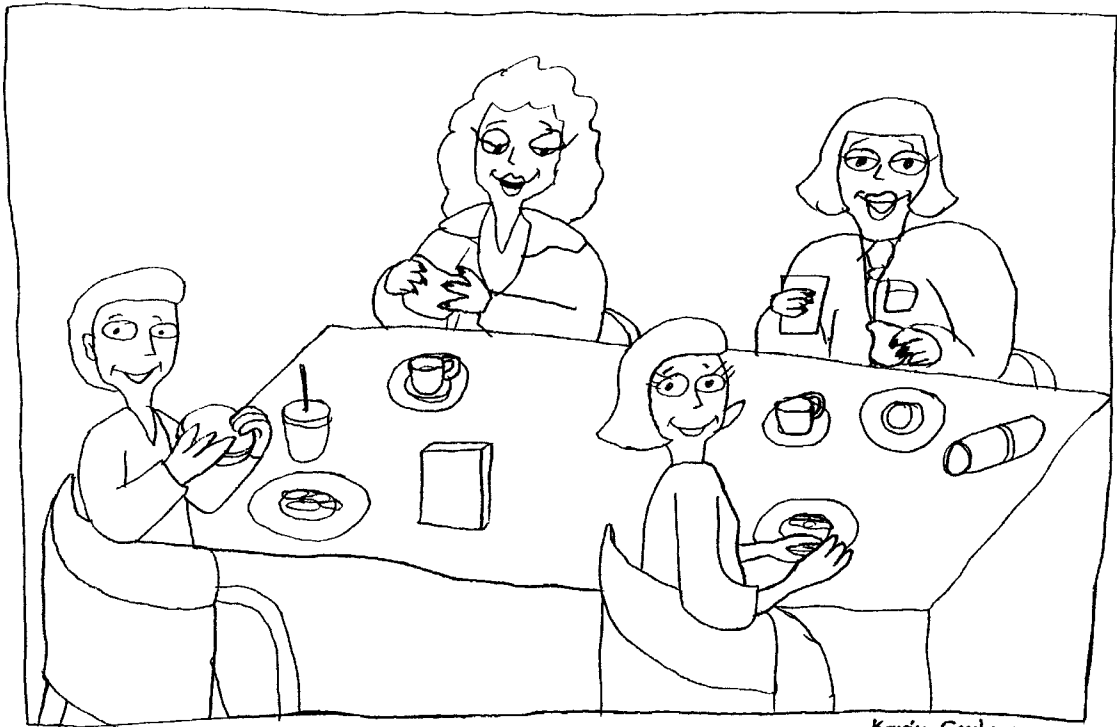
## INTRODUCTION

Do you think you will write a book someday? When I was in the second grade in February 1979, I won my first writing contest. It was the *Why My Teacher Is My Valentine* Contest. The prize was a lunch at a McDonald's restaurant with my second grade teacher. Another contest winner was also there with her teacher. Our picture was in *The Putnam Ledger*, a local newspaper.

A talent is something you are good at doing. Most people have talents they don't know they have. I discovered a talent in writing I didn't know I had. My talent in writing for children gives me hours of fun and a great feeling of accomplishment!

Do you have a talent you don't know you have?





Kevin Carlson

Why my teacher is my Valentine

My teacher is very nice. She

works hard teaching us the

things we need to learn. She

cares about Me, My teacher

is my Valentine.

Richard Carlson

# POEMS ABOUT LIFE IN STORMVILLE, NEW YORK

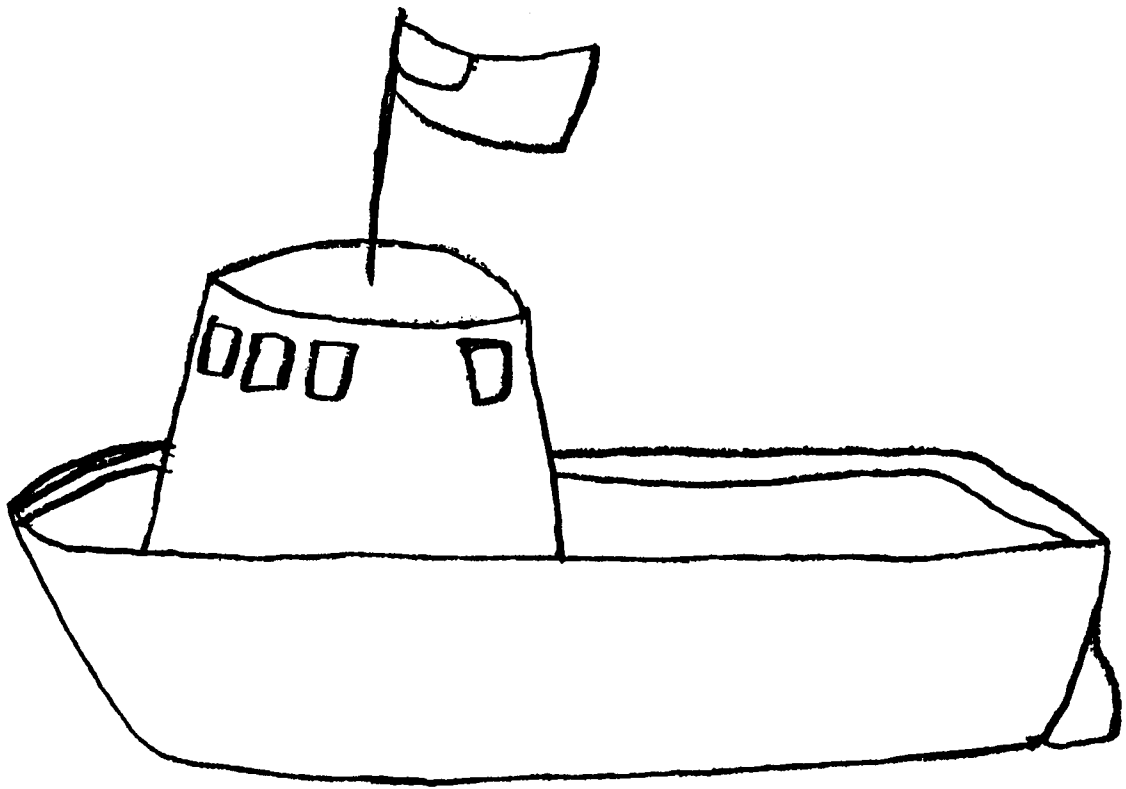


Kevin Carlson

## THE FROG DAD BROUGHT HOME FROM WORK

Dad placed a frog in my little hands to stay.  
I held him and hoped he would not hop away.  
The frog was the biggest I had ever seen.  
He was colored dark green.  
I put him into our pond like my wind-up toy boat.  
Next to a water lily he float.  
He was happy I could see,  
In our little backyard pond to be free.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (3/30/00)

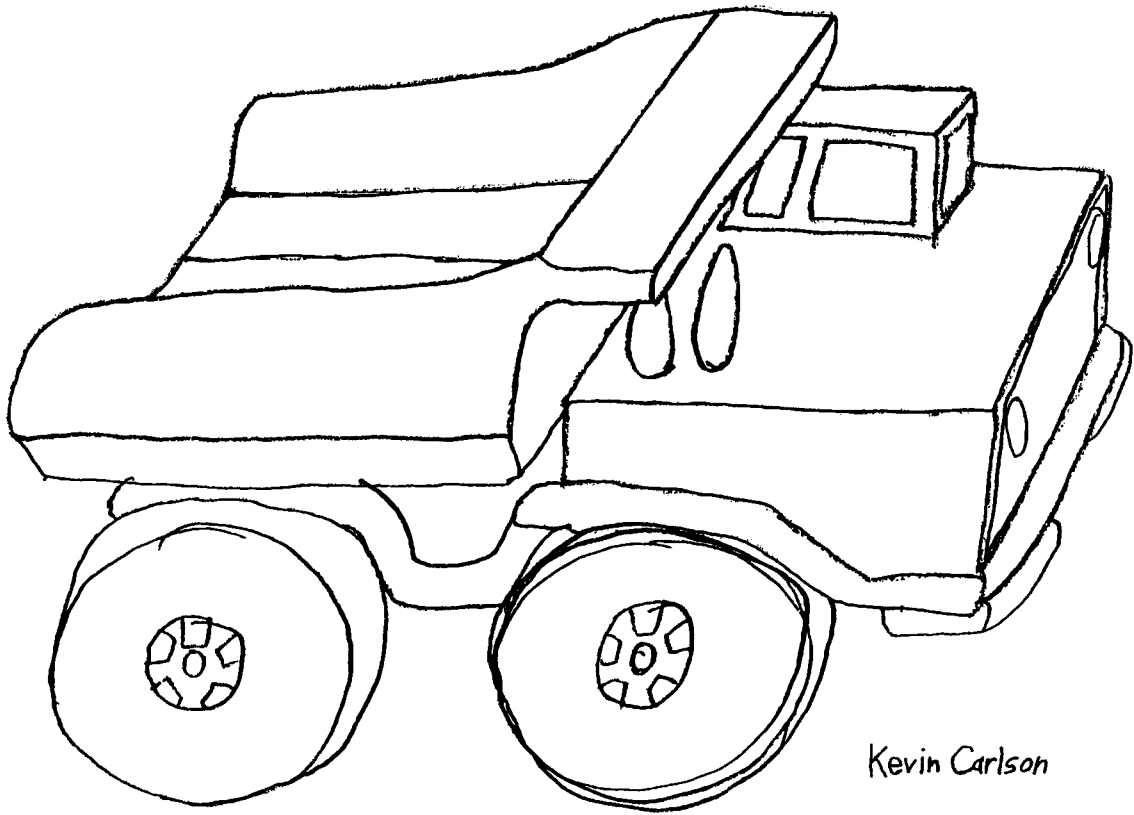


Kevin Carlson

## MY CHILDHOOD WIND-UP TOY BOAT

I sat inside waiting for the rain to stop one spring day.  
A huge puddle formed in our front yard for me to play.  
The sun came out and I smiled as I wound up my toy-motorized boat.  
I placed it into the deep puddle to see if it would float.  
I watched my boat sail in the water and then it started to slow.  
It sailed until the propeller would no longer go.  
The boat stopped and in the middle of the puddle it was stuck.  
I looked around for help and was in luck.  
Nearby was a long dried branch on a maple tree.  
Just long enough to reach my boat I could see.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/2/00)



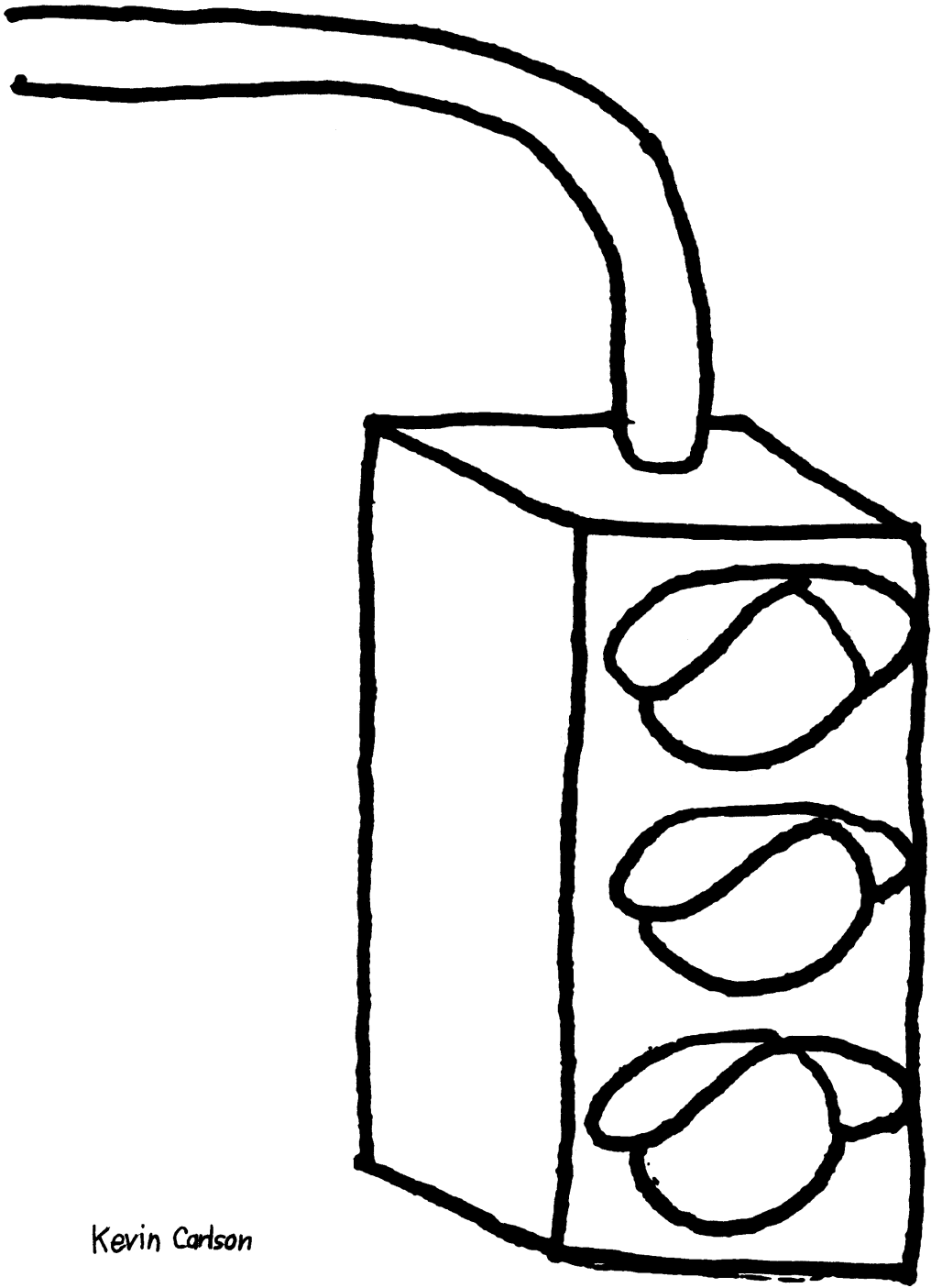
Kevin Carlson



**FATHER,  
CAN I KEEP MY DUMP TRUCK?  
*PLEASE!***

You promised you would buy me a brand new toy dump truck after we move.  
To throw mine away like junk I disapprove!  
My dump truck is not like all the rest.  
It's special to me and the best.  
It's true that both axles are squeaky and bent,  
And everywhere else there's a scratch or dent.  
My dump truck is great!  
Not to play with my truck again I would hate.  
All day I've sometimes played with my truck having fun on my knees.  
Father, can I keep my dump truck? *Please!*

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/18/00)



Kevin Carlson

## WHAT IS MY FAVORITE COLOR?

Father, brothers, and I rode in our car.  
Where we were going was not far.  
We turned right,  
And neared a traffic light.  
The light shone yellow and we slow.  
What color was my favorite? I wanted to know.  
We stopped as the light turned red.  
Red looked pretty, to dad I said.  
I thought about the color blue.  
Blue was beautiful, but not my favorite I knew.  
Orange and yellow looked really neat.  
Neither were my favorite, I thought as I sat up in my seat.  
As we waited I thought about pink, purple, and the rest.  
The traffic light turned green and I knew what color to me was best.  
I smiled and felt good, as I looked at the light shining green.  
It was the most beautiful color I had ever seen!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (5/7/00)



Kevin Carlson

**I CUT MY HEAD FALLING OFF  
"SPEEDY," MY BICYCLE**

Dad walked to the bottom of a hill.  
To race down I yell to dad I will.  
I sat comfortably on Speedy's banana seat,  
And on the street I rested my feet.  
As I rode, I lost control and fell hard to the ground.  
My bicycle slammed down on the street creating a loud sound.  
"CRASH!"  
I struggled to stand and touched where it hurt on my head.  
I looked at my hand and saw the blood, red.  
Dad ran up the hill to me.  
If I was all right he wanted to see.  
He looked at my head,  
And said,  
"Your bicycle's front tire was stuck in a rut."  
"On your head is a huge cut."  
I was upset and worried I had scratched Speedy's red paint and bright  
chrome.  
Dad and me hustled home.  
If I needed stitches, mom and dad didn't know.  
To find help we go.  
The Crawford's house was not far.  
Uncle Ian said my wound might leave a little scar.  
He put a bandage on my head.  
And to him I said,  
"Down a hill on my bicycle I wanted to race."  
"I fell and cut my forehead and scratched my face!"  
Days later, the bandage was removed when my wound heal.  
I'll try not to get stuck in another rut my bicycle wheel.  
To ride Speedy fast I wanted to still.  
I rode back to, and carefully raced down that same hill.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (5/9/00)

**MY FIRST SHOVEL,  
FROM UNCLE IAN**

Uncle Ian's shovel was broken at the handle and old.  
A short shovel was my size to me he told.  
He handed it to me and I smiled, as I couldn't help feeling glad.  
It was the first shovel I ever had.  
My family in our yard,  
Planted plants and I helped with my shovel working hard.  
I dug holes and moved the land,  
Proudly holding my shovel in each hand.  
I loved my shovel with the broken handle made of wood.  
Digging in our yard like father now I could.  
In the shed I carefully put my shovel away,  
Keeping it safe for me to use another day.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (2/22/00)

## I LOVED TO WALK ON MY BARE FEET

When I was a young boy,  
I loved life and felt great joy.  
I untied and my little shoes off I took.  
At my bare feet I wanted to look.  
It felt really neat,  
Walking on the grass and soil in bare feet.  
I breathed in the spring air through my little nose,  
And in the mud puddles, wiggled my little toes.  
I would play and daydream.  
Life was wonderful to me it did seem.

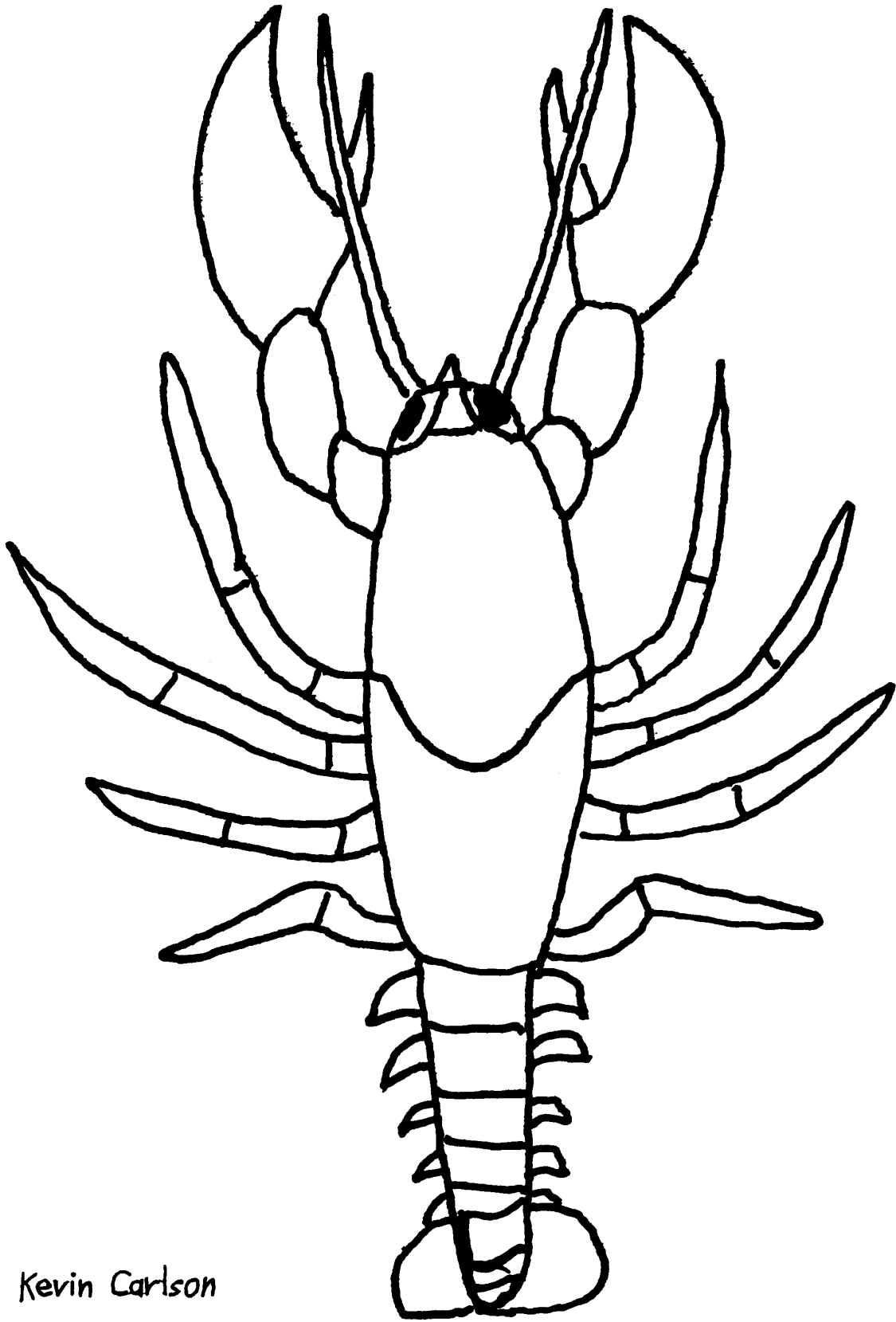
—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (10/4/99)

## WHAT DID I FIND IN A NEW SANDBOX?

At school, I leaped into a new sandbox holding a stick in my hand.  
I dug a hole and built a mountain with the sand.  
Dig in the corner, a feeling told me.  
What was there I couldn't wait to see.  
I dug the sand to the dirt below.  
A feeling told me I still had further to go.  
Into the dirt I dug deep,  
And saw something special for me to keep.  
A workman's trowel I proudly pulled out of the ground.  
I did what my feeling told me and a lost treasure I found.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (5/6/00)





Kevin Carlson

## WHAT DID I FIND IN A STREAM UNDER A ROCK?

Mom asked brothers and me if we wanted to go out for the day.

Let's go somewhere where there might be turtles I say.

An old bucket with us I take.

Down the country roads we drove looking for a pond, stream, or lake.

We stopped near a stream that was deep and wide.

It had many places for creatures to live and hide.

My shoes I untied and off I took.

In the stream I wanted to look.

The sand and cool running water felt really neat,

As I walked into the stream in my bare feet.

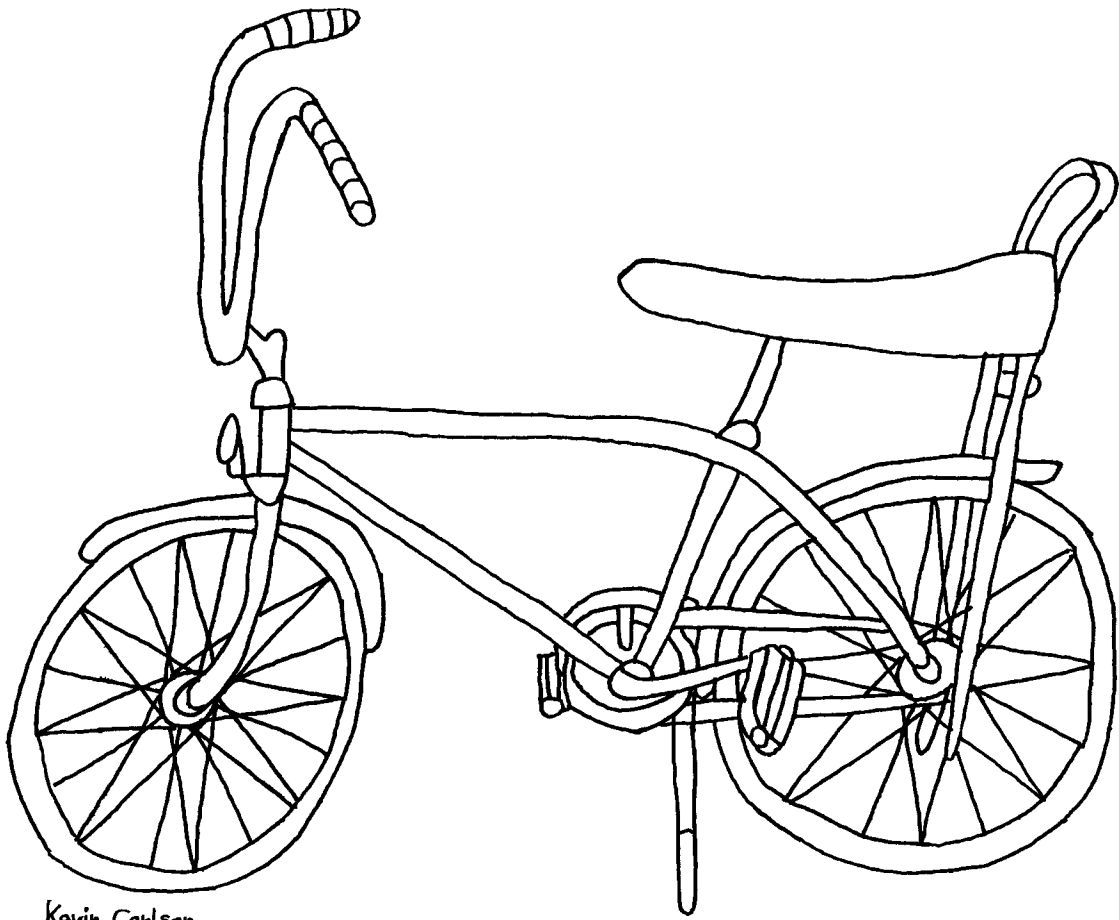
An odd feeling told me to move a large rock and why I wonder.

The rock I moved and looked under.

To find a turtle I really wish.

I picked up from in the muddy water four crayfish!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (2/27/00)



Kevin Carlson

## MY FIRST BICYCLE, "SPEEDY"

Dad and I put my first bicycle, Speedy, together.  
We helped each other outside in the warm weather.

"Speedy is great!" I said.

He had a long banana seat and was painted red.  
In the sun, Speedy's chrome handlebars shone bright.

To me, he was out-of-sight!

How fast could Speedy go?

I smiled and wanted to know.

I sat on Speedy's seat and the ground my feet could still reach.  
To ride my bike I looked for someone to me to teach.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (10/4/99)

## WHAT DID I FIND IN THE WOODS?

One day when I was a boy, I went into the woods to roam and play.  
I walked farther and farther into the forest far away.  
I climbed over moss covered stonewalls and in between many trees.  
Something in the dried leaves I saw as I felt a cool autumn breeze.  
The object up I picked.  
It was a brown car gas cap that was scratched, rusty, and nicked.  
"MERCURY" was written in the center of the cap in chrome.  
My treasure I proudly held as I raced home!

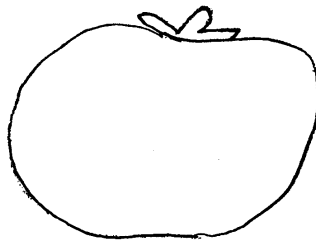
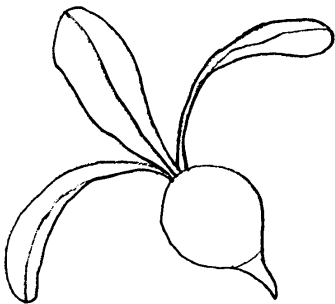
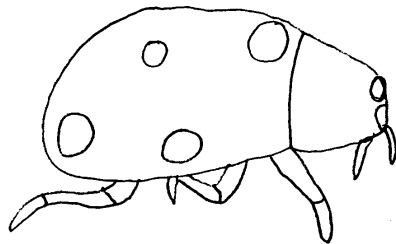
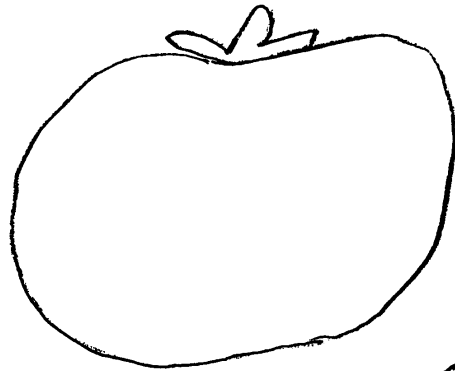
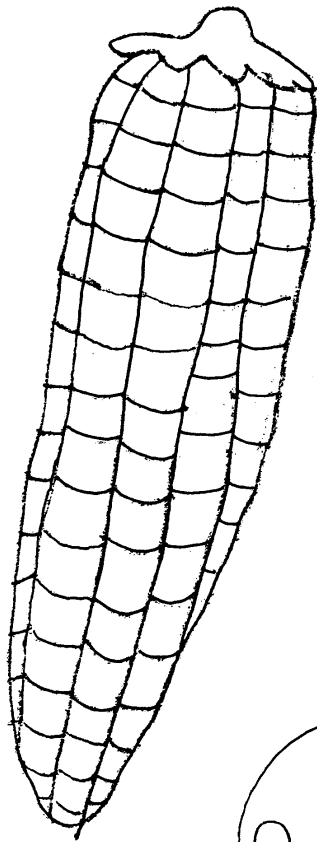
—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (11/3/00)

## TREE

Tree  
Tall Green  
Weeping Moving Blowing  
Truck Men Shovels Holes  
Falling Breaking Weeping  
Ugly Cracked  
Wood

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (1984)

ABOUT THE POEM: While living in upstate New York in the late 1970's, I would ride my bicycle to the construction sites near our home. *Tree* was written while I was attending the 7<sup>th</sup> grade at Cross Middle School in Tucson, Arizona. When I wrote the poem, I remembered seeing trees that were cut down at the sites of new homes in New York.



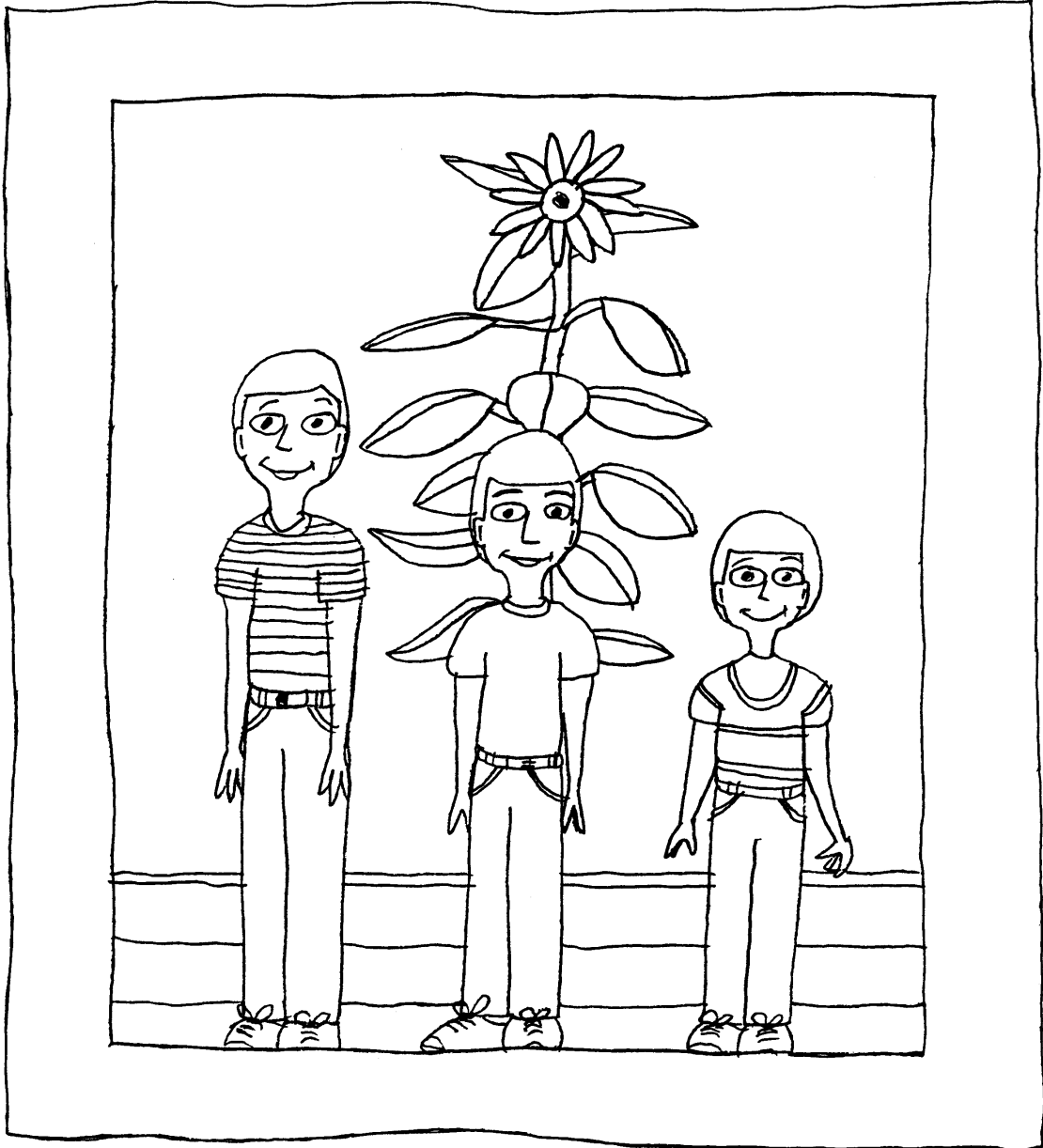
Kevin Carlson

## OUR GARDEN IN STORMVILLE, NEW YORK

We bought squash, green bean, carrot, and other seeds,  
And in our garden, our family removed the weeds.  
Holding a gasoline-powered gardening tool in each hand,  
Father tilled the land.  
Earthworms were gladly welcome since they help fertilize,  
They were slimy and some were huge in size.  
Mom and dad gave a small section to brothers and me.  
How tall our corn stalks would grow I wanted to see.  
With my small hand,  
I helped put the seeds into the land.  
We welcomed into our garden the ladybugs,  
And removed pests such as caterpillars and slugs.  
I would sometimes walk in our garden in my bare feet,  
Waiting for the day our crops would be ready to eat.  
We watched every day as our garden grew and grew.  
One day, it was time to harvest, we knew.  
I pulled potatoes and carrots out of the land,  
And removed the corn from the stalks with my small hand.  
I ate a small carrot and a green bean.  
Some tiny insects on the red tomatoes could be seen.  
In a basket I gathered a number,  
Of juicy squash and cucumber.  
Brothers helped too in the warm summer sun.  
I was happy as we worked together in our garden having fun!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (12/18/00)





Kevin Carlson

**MY SUNFLOWER PICTURE  
HANGING ON  
MY BEDROOM WALL**

I was a boy living in the country in 1978.  
For spring to come I had wait.  
To plant a flower was my need,  
So I decided to plant a sunflower seed.  
I dug a hole with my little hand,  
And placed the seed into the land.  
The plant grew tall like a tower.  
One day, a bud opened into a beautiful golden sunflower.  
It grew where everyone could see.  
It was my first sunflower and very special to me.  
To me, my sunflower was the most wonderful flower in Stormville, our town,  
And anywhere else around.  
Michael, Steven, sunflower, and me stood close together,  
Enjoying the comfortable warm weather.  
Bright light shone from the sun,  
Onto everyone.  
With his camera, our picture Dad took,  
Twenty years later in several boxes I look.  
My sunflower picture I found.  
In our house I looked around and around.  
I noticed on my bedroom wall above my bed a bare space.  
My sunflower picture now proudly hangs in its place.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (11/6/99)



Kevin Carlson

**I GOT  
A BLACK EYE  
DURING  
BASEBALL PRACTICE!**

"We will practice," the coach said to us before the little league baseball game.

I looked at our team, Lakeland Lumber, all dressed in orange shirts, the same.

I hustled to the outfield in the sunny warm weather.

Waiting for the ball, I proudly wore my baseball glove made of leather.

I squinted my eyes to see.

The baseball headed straight toward me!

The ball bounced on the ground.

Holding my glove open, I moved around.

"SMACK!"

The ball hit me in the eye!

I felt dizzy and fell as if I was going to die!

I got back up, picked up the ball, and the best I could, it I threw.

Still feeling uneasy, something was wrong I knew.

To the assistant coach I run.

I felt a little dizzy and struggled to see in the bright sun.

"Are you alright?" he asked me.

"Yes," I replied as through my eyes I could still see.

"You won't play baseball with your team today,"

To me, the assistant coach say.

Since the swelling was bad in my case,

A bag of ice was placed on my eye and face.

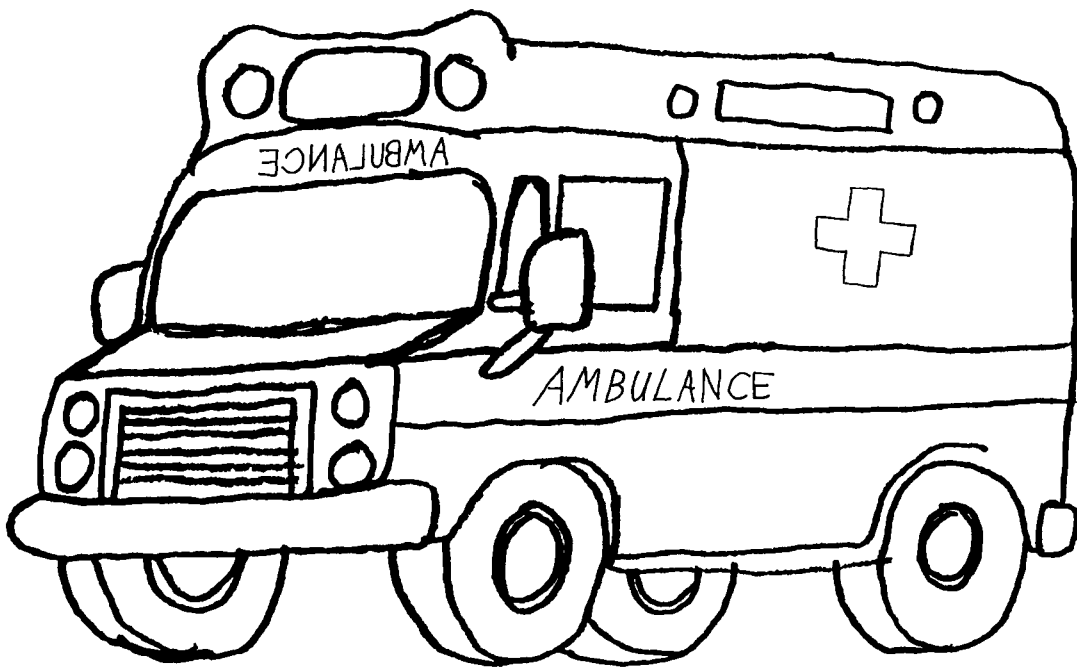
I had a black eye, which I couldn't hide.

Days later, Dad took our family's picture on 35 millimeter slide.

"You look as if you've been in a fight," mom said which was true.

In the mirror I looked at my eye, black and blue.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/19/00)



Kevin Carlson

## MY FIRST MODEL KIT, AN AMBULANCE

Father said at my age to build a model I was ready and able.  
With my first model kit I sat down with him at the kitchen table.  
The model was an ambulance van with *AMBULANCE* written backwards on  
front.

I opened the box and through the model parts I hunt.  
There were decals and most of the parts were white.  
The real ambulance with its flashing lights and siren would be out-of-sight!

I first went over the instruction plans,  
As I held the parts tree in my small hands.  
I looked at the instructions and the needed parts off I clip.

"SNIP, SNIP, SNIP"

Holding a piece of sandpaper sheet,  
I carefully sanded each seat.

All of the parts fit together just right.  
I didn't rush, and stopped for the night.

The next day, father helped me cut the decal sheet,  
And after we put on the decals my ambulance looked really neat!

My kit was simple and I didn't need glue or pliers.

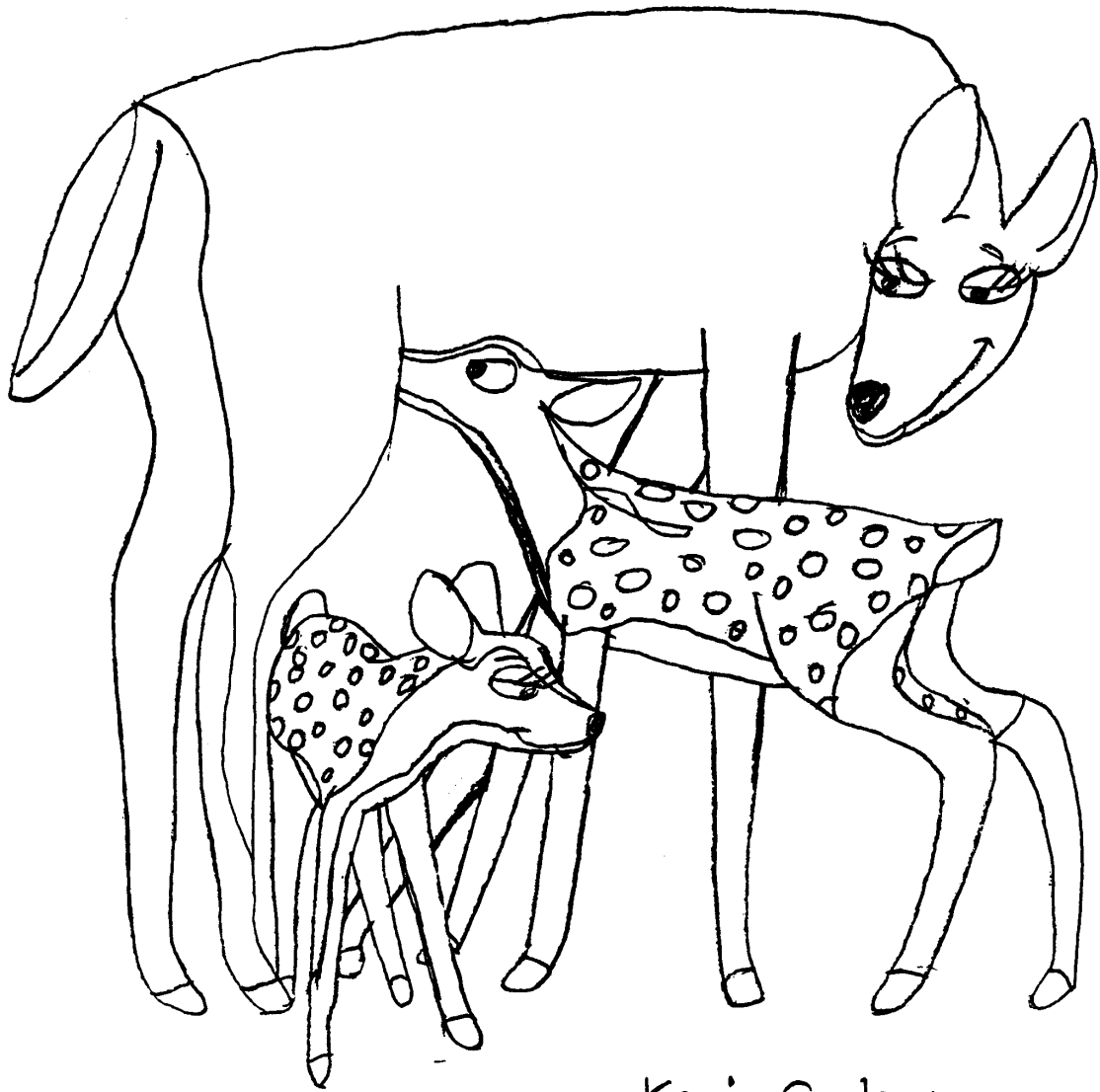
I liked the soft black rubbery tires.

At the kitchen table I sit,

Proudly looking at my first built model kit.

To the bathroom mirror my model I took,  
*AMBULANCE* on the front of my model in the mirror I wanted to look.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/19/00)



Kevin Carlson

**WAS MY CHILDHOOD IN  
STORMVILLE, NEW YORK  
FUN?**

In the 1970's the town of Stormville was my home.  
A place in the country where I loved to play and roam.  
There lived weeping willow, maple, and other trees,  
Nests of wasps, and hives of bees.  
In our garden we grew different crops such as corn, carrot, and beet.  
I loved being a sensitive boy walking around in my bare feet.  
I often rode "Speedy," my bicycle, on neighborhood roads,  
To ponds and puddles to catch turtles, frogs, and toads.  
Sometimes I caught a salamander, newt, or snake,  
And in my bucket to home I would take.  
Once I caught several crayfish in a stream,  
And got a black eye playing little league baseball on the Lakeland Lumber  
team!  
My family and I landscaped our yard,  
For hours at a time having fun working hard.  
I listened to music of the 1970's in our station wagon and house.  
One day, father found living in our station wagon baby mice and mother  
mouse.  
I loved playing with my toy dump truck, bulldozer, and tractor-trailer.  
After rain, I wound up my toy boat and in a deep puddle imagined being a  
sailor.  
I played inside in my pajamas with feet while having the chicken pox.  
Dad built for brothers and me our own backyard sandbox.  
At the civic center, build a shelf and desk, father said I could.  
Of pine wood and using my little hammer I proudly would.  
Sometimes I saw a deer with her fawn.  
I quietly tiptoed closer and deep into the forest they were gone.  
Brothers and I went fishing at a lake,  
And in my swimsuit swimming lessons I take.  
Winter was cold and wearing long underwear I would play.  
I pulled brothers in the snow on our sleigh.  
In spring, leaves grew on the trees coloring the forest a beautiful green.  
Our town of Stormville was an awesome sight to be seen!  
In 1980, father received a good job offer from far away.



I felt sad leaving Stormville on moving day.

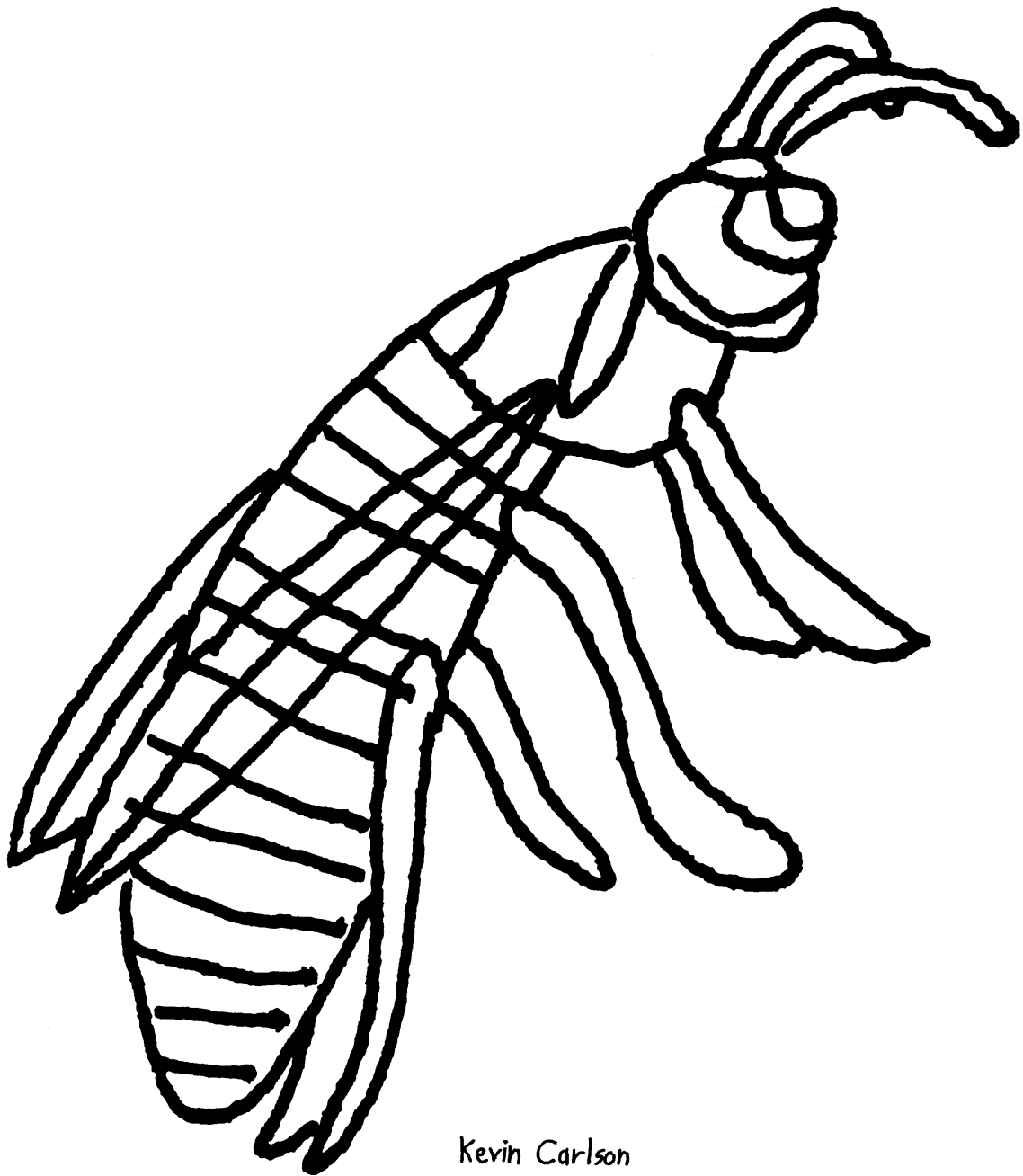
—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/2/00)

POEMS FROM THE BOOK *JEREMY GRABOWSKI'S CRAZY  
SUMMER IN STORMVILLE!*

## TO A SPECIAL BOY WHO HAS A POWERFUL IMAGINATION

Who lives in your world that's wonderful and so much fun?  
You might be the only one!  
Smile often and don't wait!  
Enjoy life and feeling great!  
Someday I hope you too write a book and have a good time.  
And create poems that teach lessons and rhyme!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (3/00)



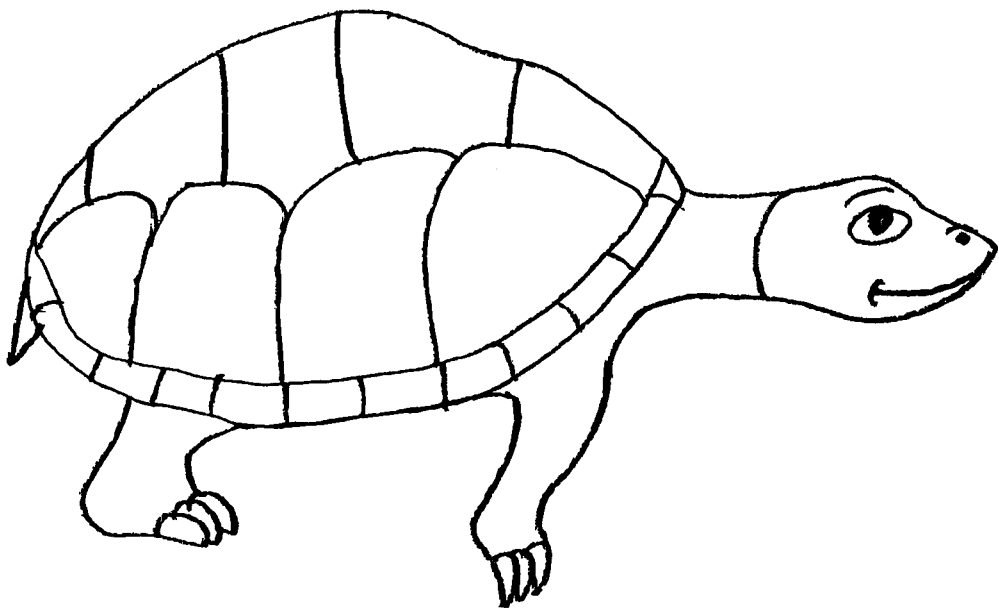
Kevin Carlson

**WHY DID AN ODD FEELING TELL  
JEREMY GRABOWSKI JR.  
TO STAY AWAY FROM  
A PICNIC BLANKET?**

Jeremy walked toward a picnic blanket in the yard at about noon.  
Brother had just put the blanket down and would be back soon.  
Jeremy had an odd feeling telling him to go far away from here.  
There was something unusual about the blanket that was near.

Jeremy decided not to do,  
What his odd feeling told him to.  
What bad could happen to me?  
Jeremy wondered and wanted to see.  
He jogged to the blanket and sat down wondering why.  
"YELLOW JACKETS!" he yelled as he jumped up high.  
There was a nest somewhere in the ground!  
Angry yellow jackets were flying around!  
As Jeremy was stung, he realized it was true,  
You should pay attention to what an odd feeling tells you!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (3/00)



Kevin Carlson

**WHAT DID  
JEREMY GRABOWSKI  
FIND IN THE MIDDLE  
OF THE ROAD?**

Jeremy Theodore Grabowski Jr. heard loud squeals,  
From his family's station wagon's wheels.  
In front of their car,  
A turtle sat in his shell not far.  
To the other side of the road the turtle planned to go.  
When would he come out of his shell? Jeremy wanted to know.  
Did the turtle live at the nearby lake?  
Out of the car he raced and the turtle to his pond at home he take.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (7/00)



Kevin Carlson



HOW DID  
JEREMY THEODORE GRABOWSKI JR.  
GET A BLACK EYE?

Jeremy proudly showed Julie the sign on his tent.  
No Girls Allowed! is what it read and meant.  
To go into the tent she try.  
He stood in front and wouldn't let her go by.  
Jeremy joked and proudly said, "I won't let you go in and I *dare* you to hurt  
me!"  
What would she do he couldn't wait to see.  
Julie warned, "Everything you say and do,  
Can be used against you!"  
Later during a baseball game, Julie hit the ball into the sky above.  
Jeremy moved around holding open his leather glove.  
As he remembered his dare,  
The ball flew downward and he didn't know where.  
In the blinding sunlight Jeremy couldn't see the ball.  
"POP!" he heard as into his face it accidentally fall.  
What you say can come true.  
Jeremy now had an eye, black and blue!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (10/00)

**JEREMY GRABOWSKI'S  
BATH IN THE BATHTUB**

Jeremy played with his toy trucks in the mud and needed to take a bath for certain.

He closed the bathroom door and opened the bathtub curtain.  
He closed the bathtub drain and turned on the HOT and COLD knob.  
He heard mother raise her voice and say, "Clean behind your ears and do a good job!"

When full, he turned off the water and his clothes off he took.

In the mirror at his naked behind he look!  
With a washcloth and soap he first washed his face,  
And his arm pit place.

Jeremy washed his arms, back, and chest.  
It was important to be clean and look his best.  
He cleaned his legs, feet, and toes,  
And on the rest of his body the washcloth goes.

He squirted in his hand shampoo.  
It was gooey and colored light blue.  
He washed his scalp and hair,  
And rinsed off his body here, there, and everywhere.  
Jeremy stood up and saw himself in the mirror naked and wet.  
He pulled the bathtub plug and his green towel he get.  
He dried himself and was squeaky clean.  
In the bathtub a brown dirt ring could be seen!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (7/00)

## MOM, I DON'T LIKE BROCCOLI!

Jeremy Grabowski sat at the kitchen table and looked at his dinner plate.

His chicken and French fries he gladly ate.

He rubbed and rubbed on the floor his small bare feet.

His broccoli he did not want to eat.

Mother explained, "To throw away your broccoli would be a waste,  
Give them just a taste."

He decided to try a little bit.

Straight up in his chair he sit.

He didn't remember it being true,

That he had eaten broccoli, not even a few.

He looked at a very small broccoli piece and felt in his throat a lump,

Like a huge uprooted tree stump.

He put in his mouth the tiny piece and rushed,

Down his throat with milk the broccoli he flushed...

GULP!

(PAUSE)

Jeremy thought and said, "Gee... that didn't taste so bad!

Tasting a new food I had.

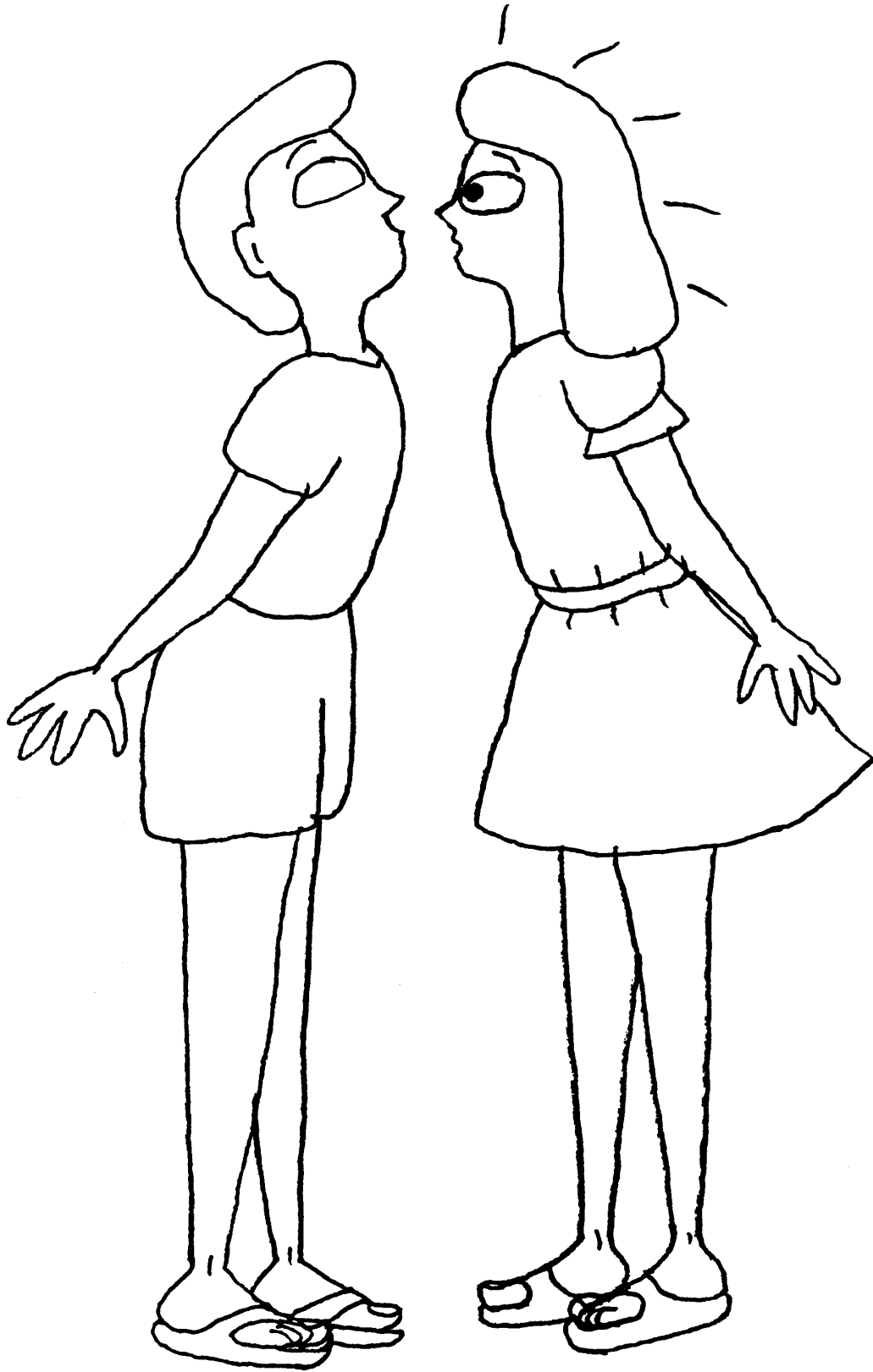
Broccoli I don't hate.

Broccoli tastes really, really great!

New foods I will try.

I probably won't get sick and die!"

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (3/00)



Kevin Carlson

## JULIE AND JEREMY'S FIRST KISS

Jeremy walked to Julie's house next door.  
It was spring and his little sandals he wore.  
He told her what a nice sunny day was today,  
And asked if in the forest with him she wanted to play.  
Out of her house she came, and into the woods they run.  
He took her to a place far away from everyone.  
They went near a pond and weeping willow tree,  
And stood behind a bush where no one else could see.  
Julie's eyes were as blue as the beautiful sky.  
To kiss her he wanted to try.  
Jeremy smirked and wiggled his little toes,  
And kissed her cute nose.  
Julie was surprised and at Jeremy she stare.  
She'd never forget her first kiss, when it happened and where.  
He felt great inside and thought, "That was a thrill!  
Kiss her again I will!"  
He felt very strong, not weak.  
And kissed her cheek.  
Julie covered her eyes with her hands as her face turned red.  
Jeremy giggled and kissed her forehead.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (5/00)

**WHAT HAPPENED WHEN  
JEREMY GRABOWSKI JR.  
SPENT THE NIGHT  
AT AUNT AND UNCLE'S HOUSE?**

Jeremy spent the night at Aunt and Uncle's house and slept in the guest room.

Winston, their beagle puppy, raced up the stairs, "ZOOM!"  
He leaped into Jeremy's bed.

Jeremy woke as Winston licked his face, ears, and head.  
The boy giggled as he fell onto the floor.

Aunt had forgotten this morning to close the bedroom door.  
To Jeremy's bare feet Winston goes.

Winston tickled Jeremy silly as he licked the boy's little feet and toes.  
The puppy jumped on Jeremy's stomach and his face turned red as he  
giggled.

Winston licked Jeremy's face as Jeremy laughed and wiggled.  
Uncle called the puppy for his breakfast and into the kitchen he raced.  
Jeremy sprung out of bed and down the stairs the puppy he chased.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (6/00)

**WHAT HAPPENED WHEN  
JEREMY GRABOWSKI JR.  
CAUGHT A LEOPARD FROG  
IN A THICK MUD PUDDLE?**

Jeremy stood in a mud puddle holding a leopard frog he wanted to keep.

He wore father's boots on his small feet and sank deep.

In the mud he couldn't move and was stuck!

He had an idea and was in luck.

He took his feet out of the boots and into the mud he stood.

Being careful not to slip and fall he should!

In between his toes,

The mud goes!

The slimy thick mud felt neat,

On his bare feet.

"SPLAT!"

He slipped and fell into the mud so thick!

The leopard frog was free and hopped away quick!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (7/00)

**WHAT DID  
JEREMY THEODORE GRABOWSKI JR.  
STEP ON WHILE  
PUTTING UP HIS TENT?**

As Jeremy put up his tent,  
He stepped on something and flying up into his face it went!  
"FLI NG! SMACK! OUCH!"  
If Jeremy had put the rake facing down, its proper place,  
The handle wouldn't have been able to fling up and hit his face!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (6/00)





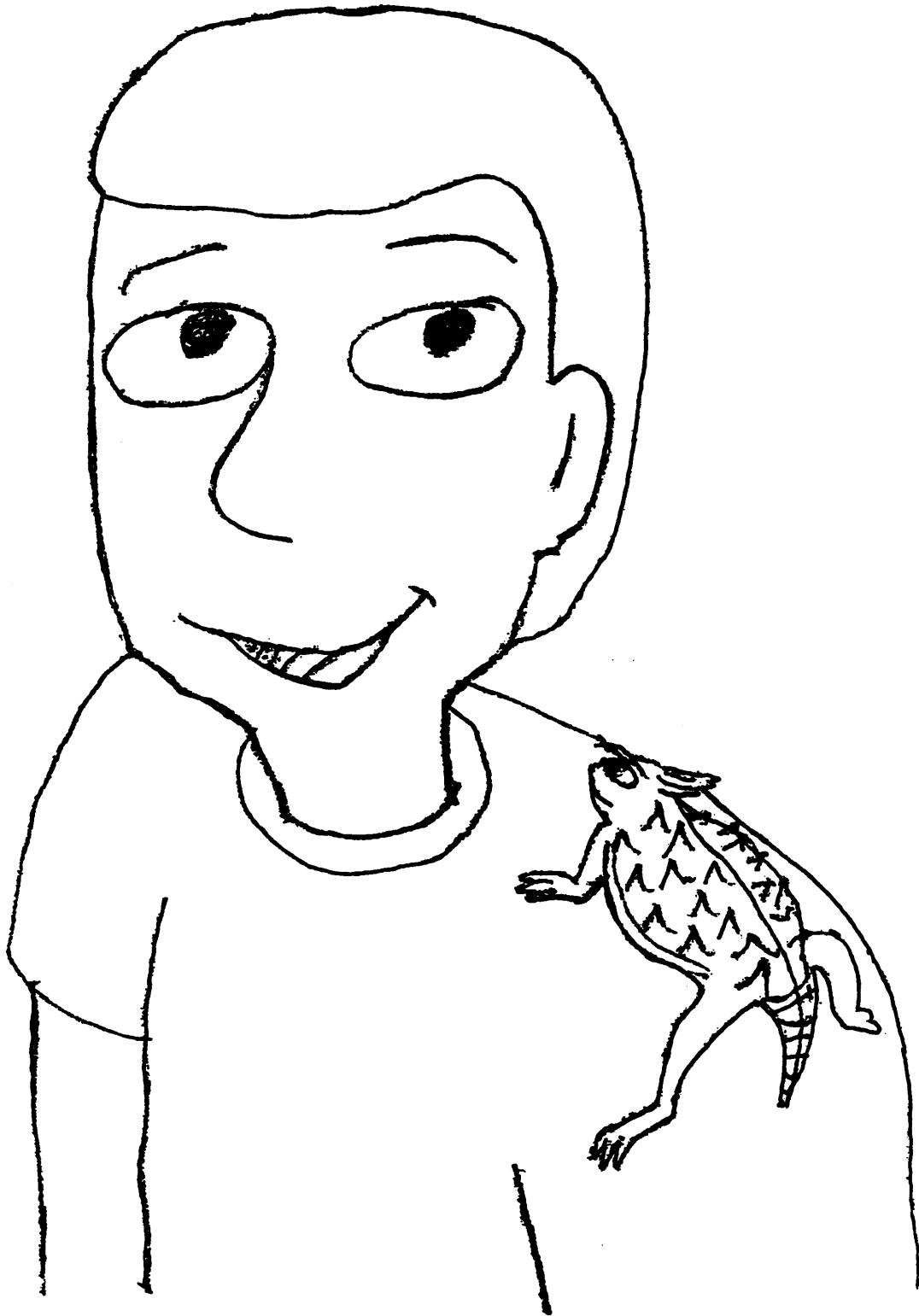
Kevin Carlson

**JEREMY GRABOWSKI!  
WHY DOESN'T JULIE WANT  
YOU TO MOVE FAR AWAY?**

Jeremy Grabowski! Why doesn't Julie want you to move far away?  
The real reason why, to you she won't say.  
You have a friendly smile and are really fun.  
Her husband and father of her kids, she wonders if you'll someday be the  
one.  
She knows deep inside, she likes you, is true.  
You could ask and ask again and she wouldn't tell you.  
If she admitted to you she had a crush,  
She would feel too embarrassed and in front of you blush!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (5/00)

# POEMS ABOUT LIFE IN TUCSON, ARIZONA



Kevin Carlson

## A HORNY TOAD IN OUR YARD

Under the bright Arizona sun,  
In my cactus garden I saw a horny toad run.  
In between the prickly pear he race.  
Into a small bush him I chase.  
He looked for a place to hide.  
To get away from me he tried.  
His body colors matched the sand.  
I reached him with my hand.  
I picked him up and in my small hands him I hold.  
"Look how big this one is!" to mom I told.  
I put him on our basketball court and wanted him to stay.  
Back into the desert with his little legs he raced away.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/20/00)

**IT'S TRUE!  
I DID SEE A MOTORCYCLE  
IN THE DITCH!**

I got father and took him outside to see what I saw.

I couldn't wait to show him and was in awe!

He said, "There's nothing out here that I can see.

If there was, where could it be?"

I exclaimed, "I saw a dirt bike, painted red!"

"It's true! In this ditch!" I said.

He explained, "It's your brain playing a trick on you!

Sometimes children imagine seeing things, they do!"

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/17/00)

**MOM! MOM!  
I LOST MY TOAD IN  
OUR APARTMENT  
SOMEWHERE!**

My family came home from a store and I wanted to see my new pet.

Into his box I reached and him I tried to get.

*Where did my Colorado River Toad go?*

I assured mother, "He's hiding and where I think I know!"

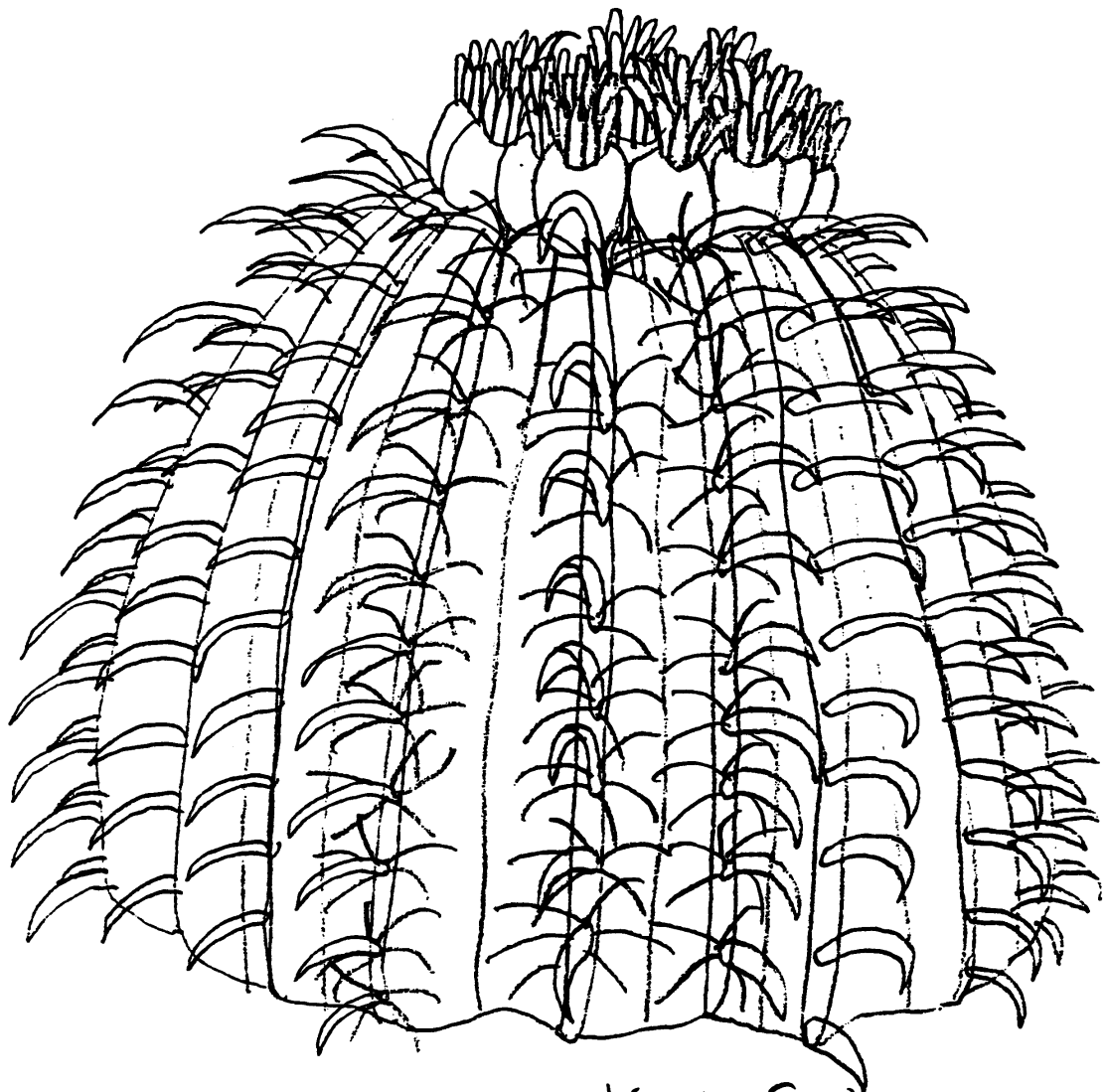
Into the kitchen I race!

I just *knew* his hiding place!

I could see in between the refrigerator and counter side,

He was keeping cool and trying to hide!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/21/00)



Kevin Carlson



**WHAT HAPPENED  
WHEN I TRIED TO CATCH  
A BALL NEAR A CACTUS?**

Brother threw a ball quickly to me to catch.  
I put my hand down and the ball I tried to snatch.  
"OUCH!"  
I was surprised, as before something I did not see!  
My hand was now stuck in a barrel cactus next to me!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/17/00)

## MY BELLY BUTTON LINT

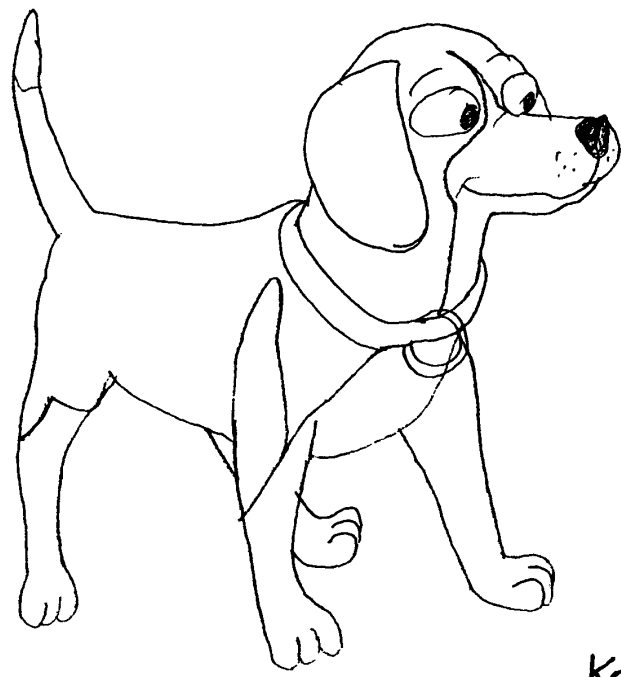
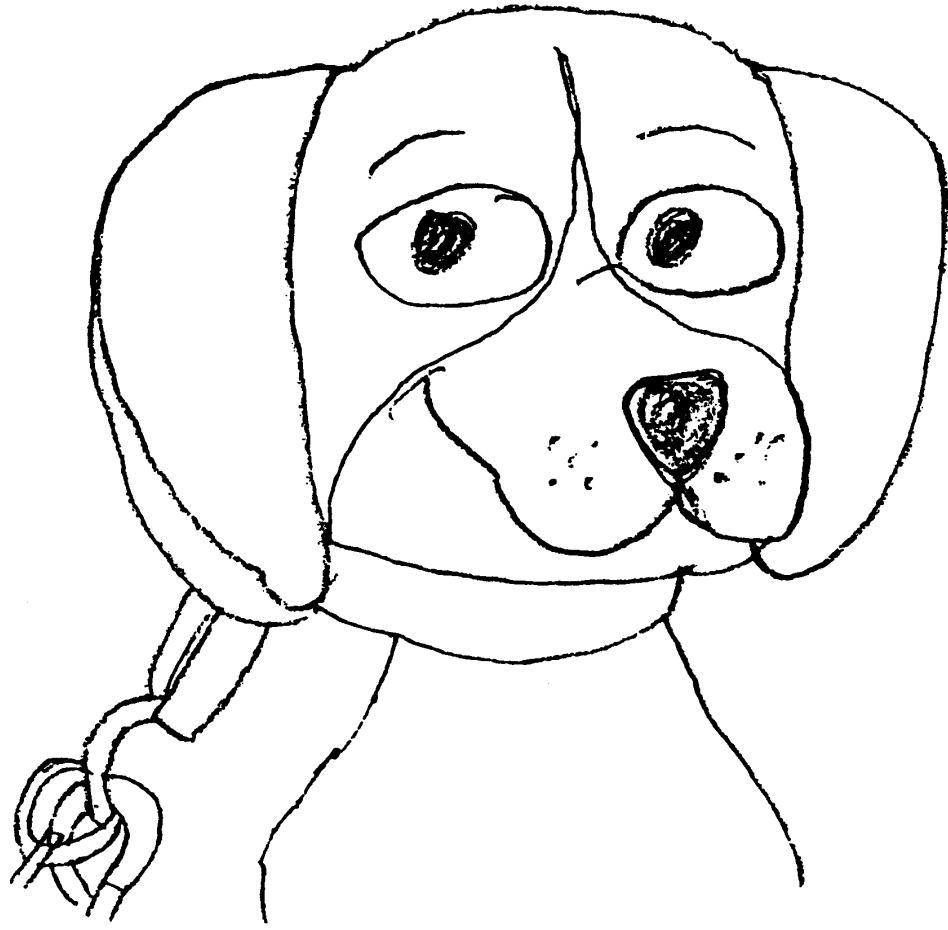
It was interesting the look on Sis's face,  
When I removed lint from my belly button in a public place.  
I lifted up my shirt and my stomach was bare.  
My stomach could be seen everywhere.  
In my belly button, my finger I slid,  
And my belly button lint I rid.  
Sis frowned giving me a hint,  
She explained, "In the shower clean out your belly button lint!"

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/19/00)

**MOM!  
WHERE IS MY  
BABY BLANKET?**

I don't think you remember it being true,  
Your gray baby blanket was once, baby blue.  
I washed it often and because you used it every day.  
It changed to gray!  
It was very old and I finally decided to throw it away.  
The garbage truck took it to the dump today!  
Sleeping without your baby blanket, I really think you can.  
You're twelve years old, already a young man!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/17/00)



Kevin Carlson

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN  
OUR NEW BEAGLE PUP  
TRIES TO PLAY  
WITH OUR CATS?

We call our new beagle, "Puppy" since we haven't yet given him a name.

With our two grown cats he wants to play a game.

Puppy tries to get close to the cats and have fun!

Suzy and Sandy hiss and away they run!

Puppy races and the cats he wants to play with and catch!

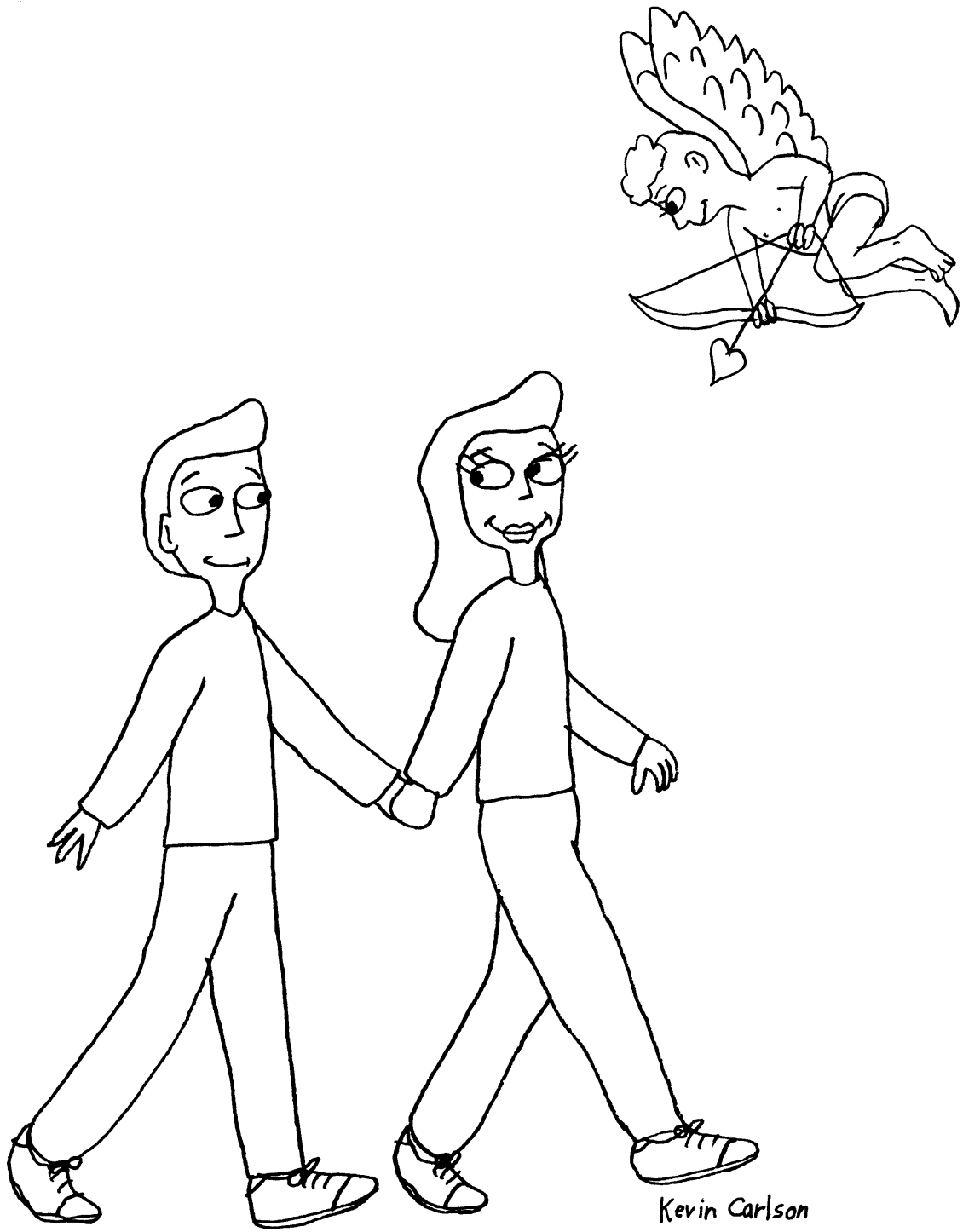
"YELP!" he cries as his snout Suzy scratch!

When the three of them are fed, each other they bump into and step on!

They're *much, much* too busy to fight until their food is all gone!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (11/23/00)

## OTHER POEMS ABOUT LIFE



Kevin Carlson

## WHEN I'M WITH YOU

Time with you I like to spend.  
It's fun being with a special friend.  
When I am with you I feel different inside.  
My feelings I can't hide.  
Great I feel from head to toe.  
I smile, as you're someone special I know.  
It's very true,  
I'm in love with you!

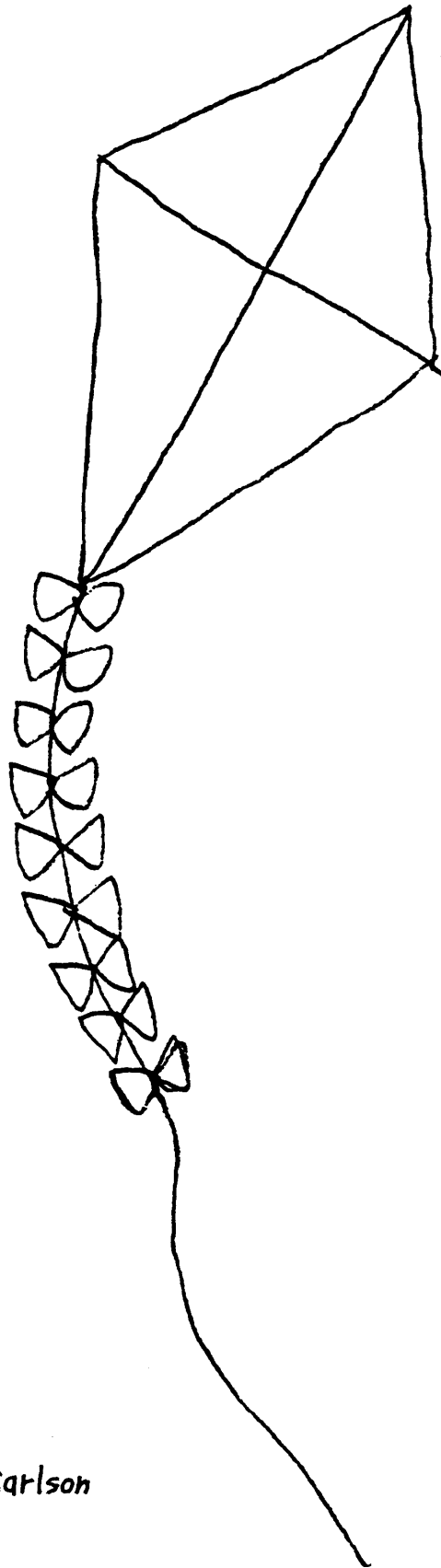
—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (12/19/00)



## WHAT DID GEORGE FIND AT A POND?

George ran holding his gigantic net.  
He wonders what he'll get.  
Nearing the bog.  
He sees a huge green frog.  
Shining on his smiling face is the sun.  
Oh, what fun!  
"Buzz," says a bee.  
He squints his eyes to see.  
Flying in the sky is a mother duck.  
She lands on the brown muddy muck.  
George walks closer and sees a black snake.  
"Crack," say the dried weeds as they break.  
A turtle hides near a huge water lily.  
The boy smiles feeling silly.  
Soon again he plans to visit this pool.  
Oh no, tomorrow is school!

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/2/00)



Kevin Carlson

## CAN SHE GET HER KITE FREE?

A girl stands tall with a smile.  
She hasn't flown her kite in awhile.  
The wind blows.  
Up her kite goes!  
It's in flight.  
The clouds are bright white.  
The kite flies high.  
High into the blue sky.  
She holds tight the string,  
As birds watch and sing.  
The kite sinks down into a maple tree.  
Can she get her kite free?

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (3/6/01)

## BULLDOZER

Wearing a yellow hard-hat, a bearded fellow,  
Sat in a bulldozer that shone bright yellow.  
He started the engine and closed the door,  
Going to do his part building the department store.  
The gigantic blade scraped the land,  
Like a giant man's hand.  
The bulldozer weighed many ton,  
Working in the hot morning sun.  
It moved a grass-covered mound,  
Now nowhere to be found.  
A dead maple tree stood tall,  
Soon going to fall.  
Everywhere in the dried mud were cracks,  
Replaced by bulldozer tracks.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (5/9/00)

## YOU YELL TOO MUCH!

Father pointed his finger at Jimmy and shouted, "Don't run in the house!  
It's not your outdoor playhouse!  
During meals, you talk with your mouth full of food!  
Do you know that's being very rude?  
You reach for something across the table and as your arm pass,  
You knock down someone's orange juice glass!  
In your room, you play in your pants on your knees,  
Take care of your clothes, would you please!  
Before lunch I ask, 'Did you wash your hands?' and look at you as I hope.  
'No,' you say, and to bathroom you march to wash with warm water and soap!  
You scatter your toys on your bedroom floor!  
'Later I will clean up,' you softly say as I angrily close the door."  
Jimmy smiled at father and explained, "I'm a boy, not a grown man like you!  
Not behaving or doing things right sometimes children do!  
To yell too much is not good,  
Think about what you say, you should!  
Parents might not always know what's right,  
Not knowing they yell too much at their children, they might!"

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/20/00)

**A RAT'S HOME  
AT A  
GARBAGE DUMP**

At a garbage dump lives a huge ugly rat.  
On an empty tin can he sat.  
His home is an enormous garbage mound.  
It weighs over five hundred pound.  
On top is a shower curtain.  
Put there last Thursday for certain.  
Next to it stands a broken wooden stool.  
Couldn't be fixed with any tool.  
On its side lies a shiny teakettle.  
And other pieces of metal.  
Lying flat is a rusty door.  
Came from a department store.  
There's a stained white shirt.  
And an out-of-fashion purple skirt.  
There are old toys.  
Broken and abused by girls and boys.  
Thick black goeey motor oil.  
Seeps into the soil.  
On the bottom rests an unearthed tree stump.  
Next to a worn out tire pump.  
In the very middle hides a lost emerald ring.  
It belonged to a famous obese king.  
There are plenty of thrown away pieces of food.  
If you're in the mood.  
In the distance sits a bent lawn chair.  
Not far rests a clump of matted smelly brown hair.  
A chipped and cracked cement block.  
Stands next to a frayed dirty white sock.  
A one-month-old torn newspaper blows.  
Where it goes, no one knows.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (8/2/00)

**DO YOU WONDER IF  
WHAT YOU BELIEVE  
AS FACT  
IS REALLY TRUE?**

People once discovered the world was round.  
Not flat, they had finally found.  
Were there people living in the southern hemisphere? They wondered if  
people could.  
If so, walking upside down people thought they would!  
What they believed as fact wasn't true!  
There, rain must fall upward *to* the sky, they thought they knew.

—Richard W. Carlson Jr. (9/7/00)

## SHORT STORIES



## THE MYSTERY OF THE STRANGE VOICE

On the front lawn, Chris tossed a baseball into the sky and caught it in his baseball glove. He wished there was a kid his age in the neighborhood who would play ball with him. "Shucks," he said to himself.

Chris heard a strange voice coming from somewhere not far away. Looking around, he thought, "Who is that?"

He heard the voice again and wondered, "Where is that voice coming from?" "I know where to look," he said walking into the garage.

"Clang, clang, clang!" he heard. Chris looked and saw his father working on the car. "Gee, that's not what I heard," Chris thought.

Still looking around, he walked to the old wooden shed in the backyard. He slowly pulled open the shed door. Carefully, he peeked into the shed and saw the rusty lawn mower and yard tools. "No, not here," he thought.

"Aha!" he exclaimed, "I'm going to look in our garden."

As he walked into the garden he saw something moving behind the tall corn stalks. "What is in our garden?" Chris wondered, "What will I find?"

Afraid, he felt his heart beating quickly and shouted, "Who are you? What are you doing here?" Again, he saw something moving.

He walked closer and saw an ugly three-eyed hairy green monster! The monster roared and pounded its chest with huge fists. It leaped from behind the corn stalks out into the sunlight! Chris was surprised!

Chris smiled and asked, "I need to practice playing baseball. Do you know how to throw a ball?"

"Yes!" replied the monster grinning, "I would love to play baseball!"

(5/11/00)

## WHO OR WHAT IS MAKING THAT SOUND IN ELLIOT'S CLOSET?

"Vvvvrrrrrruuuummm!" Elliot exclaimed sounding like a racecar. He raced into his room and leaped into bed. Mother tucked him under his comforter. Mother and father wished him a goodnight and father turned the light off. Elliot closed his sleepy eyes and listened to the crickets chirping outside.

As Elliot began to fall asleep, he heard a sound coming from his closet. "Hum," Elliot thought, "My closet is full of my toys and clothes."

He heard the sound again. "Who is in my closet?" Elliot thought.

Elliot heard the sound again and was scared. He pulled his comforter over his head and listened.

He heard the sound again and wondered, "Is Count Dracula in my closet? Is he going to bite my neck?" Elliot was puzzled.

Elliot still heard the sound. He could hear someone or something moving in his closet.

"Oh no! Is a ghost in my closet?" Elliot wondered.

Elliot was curious and thought, "I'm going to be brave and look in my closet!"

The night-light near his bed lit his room enough to see. Elliot quietly slid out of bed and picked up the baseball bat nearby. He tiptoed to his closet. Elliot could feel and hear his heart pounding as he held the closet door handle.

As he opened the door, Elliot could see the Bogey Man! Elliot was so scared that he stood speechless with his mouth wide open.

"Excuse me," asked the Bogey Man, "It's uncomfortable and chilly in your closet. Can I borrow a blanket and sleep on your bedroom floor tonight?"

Elliot was no longer scared. They stood looking at each other.

"You can sleep on the floor tonight in my sleeping bag," replied Elliot smiling.

Elliot took his sleeping bag out from under his bed and unrolled it onto the floor. He also took out a spare pillow from the closet.

"You can sleep here tonight," Elliot said pointing his finger.

"Thank you," replied the Bogey Man.

Elliot and the Bogey Man lay down to go to sleep.

"Good-night," said the Bogey Man.

"Pleasant dreams," replied Elliot.

(12/21/00)

## GEORGIE'S BIRTHDAY WISH

Georgie lay in a hospital bed and thought, "I wish mom and dad could be here with me today and tomorrow when I have my operation." He was upset and started crying.

"Why do I have to be alone on my birthday?" he asked himself as he covered his face with his white bed sheet.

Today was Georgie's tenth birthday and tomorrow he was going to have an operation. Like most children who were going to have an operation, he was scared. Doctor Goldberg said it was important for Georgie to have a simple operation on his brain as soon as possible. A couple of days after his operation, Georgie would probably be able to go home.

Georgie's family lived in a small town and flew into the city to bring Georgie to the hospital two weeks ago. Georgie's parents had to go back to their jobs and his sister Amy had to go back to kindergarten. When mother told Georgie they couldn't be with him for his birthday and when he had his operation, he couldn't help feeling sad. Georgie also felt sad because his family was upset and he missed his friends at school. Mother said they would call him on his birthday sometime in the afternoon. Father told Georgie they would surprise him with a birthday gift when he returned home.

Georgie felt more upset as he cried. He wiped his face with his bed sheet. It was about ten-o'clock in the morning. Georgie lay on his stomach. "I really, really wish I wasn't alone on my tenth birthday!" Georgie wished.

Georgie heard his room door open. Georgie sat up as the nurse pushed a young man in a wheelchair to the other bed in the room. The other bed had been empty ever since Georgie arrived in the hospital. The man smiled as he saw Georgie, making Georgie feel a little better as he smiled back.

Georgie watched as the nurse helped the man into the bed. After the man and the nurse talked, she left with the wheelchair.

The man smiled and asked, "Hello! My name is Teddy. What is your name?"

Georgie replied, "I'm Georgie. Why are you in the hospital?"

Teddy explained he accidentally hurt his leg and was going to have an operation tomorrow. Georgie explained he too was going to have an operation tomorrow. Georgie was still scared and felt upset.

Teddy leaned facing Georgie and explained, "My mother, father, and sister can't be with me. I'm going to college in this city and they live far

from here. I miss them. I wish they could be here especially since today is my twenty-fifth birthday."

Georgie looked at Teddy wide eyed and replied, "Today is my birthday too! I'm ten years old! My family can't be here with me either!" Georgie didn't feel alone and upset as he had earlier.

Teddy smiled and said, "I was riding my ten-speed to college when I slid on gravel and fell. My knee was hurt badly especially since I was riding too fast. A couple of days after my operation, I can go back to college and return to my studies. I am studying to be a veterinarian."

Georgie explained as he slid out of bed, "Excuse me, I have to go to the bathroom." Georgie heard Teddy and a nurse talking about something. Georgie felt better since Teddy was there.

Georgie and Teddy spent a long time talking about their families, friends, school and playing a board game before lunch.

It was about noon when a nurse came into the room with the lunch cart. Georgie sat up in bed surprised as two other nurses brought in a huge birthday cake covered with candles!

"This is the biggest birthday cake I've ever seen!" Georgie exclaimed smiling.

"Happy birthday Georgie!" Teddy wished.

"Happy birthday to you too!" cheered Georgie.

The three nurses sang "Happy Birthday" to Georgie and Teddy.

"I asked the nurse when you were in the washroom to bring a cake for our birthdays! I hope you are surprised! Make your birthday wish!" Teddy said.

Georgie smiled at Teddy and the nurses and replied, "My birthday wish already came true! Thank you!"

Georgie and Teddy ate the chocolate cake and drank milk. Georgie explained to Teddy, "Mother is going to call me soon and I can't wait to tell her what a wonderful birthday I've had!"

(12/15/00)

## FATHER YELLS TOO MUCH AT JIMMY!

"Vvvvrrrrrruuuummm!" Jimmy exclaimed sounding like a racecar. He leaped out of bed and raced past father into the kitchen.

"Jimmy!" father yelled at the top of his voice, "You almost knocked me down! Don't run in the house again! You could hurt someone!"

Jimmy was frightened and replied, "Yes, father."

Today was a sunny Saturday morning in March. Mother cooked scrambled eggs and juicy sausages. Jimmy and his parents sat down at the kitchen table for breakfast.

Jimmy smiled at mother and said with his mouth full of food, "You're a great cook mom!"

"Jimmy!" father interrupted in a harsh voice, "You are old enough to know better than to talk with your mouth full of food!"

"Sorry father," Jimmy mumbled with a sad look on his face. Father read the newspaper. Jimmy reached for the milk container and accidentally knocked down mother's orange juice glass.

"Jimmy! Clean up this mess immediately!" father yelled.

Jimmy cleaned up the spill with a frown on his face and thought, "Why am I so clumsy?"

Jimmy took apart and played with his model human brain on his bedroom floor. "Father! Come see my model human brain. I would like to operate on a person's brain. I want to grow up to be a brain surgeon!" Jimmy called to father.

Father walked into Jimmy's room. "Jimmy!" father pointed his finger and scolded, "Don't play on your knees while wearing pants! You'll put holes in the knees! Clothes are very expensive!"

"Yes, father," Jimmy said startled.

Jimmy watched television until noon. "Jimmy! It's time for lunch!" mother called. Jimmy walked into the kitchen and sat down next to father.

"Yummy! Chunky peanut butter and jelly sandwiches!" Jimmy cheered with a smile on his face. Jimmy's mouth watered as he took a huge bite of his sandwich.

"Jimmy, did you remember to wash your hands before lunch?" Father asked calmly.

Jimmy looked at father with his mouth full of food. Father looked at Jimmy's hands and said raising his voice, "Your hands are filthy! Go into the bathroom and wash up!"

Jimmy stood up from his chair and walked into the bathroom. Jimmy washed his hands and thought, "Why does father yell at me so much?"

"Make sure you wash your hands with warm water and plenty of soap!" father shouted from the kitchen.

"Shucks!" Jimmy thought, "I can't do anything right!"

Later that evening, Jimmy put on pajamas and got ready for bed. Jimmy hopped into his cozy bed under his comforter. Mother and father walked into Jimmy's room to wish him a goodnight.

"Jimmy!" father exclaimed, "Why didn't you clean up your room before bed time? The pieces of your model human brain are all over your bedroom floor!"

Jimmy was upset and replied, "Sorry father, I will clean my room tomorrow morning."

"Pleasant dreams," mother said as she tucked Jimmy into bed and turned the light off.

"Good-night," Jimmy replied. Father walked out of Jimmy's room and into his study.

Father sat down at his armchair and thought and thought about Jimmy, "I yell at Jimmy much too much. Jimmy is still a boy and I expect too much from him." Father felt badly. "People aren't perfect, especially young boys," father thought shaking his head back and forth. "It's not good for parents to yell at their children.

I shouldn't scare Jimmy! He's a boy! What have I done?" father thought as he went back into Jimmy's room to apologize. Jimmy had already fallen asleep. Father walked into his room and sat on the bed next to mother.

"From now on things will be different between Jimmy and me," thought father as he nodded his head.

"I yell at Jimmy too much. He's still a boy. Parents shouldn't yell at their children as much as I do. Parents have a responsibility to take care of their children. Parents may not always know what's best for their children. I've learned a lesson and I'm going to change for the better," father thought as he lay down under the bed sheets.

"I can't expect children to always behave and be perfect. Tomorrow I will apologize to Jimmy," father thought as he fell asleep.

(12/21/00)

## DID DANIEL CHEAT ON HIS SIXTH GRADE HEALTH TEST?

Daniel arrived at school in the school bus. He looked out the bus window smiling and thought, "Today is my first health test for the sixth grade. The test covers the parts of the human brain. I studied last night and I think I'll do very well."

Daniel knew it was important for him to do his best in school. He wants to grow up to be a brain surgeon. "I have to do my best," thought Daniel, "especially since I want to go to medical school."

"RING! RING! RING!" rang the school bell.

Daniel cheered, "Good Morning!" to his teacher, Mrs. Carmichael, as he walked into his classroom.

"Present!" exclaimed each student as Mrs. Carmichael took attendance.

Mrs. Carmichael stood up in front of the class and explained, "Please quiet down class! I am going to hand out the health tests on the human brain. Relax, take your time, and do your best. Keep your eyes on your own paper."

Daniel felt as if there were hundreds of butterflies in his stomach as the teacher handed him his test. Daniel sat up at his desk and thought, "I think I will do very well on this test. It should be easy for me because I studied and health is my favorite subject."

The health test had sixteen questions and Daniel had answered the first eleven questions when he thought, "Oh no! I don't remember the answers to the last five questions. I must have studied longer than anyone else in my class. I want to get a good grade!" "Hum," he thought and thought.

Daniel worried and didn't know what to do. He tried to figure out the answers, but he couldn't.

"Aha!" Daniel thought as he came up with an idea. "Maybe I could get the answers from Veronica's test. She sits in front of me," Daniel thought as he squinted his brown eyes.

Daniel peeked in front of him and could see Veronica's test. "If I waited for the right moment, I could see the answers on her test. Her answers are probably correct and she gets good grades," Daniel thought.

Veronica earned good grades and Daniel remembered she won the school spelling bee last year. Daniel did not want to cheat. He couldn't remember cheating at school ever before. He wanted to get a good grade but he knew he would be punished if he were caught cheating.



Daniel thought and asked himself, "I have never cheated before at school and I could cheat only this once. Is there anything wrong with that?"

Daniel remembered seeing some other students cheat and not get caught. He thought it very unfair that he studies and some other students cheat and are never caught.

Mrs. Carmichael walked around the classroom watching her students take their test. Daniel watched his teacher until she turned facing away from him.

"Now is my chance! Mrs. Carmichael won't catch me cheating!" he thought as he looked over Veronica's test. Daniel acted quickly and carefully. Squinting his eyes, Daniel could see two of the answers. He acted as if he did nothing wrong and wrote the answers on his test. He watched and waited for Mrs. Carmichael to turn facing away again.

Veronica finished and placed her test at the corner of her desk. Veronica's test was where Daniel could easily see her answers. Daniel watched carefully to be sure the teacher faced away from him.

"She won't catch me cheating. It's unfair for me to study in school and some other students just cheat," he thought.

Daniel quietly sat up at his desk and looked for the other three answers on Veronica's test.

"Daniel Swasny! What are you doing! Get up and sit down at the chair next to my desk and bring your test paper with you immediately!" Mrs. Carmichael said raising her voice.

Daniel was startled and the entire class looked at him. He acted as if he didn't know why she yelled and called him to her desk.

He slowly stood up from his chair and walked to the teacher's desk. Daniel nervously sat down holding his test.

The teacher explained to Daniel to wait for her to dismiss class for a ten-minute recess. Daniel didn't know what to say or do. When the students finished, Mrs. Carmichael collected the tests and dismissed class.

The other students hustled outside to recess. Mrs. Carmichael explained, "Daniel, I saw you looking at Veronica's test paper. Since you cheated, you will get a failing grade on this test. I'm going to call your parents this afternoon to explain to them what happened."

Daniel felt nervous and replied, "I didn't cheat. I wasn't looking at Veronica's paper. I didn't cheat."

Mrs. Carmichael frowned. She could tell by the look on Daniel's face that he was lying to her. She explained to Daniel that he was in enough

trouble as it was and it would not do him any good to lie to her. She told him how disappointed she was with his actions.

She explained, "Everyone will be held responsible for his or her actions. You will be held responsible for everything you do."

Daniel felt upset. He didn't know what to say. Embarrassed, Daniel handed his test to Mrs. Carmichael and returned to his desk. Daniel worried about what his parents were going to do when they found out he cheated on his health test.

Later, as Daniel rode the school bus and walked home from the bus stop, he wondered how his parents were going to punish him. "Shucks! It's not fair! Some other kids cheat and don't get into trouble!" he shook his head and thought.

Mother greeted Daniel at the door. Father, who was a doctor, came home early today and was sitting inside at the kitchen table.

"Daniel," father said, "Mrs. Carmichael called me at work about what happened at school today."

Daniel nervously explained to his parents the truth about what happened. Daniel told his parents he never cheated in school before. He explained to them how unfair he thought it was for him to cheat once and be punished while some other students cheat and are not caught. He told them what a good student he was and how he rarely got into trouble.

Ashamed, he shook his head and said, "I wanted to get a good grade on my human brain health test. I wish I never had cheated. Cheating was wrong. I was very foolish!"

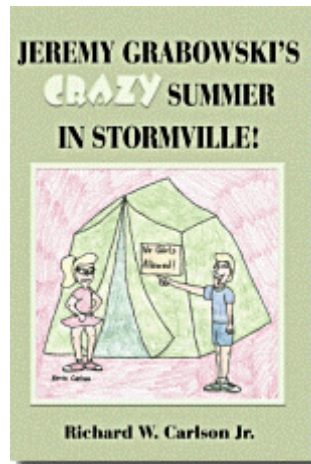
Mother and father explained to Daniel they were disappointed with his actions and it wasn't too late to change for the better.

Father said, "You made a mistake by cheating and will be held responsible for your actions. The fact that some other students cheat and are not caught doesn't mean you should cheat. Cheating on tests will not help you now or in the future. Besides, another student's answers might not be correct."

Daniel smiled and replied, "I will be held responsible for everything I do. I'm going to learn from my mistakes and it's not too late for me to change for the better."

(12/15/00)

Also by Richard W. Carlson Jr.



*JEREMY GRABOWSKI'S CRAZY SUMMER IN STORMVILLE!*

An out of the ordinary story about a ten-year-old boy's crazy summer!

Is Stormville a fun place to live? It sure is! It's 1978.

Ten-year-old, Jeremy Grabowski wonders if he'll make it through the summer.

Will his family move far away to Arizona? What could Jeremy do to stop them?

He has a stubborn little brother and babied sister. Julie, who lives next door, has a crush on him. She wants to be president and liberate the women of the world.

Robert, a bully in the neighborhood, thinks he's going to be a world famous movie star. He'd do anything to be world famous! All Jeremy can do is wish Robert were a dream, not real! How will Jeremy deal with someone bigger and stronger than him? He's even worse than everyone else put together!

Fortunately, Sean lives down the street and is Jeremy's friend.

Jeremy's parents are also a problem in his life.

What about the other people in the neighborhood?

Can a ten-year-old have a sixth sense and tell the future?

Maybe Jeremy will get through the summer. Maybe everyone in Jeremy's world will make him go crazy! Find out if he's taken away in a straightjacket to the nut house!

"Think very carefully about what comes out of your mouth *before* you say it!"

"Be careful what you wish for! It might come true!"

"Do you have a talent you don't know you have? Most people have talents they don't know they have."

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