

# NATURE THROUGH A LENS

LIFE THROUGH A CAMERA'S LENS

Adorable Pictures

Fantastic Stories, Ballads,  
Advice and more!



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# The Critter Crasher

The critter stuck its bulging body fuzz into the centre of the frame. The technology focused on the hairy critter, and blurred the couple.

In May 2009, Melissa and Jackson Brandts had been hiking in Banff National Park, Alberta. When they approached beautiful Lake Minnewonka, they decided to take some pictures using the wireless remote feature of their camera. After setting the camera up on the tripod, they quickly squatted in the rocks and posed, with the beautiful water glistening behind them on a bright warm sunny day. Melissa and Jackson's tripod and camera were surrounded by bumpy rocks. After they took a few images of themselves with a wireless remote, a furry critter scampered up to the camera.

"Get it!" screamed Melissa.

"Get it!" roared Jackson, quickly pushing the remote button.

The couple laughed and caught some really great pictures. Their faces were red as a beet, from laughter. The ground squirrel had heard the shutter go, and jumped over to it. Perhaps he thought that the strange machine was a food dispenser for ground squirrels, and poked its curious body into the frame. The squirrel succeeded, in that the couple were blurred and that he was the centre of life of the photo. After a few seconds he lost interest in the "food dispenser."

So he hastily rocked away.

When the couple dragged themselves up into their hotel room, they booted up their computer and downloaded the pictures. Melissa was surprised to see that the pictures of the squirrel were exceedingly special. The features of the squirrel were so incredible and indescribable.

A few months later, Melissa entered the picture in a contest for National Geographic. In August, it was chosen as a Picture of the Day for the online gallery. In November, it appeared in their magazine. From there, the magnificent picture with blurred people and nature in the background became viral. The photo won competitions and people were discussing the picture everywhere.

If you try to take a brilliant photo, who knows you just might become the centre of the topic on the internet. Try today!



(picture taken by Melissa Brandts)

## Letter to the editor

Dear Madam,

When I first laid my royal eyes on your brilliant magazine, I fell in a deep sense of pleasure on how you do your magazine. I never gave such praise to any other authors. They never grab my attention as yours does. Other authors always drag on about their boring sentences; might I add they don't even edit as you do. My vocabulary functions quite differently. You and I are the same in writing and editing. I get so upset and annoyed that I am put to bed at once before I could faint from annoyance.

You must have been brought up by hand, if you can write this good. I have been pleased like punch. My brilliant, yes quite brilliant Pumblechookian mind is determined to read only the important magazines, which is yours. Those poor insignificant writers clearly show that they were never brought up by hand properly.

I Pumblechook would like to meet you at the Pumblechookian Café. Yes, yes, I founded the Pumblechookian Café myself. Being brought up by hand gives you advantages. I want you to meet me on Friday promptly at 3:00.

Sincerely,

*Mr. Pumblechook*

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Mr. Pumblechook,

Really, you want me to be of service to you by meeting you at the Pumblechookian Café. It would be a great honour for me to do that. I would like to see your royal Pumblechookian eyes, mouth, nose - oh definitely the nose, chin, hands and feet. I hope you don't take offence to this, this, this, wish.

I have never really dwelled on the fact that I was brought up by hand. But, on the other hand, parents always bring children up by hand. So I guess that I was brought up by a very hard hand. In fact it was basically an iron hand or a steel hand; it mainly depends on how awful I was. So I was one of those respectable ones who were brought up by hand. I'm sure you were brought up by hand too, Mrs. - oh do forgive me - I mean Mr. Pumblechook.

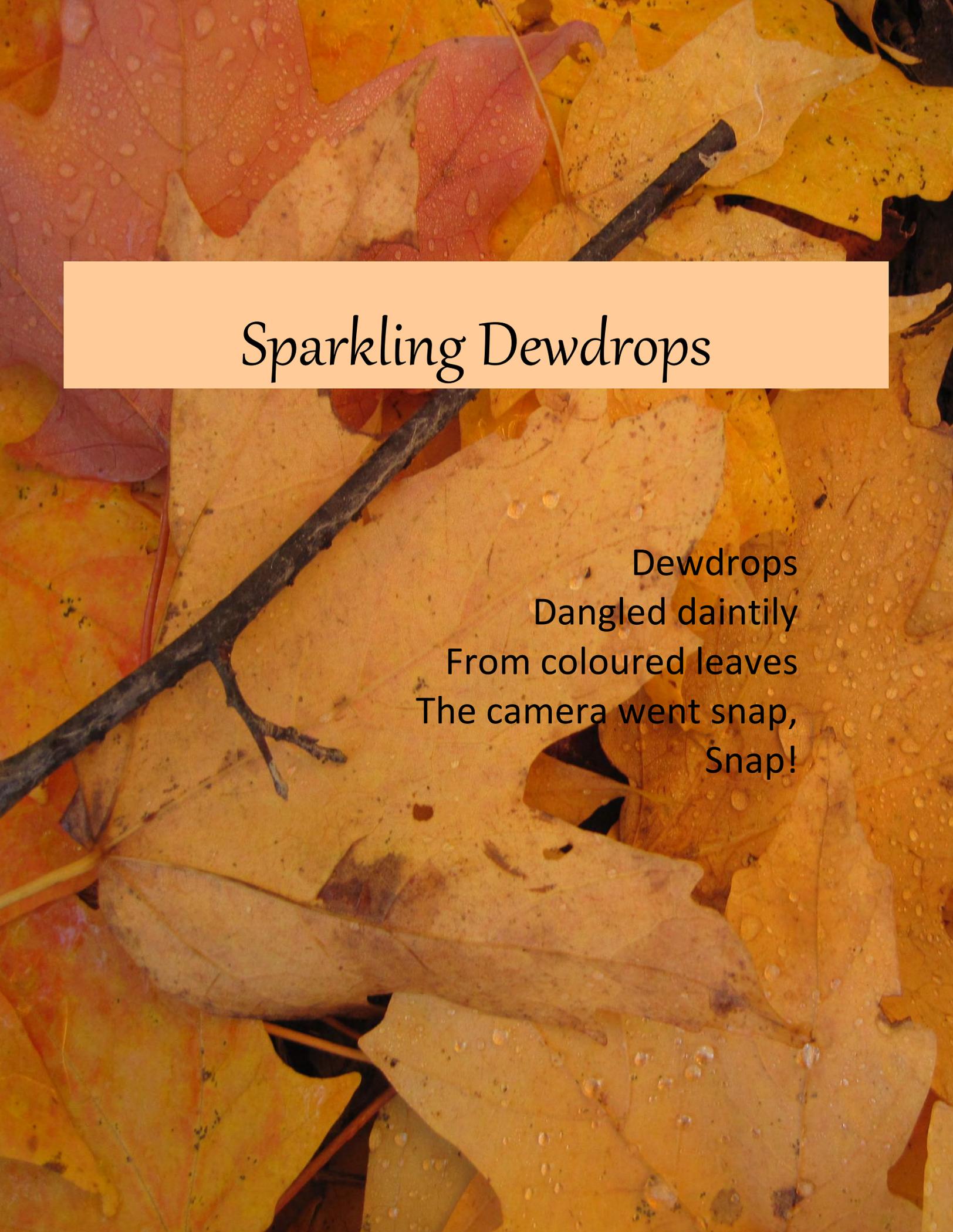
I looked at your Pumblechookian Café menu with interest. I have never in my life seen or heard of a Pumblechookian sauerkraut. Well I will look forward to the meeting.

Gratefully yours,

*Annalies X*

Editor, *Nature Through the Lens Magazine*





# Sparkling Dewdrops

Dewdrops  
Dangled daintily  
From coloured leaves  
The camera went snap,  
Snap!

# A Consequence to Learn

“Students, are you even listening to my true story of the Terracotta Xian soldiers?” The teacher’s eyes flashed at her students. “As I was saying.....

Panic rose in me as I screamed for Little Misha to come back, as he and I weaved through and around the Terracotta soldiers in Xian, China. Something rusty whizzed by me at full speed. Before I realized what it was, a face flashed before me in my memory. His words came back to me. “Better be careful with that little kid around,” commented the man dressed in a blue uniform, “You make sure he doesn’t get inside the mysterious court with all the stone soldiers in it. Also...”

I had interrupted him before he could say another word. “Little Misha! Don’t you dare go into that cold river! The river is no place for a toddler. Sorry sir, I have to go catch him before he cannonballs into the river.” I was glad to escape the lecture that was coming to me. I quickly broke into a run to catch Little Misha before he tumbled into the roaring river. I snatched him by his little waist and started scolding him like a mother chicken.

“M-m-m-e-e want j-jump w-water,” Little Misha had sobbed.

“But Little Misha, the river is extremely dangerous.”

Then Misha’s eyes had lit up as he said, “We go see soldiers?!”

“But Little Misha,

we’re supposed to wait for Dada and Mama.” I recalled that Dada and Mama had tried to drill that important piece of information into my head.

Then all of a sudden Little Misha’s big blue eyes had clouded up with tears. All of a sudden he had bawled loudly.

“Oh, all right, we can go see the soldiers, on one condition. You have to do as I tell you after this.”

We had arrived at the Terracotta soldiers. Little Misha had bubbled with excitement at the sight of the stone soldiers.

“Little Misha, I’m going to buy us some yummy ice cream with my money. But Little Misha you stay where you are,” I emphasized the last sentence.

I was carefully balancing the ice cream cones as I had gotten to the place where Little Misha should have been waiting. I had stared wide-eyed at the empty bench where he was supposed to be.

“Misha Matthew Mallen!” I screamed at the top of my lungs. I only used that name when



he was in trouble.

Suddenly there had been a flash of a red shirt which had darted from behind one of the Terracotta soldiers.

Little Misha screeched joyously, "Play tag, you it!"

Panic rose in me as I screamed for Little Misha to come back, as he and I weaved through and around the Terracotta. I had plunged after him. I held my camera close to me as I had chased after him. All of a sudden an arrow pierced the air and grazed my shoulder. I screamed in agony but I stumbled on. Tears stung my eyes and made my vision blurry. My heart pounded, my body trembled, but I wouldn't let that stop me. I heard a delighted scream that came from ten feet away. I kept running and running until I hit a wall with a thud. Little Misha grabbed my hand in fright as an arrow lodged itself right above Little Misha's head. Something hissed right next to my ear. It smelled like it was made 2,000 years ago. Slowly it turned over my mind that it was poisonous gas. I quickly collapsed on the ground as an arrow smashed the wall where my body used to be. Little Misha ran

from my grasp in fear, and tripped on a twig, forcing him to fall backwards against the wall. A rock wall slid open to reveal a dark damp passageway. Thankfully I was quick enough to get Misha and myself inside, because two arrows hurled themselves into the wall, were Little Misha and I used to stand.

"Me want Mama!" wailed Little Misha.

"Mama's busy now Little Misha. Do you want to go and explore around?"

Little Misha nodded. I used my camera's built-in flashlight to see the path before us, if there was even a path. A golden coffin glittered as the light bounced off of it. Golden coins, bowls, plates, cups, swords, shields and jewellery sparkled in the bright light. I took a thousand pictures of the golden room that held the treasure.

Then I remembered that the previous week, my class studied the history of the Xian Terracotta soldiers in school. I hadn't listened to the teacher when she had told the history about it. So she had made me study the whole thing again when I failed the test.

I realized where we were. We were in the tomb of Qin Shi Huan, the first Qin emperor. While I pondered this, Little Misha walked away from me.

There was suddenly a scream of agony that echoed on the damp walls.

I bolted toward the screaming. As Little Misha knelt on the cool stone, he held a bloody arm to his chest. I ran back to the golden coffin and opened the heavy coffin lid. I tore off a piece of clean linen from the corner of a



wrapped-up body, and raced back to Little Misha. I quickly wrapped up Little Misha's bloody arm, then ran back to get something he could play with. As I ran back to him, I slipped on a warm sticky substance. All of a sudden my mind went blank, and all I saw was complete darkness.

I woke up shivering with cold. I tried to lift up my head, but a sudden pain shot through me. Little Misha was nowhere to be seen. Then I went unconscious again.

I woke up to see Little Misha huddling over me. He was trying to get me to eat some of the preserved food from the tomb.

I struggled to my feet. He and I walked around until we came face-to-face with a wall. It was a dead end. At least that was what we thought.

Little Misha tumbled on a big pebble that made his tiny back accidentally push on the wall. A rocky passage-way slid open, and we tumbled out into the sunshine. I squinted in the brightness and saw Mama and Dada talking to a police

officer in the distance. I bolted toward them and forgot all about my splitting headache. Little Misha hollered something to me but I didn't listen to him. I was focused on getting to Dada and Mama. I heard running footsteps behind me, so I knew that Little Misha was chasing after me. Finally I landed into my Mama's strong arms. I looked back, only to see a dog, no Little Misha in sight. I looked back to where I came from. All I saw was a small hill with dark green grass growing over it. There was no Little Misha and no dark passage-way anywhere to be seen.

The teacher cleared her throat before she gave her students the assignments for their school homework. After the teacher was done telling them their homework, she started writing on the chalkboard. As she was writing, she said, "Tomorrow you'll hear the end of my story of the Terracotta Xian soldiers. Class dismissed."



## *Technology on the swim*

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# Beautiful and Fantastic

Watkins Glen, New York, is an awesome place to take pictures.

The temperature is very cool. You can hear water trickling, which is mixed in with waterfalls plunging into pools of water. The place is very rocky and steep in some places. The stair cases are cool to look at. Watkins Glen has arches looping around in certain places. The trees are interesting on how they grow in rocky and bumpy places. Some places have some light streaming in. But some places are dark.

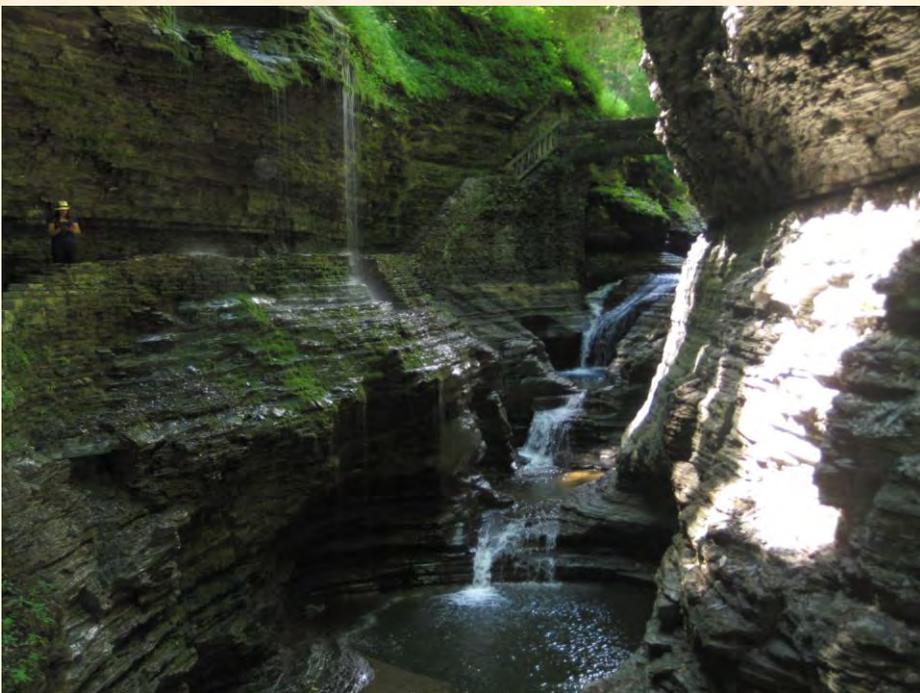
It is an excellent place to take pictures of everything. The light is great if you want some shadows mixed in with light. But the lighting is tricky in some places. The waterfalls are very dramatic. Some people were in the way of my pictures. But at times you have to be very patient till they get out of the way. If you wear high



heels, then your feet will be very sore at the end of your hike. So wear good shoes, which are built for hard rough hiking.

Watkins Glen is a great place to take pictures on special occasions or holidays. It is a very unique location with so many interesting things. Make sure you have lots of memory storage for taking pictures because there are so many fabulous things to capture.

I think you would enjoy going to Watkins Glen to take unique pictures!



# Vanished Pictures

The day finally arrived for the wedding. The couple-to-be was going to have their wedding on the Nerds Ranch. The best part of it all was that I was the photographer. I would have to admit that I was the only best photographer in the whole universe.

I took 25 pictures when the bride waddled over to the preacher in her tight wedding dress. The gorgeous bride had the look of nervousness on her face. Her face was drawn in with concern. But the husband-to-be strode leisurely over to his spot.

The preacher looked at the bride and then at the spindly groom. The preacher rocketed into his speech about marriage.

I looked over to the lady who sat next to me. Suddenly tears began to form in her eyes. The tears slid down her made-up face and onto the grass. Then a loud sniff came after the tear.

I looked on at the preacher and the cute couple for a little while longer.

My eye caught a little puddle that was



forming on the grass. Then my eyes trailed up and focused on the lady again. Multiple tears were streaming down her face. It looked like the tears were having fun tubing down her white checks.

Our family went tubing every year when there was snow. My mom especially enjoyed it. Mom loved going down a steep slippery hill that had trees in the way. She enjoyed swerving around to avoid the trees. I preferred to on the less steep hill that had no trees. I didn't like the thrill of risking my life for tubing as my mom did.

After sitting next to the overwhelmed lady for two hours, we were sent to the grand table, which had food piled on top.

"Weddings put me to the point of bursting into tears," sighed the lady. "It takes all

your strength to keep the tears from flowing out of your eyes."

I only nodded.

"Photographer, where are you?! My beautiful complexion will dissolve if you don't come and take these pictures right this minute! Oh, Dave, how do I look? Is my beauty rubbing off?" Panic rose in the bride's face.

"Darling you look superb. If only you wouldn't scream in..."

"Who's saying I'm screaming!" screeched the bride.

I stepped forward and stammered, "Hi Mackenzie I'm sorry..." I was about to apologize when she cut me short.

"Don't Mackenzie me! You're late! Oh Dave, how do I look? I'm sure I lost some of my complexion out in this terrible heat."



“Darling, you look fabulous. Now please promise me that you won’t scream at our photo-”

“I am not screaming at our photographer. I was only stating the true facts,” the exasperated Mackenzie replied.

After taking five hundred pictures - till the bride was satisfied - I went home.

At home I thoroughly examined the wedding pictures. I was going to deliver the pictures to the bride and groom after they were professionally printed

A simple question popped up on the screen of my fabulous camera. “Do you want to format your pictures?”

Even though I didn’t know what that meant, I was eager to find out what it would do. So I clicked okay. I waited patiently for it to load.

Nothing happened when loading was completed.

I went back to my gallery of pictures. The pictures were always on the gallery display on my camera. But not today.

My eyes skimmed over the words, “No images.”

My heart sank in to the depths of despair. I slammed my camera on the coffee table. Then I rammed my fists into the wall. I reached out my shaking hand to the telephone to call the newlyweds about the pictures, when a human figure burst through my unlocked door.

It was a sunny day down by the lake. A cool breeze flittered through the air. I went down on my knees and focused my camera on the newlyweds.

“I’m sorry that my wife burst through your door a week ago,” Dave apologized. “She was so upset when she saw a scab right between her eyes.”

“Oh, no problem. It worked out well in the end.” I didn’t want to reveal to the two newlyweds that I had accidentally erased the pictures.

After that I stayed away from the question, “Do you want to format?”



# Advice Column

Dear Camera Lily,

How can you get a picture of a fast-moving animal? There was an adorable chipmunk with puffed-up cheeks. He stood still for a moment, but after a second he ran off. I only got one blurry picture that had a blurred-up chipmunk in it.

Is there a special camera that can take a picture of a fast-moving animal? Is there a special feature for this problem that can be found on any camera?

Yours forever,  
Penny Withered



Dear Penny,

There are some cameras that have speedy shutters. It is a professional camera that has the speedy shutter button. Also some cameras are built for taking pictures of moving things. If you don't have a professional camera, then check your camera settings to see if you have a setting that is for "Kids and Animals." That will make the shutter speedier. Make sure that the camera is focused when you hold the

shutter button half way. Then press the shutter button all the way down and hold till you have as many pictures as you want. Then release button.

Sit in a spot where lots of fast moving animals live. You have to be extremely patient until an animal comes. Wait till the right opportunity comes. Sit very still. It might help if you sit behind a bush that faces an animal's home. If an animal comes running, quickly point your camera in front of the animal's path. Push the button half way down. Do not wait till the animal appears on the screen. That might make your chance of getting a good picture of an animal never happen.

You could lure an animal with food. Do not put meat out to attract animals. It might attract bigger dangerous animals to the food. You could put nuts out for squirrels and chipmunks etc.

You might want to bring a snack for yourself. Who knows how long you'll have to wait?

If an animal comes to your food make sure that the camera sounds are muted, or else it might scare the animal.

I hope you'll find this advice useful.

Camera Lily

# A Harmless Trap

A speedy camouflaged camera is able to take quick speedy pictures without the animal's knowing.

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# The Proud Ruby Flower

On the boat's deck, the strong smell of the sea thrived in the air. The waves thundered on the side of the boat. I pulled out a brochure about the Ruby Flower. On the brochure there was a picture of a huge Ruby red Flower. The flower was considered the biggest flower in the universe. It was located in a tropical jungle on a small but beautiful island. That was the place where I most desired to go to. I had looked at Google maps before I had left home and had compiled a series of directions which I felt confident were the best way to reach the flower.

The boat's horn blasted in my left ear. No wonder it blasted in my left ear because I had my ear resting on the horn's speaker. While I waited for the boat to approach the shore, I devoured a chocolate chip trail bar that melted in my mouth.

The boat steered around the bend and



ended up in a beach bay. People floated on the glistening water on bright yellow rubber duckies. The duckies were overly large. Some of them had rubber sunglasses attached to them.

The captain glanced at the brochure in my hand. He also stared at my directions too. "If you want, I can give you some directions on how to get to the Ruby Flower," the captain offered.

"No thank you," I replied as I glanced down at the first step of my directions, which was, "Do not listen to other people's advice."

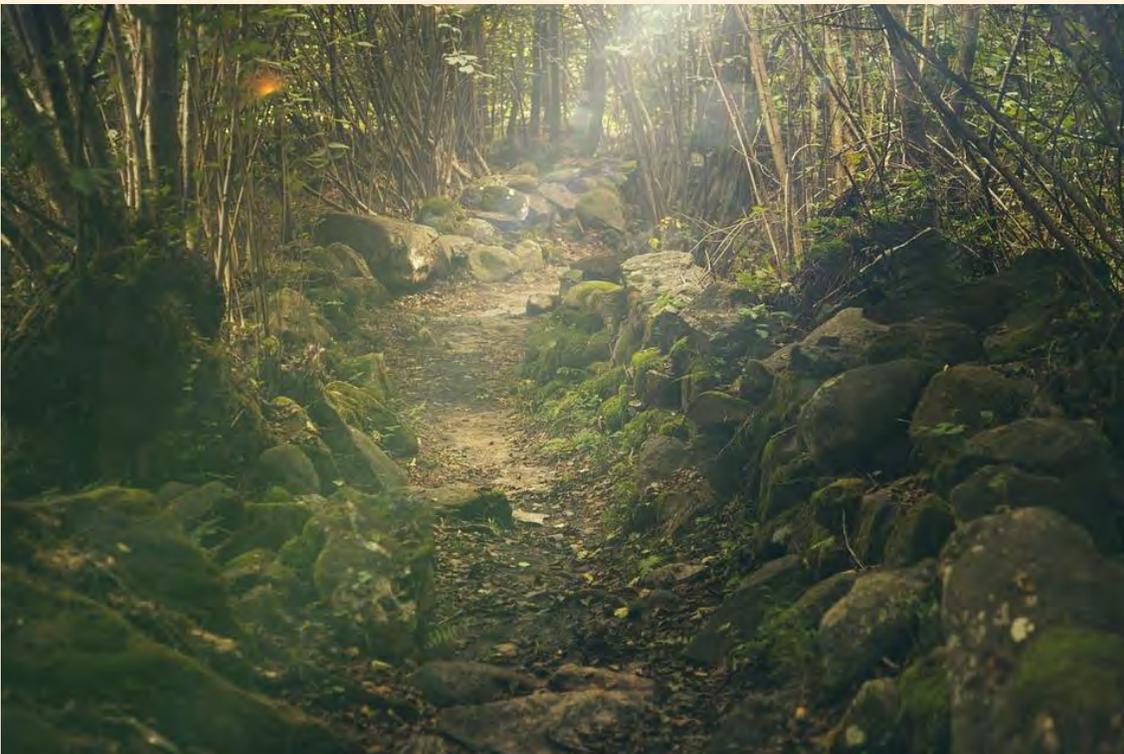
"Everyone off the boat!" bellowed the captain. "There are no lifeboats to bring you to shore. So you'll have to swim to land!"

I cannonballed into the sea water. It was a good thing that my directions were in a purple waterproof container. I was happy that my green-coloured camera was waterproof too. Salt water flooded into my mouth. The bitterness of

the water made me gag. After a long swim, I landed on the simmering sandy shore.

I took the directions out of the slippery container. The next step said, "Turn to the left and cross the nearby swamp."

I wouldn't say "nearby" because it took an hour to trudge to the swamp through a dense forest. But I finally arrived at my destination. I was very thankful that the trees covered the



burning sun. But, on the other hand, I had to stagger through tangled trees and a muddy swamp. Plus, I swatted swarms of mosquitoes away.

Something slithered on my foot. Then a scaly head, with black beady eyes, loomed above the mucky water. I screamed until my voice box almost busted out of my throat. I quickly scrambled out of the sucking mud. Safely on solid ground, I skimmed over the words of my directions to know what to do next. As I stood there, I shivered in my wet clothes that were covered in mud and grime.

I ran to a cave which was a half a mile run uphill. I slid to the ground inside the cave to rest. Suddenly, there was a shrill of mosquito's wings right in my ear. I yanked my weight up the slippery hill away from the cave, which was infested with mosquitoes. But unfortunately I tripped on a jagged rock and skidded down the hill, past the cave and back into the swamp that I had been in previously.

It took a while to backtrack to the top of the hill again. I never did set foot in that damp dark dingy cave again. I stumbled up another hill, this one rocky. I had walked 12 hours just to get to the Ruby Flower. I hoped it would be worth it.

My directions said, "At the top of the hill, turn left till you see the bend in the road."

I obediently followed the directions and stood face-to-face

with my next hardship. 99 uneven steps loomed up to the proud Ruby Flower. I spotted a dot of red which looked down on me from the top. The Ruby Flower seemed to dare me to climb those 99 slippery uneven steps. After I battled an hour to climb the difficult steps, I stood panting at the top.

Sadly the Ruby Flower was not as huge as it was on the brochure. It was about the size of a quarter. But it was miraculously pretty.

With trembling hands I quickly took out my green neon camera. I snapped a shot, which turned out fuzzy, and then my battery died.

With depressed eyes, I stared over the view that lay before me. I saw an easy road that led up from the bay to the Ruby Flower. I stared over the edge and saw an elevator that came up with people packed inside. They arrived at the top in less than a minute.



# Adventure to Honesty

I looked into two beady eyes that stared at me. Steamy breath blew right into my face. My heart jumped into my throat, so that no sound was possible to make. Then I reflected on what I had done wrong. I vowed that I would never do it again.....

“Mother, may I have one more s’more?” I begged when we were around the campfire one cool fall evening outside our cabin

“After six big s’mores?! I think mother will say no to that!” exclaimed my annoying sister Lily.

“Lily, that is not for you to decide. Emily, I think you’ve had plenty. Now it is getting late. Time to brush your teeth.” With that, mother turned her back on us.

I reached out to grab another marshmallow. Just as I was in reach of it, my mother abruptly turned and faced me.

“Young lady, what do you think your doing?! I already said no more. Now, you get ready for bed in three minutes.” ordered mother.

“Yes mother. But I....I,” I stammered till she interrupted me.

“Go to bed right this minute.”

“Yes mother.” I turned around to retreat to my bed room.

After my family was fast asleep, I snuck to the cabin’s pantry. As I opened the door, the hinges creaked aloud. I paused long enough to hear a voice in the shadows question, “Whatcha doin’?” I tore on tiptoe to one of the darkest

corners. Then a figure moved toward the other dark corner and groped around. As that figure’s back was turned, I stole back to bed. I waited and waited. A figure stood in the doorway of the bedroom which belonged to my sister and I. The spooky figure leaned over me and said under its breath, “Oh, I thought she was in the pantry. Oh well I must have heard wrong. Or not. I think I’ll tell father and mother about this.” With that Lily gracefully swept back to bed.

My heart was wildly thumping like a

hammer. It was very hard to get back to sleep. Then I heard it, a sound that evidently told me that my sister was sound sleep.

I tiptoed out of the door to the pantry. I slipped inside and turned on my flashlight. I looked around and spotted the marshmallows that sagged in a bag.

“They’ll never know. I could easily take four or maybe even twelve. I’ll take twelve.” I gobbled twelve marshmallows and ate some chocolate chips to add more flavour.

Next morning I sat at the breakfast table. Then everything happened the way it wasn’t supposed to go.

“Honey, did you go into the pantry last night?” my mother questioned my dad.

“No..... why?” responded my father between mouthfuls.

“I found the pantry door open. I am certain that I closed it last night.”

“No! I thought that I closed it after eating!” I panicked in my seat.



“Father and Mother, I saw a figure the size of my sister which opened that pantry door last night.” My sister was helping my parents in a way I didn’t want.

Then I blurted out the whole story of my marshmallow activities.

Later that morning I asked mother whether I could go out in the woods for picture-taking. She said “No,” and added that I could never go in those creepy woods, because I could get lost or something might harm me.

I meandered over to father and asked him if I could go. He said that I could take some pictures, but he then quickly added that I wasn’t allowed to go in the woods at all.

I snatched two chocolate cookies and rocketed out the red cabin door.

I kept glancing back to make sure no eyes were watching me. I enjoyed being all by myself. I especially liked it when nobody was around to boss me.

Then I looked back one more time to see our cabin shaded by the huge coloured oak trees. I also saw my sister who was soaring high in the air on the swing. My father, who always had his nose in a screen, was probably studying the News headlines. Mother was sitting beside the fast-flowing creek reading a book, which was probably about how to be a better mother. I felt neglected that nobody really cared for me. But then I abruptly change my mind.

“I’ll show them that I can do without them.”

I tore for the dark gloomy woods. There were so many things to take pictures of. Right and left were every kind of flower you could want to shoot a picture of. I walked on for hours on end.

Then I let out a sharp cry. I realized what I had done. I felt deeply scared that I was truly lost. I felt a sudden pain in my side; I knew I must find food and water to give me fuel till I got back home.

My whole face lit up when I found a berry bush and a stream of water. I snatched at the berry bush wildly because of my hunger. As I was doing so, I plopped my camera on a rock, and

raced to the stream of fresh cold water. I madly splashed the water onto my face.

I walked on for about an hour. Then it struck me. I had lost my most valued item - my camera. I went around and retraced my steps. I crashed in bushes in search of my camera.

I finally found it. It was sitting on a rock near the stream.

When my senses came back to me, I noticed that it was growing very dark. Also the temperature was dropping down rapidly.

I sat down on the cold hard ground to think really hard of what I had done. I wished that I never left my cosy cabin and family.

“I would rather be at home with my annoying sister. Actually she’s not all that annoying, now that I think of it. I would give up my camera to be back home with my beloved family. Oh, why did I have to do what I wanted? I wish, oh, how I wish that I was more honest.”

Tears sprang to my eyes. I wished that I had been a better sister to Lily. I wished that I had obeyed my father and mother. Then I stopped thinking of the past.

It was so hard to see in the darkness. But I knew that something was lurking about, and that it was very near me. Then it grunted. I felt a hot breath on my face. I stared hard at the dark shape and both of us breathed on each other. Both of our stomachs growled long and loud. “I’ve had it with this stinky-breathed creature!” I thought. So I tore away from the bundle of fur. It thundered after me and snorted. Those snorts



echoed throughout the woods. I came upon the fast-flowing creek.

When I had first come upon the creek in the day light, it was blue and sparkling and it conquered my thirst. Now it drowned out my panting in a thunderous crash. It was black and no longer friendly-looking. The blackened creek looked like it wanted to swallow me up down into the depths of death.

The fuzzy thing came out of a thicket and tore for a berry bush which was a few inches from the bush where I was hiding.

Suddenly the moon flashed out from a cloud and cast its eerie glow.

That fuzzy ball of fur was a huge black bear!! The bear clawed at the berry bush. When it had a berry, it ate like a human with human-like hands. I captured a few shots on my camera and then ran away. I ran on tiptoe like a wild person. After I was out of earshot from the bear, I crashed through the bushes. I scraped my arms, legs and face till blood dripped out. I thundered on through the bushes. All I wanted was to get away from that black beast.

After a while, it seemed like I ran two overly large football fields that were overgrown by bushes and trees. I stumbled out of the gloomy woods to see a campfire a few feet away. I rocketed into my mother's outstretched arms that were meant to comfort Lily. I thought that Lily wouldn't mind. After all, they would be overly happy to see me again.

"Mother, I was so scared! I'll never disobey you and father ever again." I snuggled deeper into my mother's strong embrace.

"Emily! I was worried sick!" mother exclaimed with a long relieved sigh.

"Lily, I am so sorry for being a liar to you, and for not being very nice to you."

"It's okay Emily. I am sorry for doing those same exact things."

"It's okay. Can we start all over again?"

"We sure can." Lily and mother said together. "Father's out searching for you. He's probably looking in the woods," mother explained.

Right then and there I spilled out the whole story.

"Now we're going to worry about your father. Let's hope he'll not meet up with the bear." mother sighed and stared out into the woods with a very worried frown.

Then we all trudged back to the cabin. I never did set foot in those woods ever again.

## Traveling Pictures for Two!

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# Hardships Before Destruction

On a radiant day, a young man pulled out his phone and went on a promenade.  
He slowly descended the stairs, and went by a stand with lemonade.  
He never looked up, not even once.

Ignoring his surroundings, he concentrated on his phone.  
Trying to find the best picture to enter in a contest.  
"All of these are terrible," he said in an annoyed tone.  
Bothered by his troubles, he bore a worried expression.  
He never looked up, not even once.

"Hissss," spoke a snake.  
"Roar!" thundered a hippopotamus.  
The young man stumbled through the dense jungle.  
But he never looked up, not even once.

He stepped through the sucking marshes.  
Trudged through the thick forests and climbing over dead logs.  
He never looked up, not even once.

Unfortunately he walked right off a cliff that was taller than a skyscraper.  
But he survived the hard fall and all the other troubles he went through so far.  
He just had a few bruises and scratches.  
The young man was busily scrolling through all his pictures.  
He never looked up, not even once.

He held out his phone, ready to take a selfie.  
But accidentally fell off a very low cliff.  
As this happened he took a picture and entered it into the contest.

Then he hit the bottom with a hard thud.  
That was the end of the young man.  
He never looked up, not even once.

His family got an email that said that the young man won.  
But he never ever lived to hear that.  
He never looked up again.

On a glorious day, the man had pulled out his phone, and taken a stroll.  
Through trials and troubles, he had never bothered till the end.  
The poor young man had never looked up,  
And had never looked up again.

