

## **The World of a Child**

**Lauren Spotkov**

A child's ability to imagine is important,  
But what if that ability didn't just belong to children?  
What if everyone had that gift?  
What if they have it now, and have only forgotten?  
What if everyone from every age group viewed their  
lives through a child's eyes?  
What if everyone changed his or her thinking?  
What if positive thinking replaced negative feelings?  
And what if the negative feelings began to fade?  
What would the world become?  
What would happen if adults thought more like the  
children that they used to be?  
Maybe the world just might be better,  
A most positive place.

## **The Story of Marge and Tom, The News and Weather People**

**Annie Darcy**

It was raining when we got there. In Ireland, it's almost always raining. This was especially unfortunate for me since I had assumed that, since it was the summer, the weather was going to be warm and sunny. Sadly, that was not the case. We were picked up at the airport by my aunt and uncle. They were happy to see us, of course. My uncle, Tom, seemed a bit grumpy but I assumed it was because of the rain. Rain tends to make me grumpy, too.

I was still a bit tired from the flight, so I wasn't really paying much attention on the car ride home. The first thing I remember noticing was the sign on my aunt and uncle's door, proclaiming that their house was an eco-friendly home. Since I was still in my extremely passionate about the environment phase, I thought this was the coolest thing ever. So that perked me up a bit. We went inside the house and that perked me up, too. (I was glad to get out of the rain). The house was nice. It was a nice size. Not too big, but not too small, either. The curtains in the living room were a brownish-red color and the couch and chair, as well. The rug in the room was white. A similar color scheme was evident throughout the house with the white floor in the kitchen, the black countertop, and the brown wood of the dining

room table. The bedrooms had more color, with blue bedspreads and curtains to match. But perhaps that was only in the guest bedrooms. I never went inside the master bedroom.

After soaking all of these muted colors in, my surge of energy depleted and the tiredness I had been feeling caught up with me. So I did something that I never do and I took a nap. Before I knew it, I was waking up at around noon. (We had arrived in the early morning). I refused to get out of bed, however. Though I had slept, I was still feeling a bit deprived of energy. (I must have had the worst case of jetlag ever). My mother came in and tried to get me to get out of bed. And after about an hour of conversation of many things, including *Harry Potter*—my favorite books—she succeeded. I went downstairs and had lunch. It was a wonderful lunch of pasta with marinara sauce—my favorite. After lunch, each of us did our own thing for a while. I went to my room and read a book before deciding to come downstairs again.

When I got downstairs, I saw that my aunt and uncle were watching the news. My aunt greeted me with an enthusiastic “Hello Margaret” while my uncle managed a less enthusiastic, yet simple “Hello” before turning back to the TV. (Maybe he was feeling tired, too). My aunt asked me the usual things. How school was going, how my friends were doing, if I was looking forward to my vacation here in Ireland. I answered “good, I’m looking forward to high school” to the first, a

simple “good” to the second, and an “I’m looking forward to it a lot” to the third. She talked to me for a while before turning back to the TV, as well. Though I didn’t really want to watch the news, I sat down next to my aunt on the couch anyway. I didn’t want to be rude, after all.

After a while, my parents came downstairs and joined my aunt and uncle and me at the TV. My aunt said to my father (they’re siblings): “How was the flight, Henry?” My father replied that it was good, if a bit long. My uncle contributed with a “Flights are always way too long. And they tend to be very uncomfortable. And after all, you never know what can go wrong.” My father replied: “Planes can be very uncomfortable. And yes, it is possible that things can go wrong, yeah. Definitely. But fortunately it hasn’t happened yet. And please God it never will.” My uncle simply nodded and turned his attention back to the TV, which was still showing the news. My aunt suggested that we go eat dinner and so all of us went into the dining room. Though I noticed that my uncle left the TV on. (Not very eco-friendly, if you ask me.)

We had a nice meal and good conversation before returning to the living room to watch TV, again. My aunt suggested that since we were the guests, we should choose what we watch. My mother replied that we were fine with anything they wanted to watch. They wanted to watch the news. Not wanting to be rude, I stayed and watched with them. The news was followed by the

weather, which was followed by more news. Watching the news for the second time I noticed a story that was the same. And then another one. And then another one. In fact, all of the stories were the same as the ones that my aunt and uncle had watched before. After watching the weather the second time around—the forecast was rain. Can you believe that? Who would have thought?—I excused myself, claiming jetlag. But really, I just wanted to get away from the cycle of the news and weather. So I went upstairs and read my book until I fell asleep.

The next few days were pretty much the same. I won't write all about them here because that would be far too boring for anyone to read. Almost as boring as the endless cycle of news and weather was for me. But trust me, it was boring. Very boring.

Fortunately that cycle was broken when we took a mini-vacation to Roscommon—my aunt and uncle live in Dublin. The drive was pleasant enough. I liked seeing all the beautiful scenery lining the roads. There were even sheep on some of the fields on either side of the road. Definitely not something I would see in New York. We arrived at the hotel quickly enough for me. Though my uncle complained of the long drive. The hotel was called Glockson's and it had a far more interesting color scheme than my aunt and uncle's house. Pretty much everything there was red. The sheets on our beds were an exception. They were white. My aunt and uncle stayed in one room and my parents and I stayed in

another. After putting our suitcases in our rooms, all of us went to explore the town.

It was a beautiful place. Very small, but charming. Though I wasn't particularly interested in anything we saw, I still enjoyed myself. After walking for a while, all of us headed back to the hotel. We went to our rooms for a while and then went down to the restaurant in the hotel for dinner. All of us enjoyed our meals. Well, almost all of us. My uncle Tom complained that his was a bit cold. After we ate, all of us went back to the room that my parents and I shared to watch TV. (Our TV was bigger.) We watched a movie about King Arthur. I thought it was very interesting. Definitely a nice break from the endless boring cycle of news and weather. My parents and my aunt also enjoyed the movie. My uncle said that it was too unrealistic. (I wonder what a realistic King Arthur movie would look like.)

After a few enjoyable days in the hotel, it was time for us to go back to my aunt and uncle's house. So we all packed our bags and drove back to Dublin. Once inside the house, we all unpacked our suitcases and then ate lunch. After lunch we each did our own things for a while before getting together again for dinner. After dinner, we all retired to the living room to watch TV. My aunt again suggested that my parents and I, as the guests, should choose what we watch. My mother again said that whatever they wanted to watch was fine with us. Though she said it with less enthusiasm than she had

the first time. Probably because she, like me, anticipated what was coming. To no one's surprise, my aunt immediately turned the channel to the news. The news was followed by the weather which was followed by the news which was followed by the weather. Well, you get the idea. Not wanting to fall asleep from boredom, I again excused myself, claiming that I was tired from the long drive. My uncle said something about how uncomfortable the car had been and how he should really get a new one. I just said that it wasn't the car that had been uncomfortable, it was just the fact that the drive was long. He nodded and I gave an awkward wave before practically running upstairs to my room.

The next few days passed the same as the days had before we went to Glockson's. Though with less monotony during the day at least. We visited many relatives and they provided a much appreciated break from the incessant cycle of the news and the weather. But every night, it was the same. It seems that all my aunt and uncle ever wanted to watch was the news and weather. And apparently, they liked to watch it more than once. Maybe they thought it helped the message sink in more.

Fortunately, a few days later, when I had begun to run out of excuses to excuse myself from the endless stream of news and weather, all of us again traveled to a hotel. This time the hotel was in Tipperary, the town where my grandfather was born. The hotel was beautiful. It was surrounded by fields and forests and

the inside was like something out of a Jane Austen novel. It was, essentially, the perfect hotel for me. It was called the Anne Manor Hotel. The room that I had the first night we were there was also amazing. It was very big and also came with a wardrobe. (I didn't love the wardrobe so much for its ability to hold clothes but rather for the fact that it reminded me of the *Chronicles of Narnia*. Unfortunately, this wardrobe was not a passage into a magical world.) Sadly, after that night I had to get out of that room since a large group of people was coming and they needed the room. So I moved into my parent's room. Their room was a nice size, but I still preferred the first room I had. But regardless of my change in room, I enjoyed myself.

We stayed in that hotel for a few days. On the second day, my grandfather came to join us. He was staying with one of his many siblings. (He's the oldest of 9.) When he came, I was happy to see him since he and I are very close. Overall, my time in the hotel was very enjoyable. Unfortunately, that was not true for everyone that came with me. One day while we were still at the hotel, my uncle had the following conversation with my mother:

"I heard a rooster crowing this morning. It woke me up. Did you hear it, Molly?" (That's my mother's name, by the way.)

"No, I didn't hear it, Tom."

"Oh. Well you must not have had your window open."

“Well, no, I didn’t. Perhaps you should close your window. Then you won’t hear the rooster and it won’t wake you up.”

“I can’t close the window. Then it’ll get too hot.”

“Oh. Well....um...perhaps....”

My mother trailed off, since she could not seem to think of a reply. My uncle simply nodded and then fell silent. At this point, I was trying not to laugh. I was also wondering how it’s possible for it to be hot anywhere in Ireland. The weather hadn’t been that good throughout our whole trip. It certainly hadn’t been hot. Perhaps I should have switched rooms with my aunt and uncle. I would have enjoyed the heat.

Sadly our stay in the hotel couldn’t last forever. After a few days, we headed back to my aunt and uncle’s house. Again, we were subjected to an endless stream of news and weather. Until one day, even my mother, who’s always eager to please people, got tired of it. She suggested to my aunt that perhaps we should choose what we watch today. My aunt agreed happily and my uncle agreed as well, if a little reluctantly. We found a good movie. It was a romantic comedy. I can’t remember the plot of the movie too well but it was certainly a nice break from the news and weather. That was one night when I did not have to think of a reason to excuse myself early.

The next days, sadly, were again another stream of news and weather. But, fortunately, one of our last days of the trip was a wonderful day. It was my cousin

Evan's christening. Apparently, God was really looking down on him because it was the nicest day that we had on the whole trip. It wasn't raining and it was even a little—dare I say it—hot. I didn't have to wear a jacket over my short-sleeved dress. Though my uncle did remind us that it had rained while we were in the car driving to the church. The day was wonderful, not only because of the nice weather but because of the company we had. I had a good time with my cousins and even got to hold baby Evan for a while. My aunt Rhonda, Evan's mother, was certainly happy that the day worked out so well.

A few days later, my parents and I went home. My aunt and uncle dropped us off at the airport in time to check in for our flight. My uncle reminded us that we should make sure to be careful on the plane. "You never know what might happen," he said. I wasn't sure what he was warning us against. Terrorists? Unexpected storms striking down our plane? People giving us dirty looks? (Though I admit that the last would have been slightly deserved since I was saying "We're going down" the whole time the plane was landing. The only thing I can say is that I have a fear of planes. I was trying to reassure myself that the plane was, in fact, going down and that I'd be home before long. Though I can see how that would get annoying.)

When I got home, I was glad to be in my own house again. Partly because I felt that homesickness one might feel when one was on vacation. But mostly

because I was glad to be able to control what I watched on TV. It was nice to be able to watch something besides news and weather. My aunt and uncle were probably glad to have their house to themselves again as well. They didn't have to worry about my parents and I possibly wanting to watch something besides the news and weather.

My vacation to Ireland was enjoyable. Don't get me wrong. And I love my aunt and uncle. I really do. But there are only so many times you can watch the news and weather before you go crazy. Unless, of course, you're my aunt and uncle. Then you can watch the news and weather on a seemingly endless loop and remain perfectly sane. I wonder what their secret is.