

A Magical Life

By Lauren Elizabeth Fullerton

Waukesha Reads ~ The Big Read Flash Fiction Contest

Middle School Division Runner-up

"Dear Mr. Bridge troll, may we please cross your bridge?" my grandmother asked politely. We put our ears to the cold autumn sky and waited.

"Of course," the wind whispered in response. I gave my grandmother a toothless smile and we crossed over from the lifeless park and into the friendly forest realm where our friends lived.

I craned my neck at the tall trees. One particular tree stood out, the emperor tree. He kept watch of the entire forest, and monitored activity of the troublesome villain, Dr. Weed. Dr. Weed operated in the sewers below New Berlin, Wisconsin.

My thoughts were disrupted by a pink blur in front of my face. "Garden fairy!" I cheered. The Garden Fairy designed the whole forest. She painted every flower, leaf, and piece of grass. She possessed garden magic, which could be used for evil or righteousness. She could build a cozy campfire with a snap of her fingers, or burn down the entire forest if she pleased. Luckily The Garden Fairy possessed an extremely kind heart.

"You're here," she beamed. "I'll get the others right away." It was only a matter of seconds before she returned. Behind her followed the rest of the gang. Mr. Bridge troll, leader and guardian of the bridge. He was very old, 3,971 troll years to be exact, and he demanded respect. Anyone who failed to ask permission to cross into this world would be thrown hurled into the pond. Lord Misquito, who controlled all the misquitoes of course. It was a powerful army, which you would NOT want to be on the other side of. This was my little secret family.

"You arrived just in time," the emperor tree boomed. The rest of the trees nodded in agreement. "Dr. Weed has been claiming more victims all around town. 2 people last night alone."

I bit my lip uncomfortably. 2 last night? That was unheard of. My grandmother gave my tiny hand a tight squeeze. "Don't worry darling," she soothed. "We always find a way."

We'd been fighting an exhausting battle with Dr. Weed for years now. How much longer could we take? "We have no time to waste," I announced. "We go after him today."

"You're not thinking this through," advised Mr. Bridge Troll. "You are weak."

"But not all of us together," I pleaded. "With Lord Misquitoes' army, and The Garden Fairy's powers, surely we have a chance."

"It'll be dangerous..." cautioned Mr. B.

"It'll be more dangerous to do nothing. He'll just keep claiming people," I pleaded. My grandmother gave me a sympathetic look.

"We have no choice," chimed in The Garden Fairy.

There was a moment of silence. "Okay," spoke my best friend, the troll. "Here's the plan."

Two long nights of planning and preparations later, I was ready. I couldn't wait to finally face my silent nemesis. Dr. Weed was going down.

I was hidden within the auburn leaves of the emporor tree beside my grandmother. The Garden Fairy would lure Dr. Weed into our playing feild where we would attack and end this once and for all. It was up to us now.

I was growing restless. My grandmother told me countless times to be patient, but how long does it really take to lure a supervillian into the forest? Just when I thought I couldn't bear it any longer, a loud thud chrashed through the forest, almost sending me barreling out of the tree. The crash was followed by another, and it didnt take long to figure out they were footsteps.

I studied the creature which resembled a giant man, only made of weeds. The trees shook, but stayed planted.

"Now!" screeched the fairy. Thousands of misquitoes came gliding through the trees and attacking the mutant weed. The monster came crashing down and for a second i rejoiced in victory. But then the weed grew across the ground like a carpet, crawling up trees and claiming the land.

The trees thrashed to get away, and the misquitoes attacked, all to no avail. The Garden Fairy blasted the weeds with fire, water, ice, but it only slowed down the deathly process.

I scurried down the tree to join the battle as my grandmother followed. "Stop," I screamed, digging my fingernails into the weeds and pulling them out through the roots; the weeds grew much too quick.

The battle was fair, we had a chance, and then things became so horrible so fast. It was like a nightmare. I turned around and watched in horror as the weeds curled their way around my grandmothers feet, and up her legs like a serpant. I did my best to stop the process but it was too late. Dr. Weed had claimed another victim.

I cried out as the weeds shrunk back and nothing was left. I sobbed for so long, time faded into nothingness. I felt a hand on my shoulder, and saw Mr. Bridge Troll's sympathetic gaze through blurry vision. The entire family gathered, all but one. The emporor tree had fallen.

The war was over, and we had lost.

Linda Fullerton Died on October 10th, 2013 after a long and exhausting battle of lung cancer. This story is from the point of view of a child attempting to understand cancer and dying. Legend says if you go Regal Park, New Berlin, Wisconsin and politely ask to cross the bridge, you can still meet all the forest friends.