

First Place Prose – High School

Jesus in the Bubble Bath

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Grade: 12

School: Harbor Springs High School

We were so innocent. Our short blond hair that just barely covered our shoulders. We always tucked it behind our ears, sharing the space with the arms of our little round pink glasses. We were three years apart but our faces looked identical. Big blue eyes filled with wonder. Our skin was still new, free from imperfections that were soon to come. You were always so eager to learn.

You would learn something at Sunday school and couldn't wait to recreate it on me. Of course you being my sister I would let you do it without question. So when we were playing in the bath, fruity bubbles foaming around us, your face lit up with excitement as you retold me how Jesus healed the blind man with spit and mud at the pool. You were happy because our bath could be the pool. You told me I was the blind man, I took my little glasses off and shut my eyes super tight. I couldn't see anything but I listened to your familiar, loving voice talk through the story.

We didn't have mud, but you said your gum would do. You pulled it out of your mouth, I could smell the mint as cold hands smushed the gum onto my eyelids. You said it was perfect and that made me excited for the next step. You said that if you used real spit the gum wouldn't dry and I couldn't be healed, it made sense to me. Without warning the blackness went to red as your thumb put pressure over my eye. I reached up to feel what was there, on one eye there was something hard and round. I smell my hand. It smelled like spearmint but it had hints of metal to it. You told me it was a quarter and that I had to let it dry into the gum. We waited in silence. Our bath water was no longer warm and the bubbles had disappeared. Suddenly the bathroom door creaked open. "Hey, why is it so quiet in here?" Then Ma's voice went from questioning to an ungodly anger. She rips me from the tub and wraps me in a soft, fresh towel that smelled like flowers, it made me feel better than the cold water. She sat me on the sink and ran away. She returned with peanut butter. The creamy JIF filled my nose and made me hungry. She smeared it really thick over the gummy quarter and started to peel it off, yelling at you in the process. When Ma was done with my eye, she put me into the top bunk.

You lay in the bottom bunk weeping, because I had not been healed.