

# A picture's worth

As we were straggling out of Collin's end-of-preschool picnic at Annie's Playground, Ms. Andrews, his teacher, called after him, "Collin! Wait! I have to give you a hug!"

She came dashing over to us in her turquoise trapeze tank, her asymmetrical dark hair swaying, big sunglasses in place, trusty spray bottle in hand. (She uses it to "surprise" her students with a cooling mist on warm days.) Collin, a contrast with pale blonde hair and a faded light blue t-shirt, ran down to meet her at the base of the hill. She crouched to the ground on one knee, set the spray bottle down and said, "Look what I found!"

It was a puffy white dandelion, ripe for wish making. She picked it. Collin folded himself under her arm and right up next to her. Together they blew, seeds speckling the landscape scene behind them of a nearly clean pavilion to the left and to the right a maze of firetrucks and fortresses to be climbed.



*Photo via Flickr/Creative Commons via r. nial bradshaw*

Everything about the scene before me was beautiful. I thought about snapping a photo with my phone, but I was frozen. So I had to use my mind. Click. A teacher and a student saying goodbye over a dandelion. Click. Fill in the details. Now that I have a mental picture, what is it about? Now: That moment when the past and future meet. Change. Good change.

"Now there are a million new dandelions out there," Ms. Andrews said with a smile as she put down the stem and picked up her squirt bottle. "Make sure you bring tissues to graduation," she told me. "The slide show pictures will have you boo-hoo-ing."

I was about to cry right then, especially because I didn't take a picture of this special little moment in my son's ever-growing life. As she walked away, I wanted to call her back and have her reenact the dandelion scene one more time after I deleted

some pictures from my phone. I decided it wasn't worth it. The sentiment behind the image would be lost. I will pay closer attention the next time a scene unfolds before me. This time I'll have a camera ready.

Why do these little moments matter? Because in life we are witnesses to God's presence. He reveals Himself to us when we stop what we're doing and focus on the beauty before us. Those glimpses of heaven are all around us. It's why photographers and artists labor over every detail so that we can see the world with their eyes. It's why we carry cameras around with us everywhere. You never know when you'll catch a glimpse of God. We just have to remember to use them.

When I picked Collin up from school the next day, I noticed a collage of students' pictures on a poster by the door. They were all blowing dandelions. And in his book bag? An entire flash drive full of pictures from every day of the school year. Thank you, Ms. Andrews!