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I hope you enjoy my story.



Alexis - age 11

Fire in the Sky

by

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FOOM... FOOM... FOOM... KABOOM... KABOOM... FOOM... FOOM...
KABOOM... BAMB! BAMB! The grand finale stuttered for several minutes as

rockets blasted into the black night sky. A million blazing streaks of red, green, gold, blue and white shot in every direction. Brilliant fireworks covered the city park like a huge, brilliant, colorful umbrella making the evening almost as bright as daytime. A thousand families stared upward. “Oohs, ahs and wows” could be heard between the deafening blasts.

As the finale concluded, Lindsey carefully slipped through the hole in the chain-link fence and ran back to her family. She hoped that no one would notice that she had snuck away to watch the men shoot off the fireworks. She jogged around the edge of the pond, passed the playground and picnic area, and looked for her Mom and Dad, little brother and two younger sisters. There they were, staring into the heavens. One more rocket shot high into the sky, almost touching the clouds. Without a burst of color, it made a single KABOOM, the loudest of all. Its smoke drifted away into the night sky. Memorial Day had officially ended. Summer had begun.

Lindsey was sure she hadn't been missed. Her Dad picked up the picnic basket and told everyone to head for the car. Her Mom folded the blanket and glanced over to Lindsey.

“I wish you wouldn’t run off like that,” she said. “You were watching them set off the fireworks, weren’t you?” Lindsey nodded. She was busted. You can’t fool Mom, she thought.

* * *

A few more days of 7th Grade and summer vacation would begin. Lindsey hated school. She hated being twelve. Her grades were okay and she could get better ones if she tried, but she didn’t. Her parents always complimented her on her passing grades, but she knew they were disappointed.

On Saturday while her Dad worked she went to the mall with her Mom and brother and sisters. They went to the jewelry store where her Mom put down a few more dollars on a layaway.

“What’s wrong, Mom?” Lindsey asked. She could see that her Mom was worried.

“I still owe \$50.00 on this beautiful watch I want to get for your Dad. I just don’t know if I’ll be able to do it by his birthday next month.”

“You can have my babysitting money,” Lindsey offered. “I’ve saved nearly twenty dollars.”

“Thanks, Lins.” She brushed back Lindsey’s curly blonde hair, looked into her sparkling blue eyes, and gave her a hug. “Just say a prayer. God will find a way. I want to surprise your Dad. I know he’d love it.”

* * *

Summer zoomed along. It was already half over. Lindsey went with her family to picnics, parties, a wedding and a family reunion. She enjoyed swimming with her friends, saw some movies, and was having a wonderful summer. Every night when she said her prayers she wondered if it would be wrong to ask God to make summer last forever so she wouldn’t have to go to eighth grade in the fall.

* * *

On the day before the Fourth of July, Lindsey rode her bike to the city park where she had seen the fireworks. She was hoping they would be setting up for the fireworks show for the next day. She parked her bike near the hole in the fence and slipped through.

In the field across from the maintenance garage two men were laying out the fireworks. Lindsey was fascinated. There were over a hundred individual rockets and several fifty-foot lines that obviously would be used for the grand finale.

“Hey, you!”

Lindsey jumped to her feet and turned around. An old man dressed in a blue work uniform was scowling at her.

“Where’d you come from?” he demanded.

“Um...” Lindsey couldn’t talk.

“You don’t belong here! Get out!” he ordered.

Lindsey’s heart was pounding. She was shaken, frightened, and she felt like crying. “Okay,” she whimpered, and she ran off.

* * *

The next evening Lindsey and her family went to the park. Nearly everyone had a portable radio because the local radio station had been saying they would

play “Music to Watch the Fireworks.” Lindsey wanted to sneak over to watch the fireworks be fired off, but she didn’t want to get caught and yelled at. So she sat on the blanket with her family as the sun went down behind the tall pine trees.

A thousand families waited patiently for the fireworks to begin. An announcer on a hundred radios was heard saying, “The fireworks should begin any minute now.” It was dark. Still no fireworks.

Lindsey leaned over to her Mom and whispered, “Something’s wrong Mom. I have to go.”

“Be careful!” her Mom whispered back.

Lindsey closed her eyes, held her hands together and said quietly in her heart, “Please, God. Be with me.” Then she got up and ran off.

* * *

As she slipped through the fence Lindsey could hear laughing and yelling.

“You drunken idiots!” someone shouted. It was the same voice that had yelled at her yesterday. There was a burst of laughter.

Lindsey ran up to the fireworks launch site. The pyrotechnicians – the men who were to shoot off the fireworks – were lying in the grass. They were giggling and laughing, surrounded by dozens of empty beer cans.

“You’re drunk as skunks! What am I gonna do?” the old man yelled. The drunken men burst out laughing again.

“Hey, mister?” Lindsey heard herself say.

The old man turned and saw her.

“YOU again! I’ve got enough problems. I have a thousand people waiting for a fireworks show and these guys are drunk.”

“I can do it,” Lindsey said softly.

“Get out of here!”

“I can do the fireworks, mister.”

“What? But you’re just a kid.” His voice became friendlier.

“Please let me do it,” Lindsey pleaded.

The man paused. "I can't let you..." He pondered. "Don't get hurt," he said, and he walked away quickly.

Lindsey put on the headset to protect her ears, and then grabbed the safety goggles. She lighted the long torch and touched the fuse of the first rocket.

FOOOM! It shot straight up, paused, then burst open and filled the sky with a magnificent blossom of red and green, dotted with blazing gold. She could hear applause coming from the patient crowd. A radio lying in the grass began playing a Sousa March. Lindsey touched another fuse. SHHOOOOM! Pop! Pop! KABOOM!

One-by-one she set off the fireworks as patriotic music played on the radio. Then it was time for the grand finale. Lindsey touched the fuse of the first line, and it began shooting rockets into the sky. FOOM-FOOM-FOOM-FOOM . . . She touched the second fuse. FOOM-FOOM-FOOM-FOOM . . . The sky exploded into a million colors. The radio blared with the "War of 1812" overture. She could hear the crowd cheering. Lindsey touched the last fuse with the torch. A few rockets shot into the sky, then there was silence. The fuse had burned out.

Lindsey looked up where the finale fireworks were still blasting. “Oh, God help me!” she prayed. Suddenly, there was a powerful explosion which threw her onto the grass. The last strip of grand-finale fireworks came alive and shot a hundred rockets into the heavens. Lindsey lay on her back, removed the goggles and enjoyed the bursting, blazing colors.

As the explosions abruptly stopped, the smoke drifted into the black velvet sky. Lindsey stood up and took off the ear protectors. She could hear the crowd applauding their approval. In the dim light she saw the old man staring at her.

“Missy? In all my life I’ve never seen a better fireworks show.” Lindsey didn’t know what to say. The old man went on. “Now go home. And don’t tell anyone what you did here tonight or we’ll both be in trouble!”

“Okay,” she said, and she turned to walk away.

“Wait,” the old man gentle ordered. “Here.” He put something into her hand. “Now go.”

Halfway back to her parents, Lindsey stopped to see what the old man had given her. She found two fifty-dollar bills. “Oh, thank you God,” she prayed. “On Sunday I’m going to give one of these to you.”

As she joined with her family, her Dad smiled, winked at her and shook his head. He knew. She went to her Mom.

“Here, Mom,” she whispered. Lindsey handed her mother one of the bills. “Now you can get Dad’s present.”

Lindsey and her Mom embraced. Lindsey’s heart was filled with joy, love and happiness.

The End