

*We all need to feel blessed and happy about the millions of small things that are out there just waiting to be appreciated. This poem helps us find the way back to our inner selves and to find comfort. Rather than being selfish and shallow, we should strive to look at life in a positive light. This poem assists us on that journey.*  
—Ralph E. Courtney, Executive Director, Tri-Development Center of Aiken County

### The Most Beautiful Flower



by Cheryl L. Costello-Forshey

The park bench was deserted as I sat down to read  
Beneath the long, straggly branches of an old willow tree.  
Disillusioned by life with good reason to frown,  
For the world was intent on dragging me down.  
And if that weren't enough to ruin my day,  
A young boy out of breath approached me, all tired from play.  
He stood right before me with his head tilted down  
And said with great excitement, "Look what I found!"

In his hand was a flower, and what a pitiful sight,  
With its petals all worn -- not enough rain, or too little light.  
Wanting him to take his dead flower and go off to play,  
I faked a small smile and then shifted away.

But instead of retreating he sat next to my side  
And placed the flower to his nose and declared with overacted surprise,  
"It sure smells pretty and it's beautiful, too.  
That's why I picked it; here, it's for you."

The weed before me was dying or dead.  
Not vibrant of colors, orange, yellow or red.  
But I knew I must take it, or he might never leave.  
So I reached for the flower, and replied, "Just what I need."



But instead of him placing the flower in my hand,  
He held it midair without reason or plan.  
It was then that I noticed for the very first time  
That weed-toting boy could not see: he was blind.

I heard my voice quiver, tears shone like the sun  
As I thanked him for picking the very best one.  
"You're welcome," he smiled, and then ran off to play,  
Unaware of the impact he'd had on my day.

I sat there and wondered how he managed to see  
A self-pitying woman beneath an old willow tree.  
How did he know of my self-indulged plight?  
Perhaps from his heart, he'd been blessed with true sight.

Through the eyes of a blind child, at last I could see  
The problem was not with the world; the problem was me.  
And for all of those times I myself had been blind,  
I vowed to see the beauty in life, and appreciate every second that's mine.

And then I held that wilted flower up to my nose  
And breathed in the fragrance of a beautiful rose  
And smiled as I watched that young boy,  
Another weed in his hand,  
About to change the life of an unsuspecting old man.

**Cheryl Costello-Forshey is a published author of many lovely poems.**  
"The Most Beautiful Flower" has been published in the books,  
*A 5th Portion of Chicken Soup for the Soul*, and *Stories for a Faithful Heart*.