Student’s Name

 Period 4

 August 24, 2016

**He is My Companion**

He has always been around. I can never remember a time without him. Some say a stuffed animal is nothing more than cheap fabric and a pile of beans, but to a young child who loses one it can feel like the end of the world. He is not the normal sky blue or cold steely grey stuffed hippo that you see at toy stores. Hippo is plump, lush minty green with puffy pink padded feet. His warm caring eyes are scratched, his fur is worn, and his once perky sewn on smile has drooped over the years. To me, he is as perfect as the day I got him.

Through the years he has been my constant companion. We have traveled a multitude of miles and seen more of the US that most human adults have seen in their lifetime. The warm sunshine state, the potato state, and the golden state are just a few of the stops on our travels. It wasn’t until an endless car trip to Iowa “the Hawkeye state” that our companionship almost abruptly ended.

We had traveled for what seemed like an eternity, but we were finally homeward bound. The vibration of the rough road against the tires on our car was lulling me to sleep. I decided to grab Hippo, so that I could hold something other than my hard plastic toys I had been playing with earlier. I reached down into the area that I had dedicated as Hippo’s car seat. It contained some bits of things that I had found and wanted to show him, but forgot to take back. When I reached down, all I felt was the small pebbles and scraps of colorful paper I had given him. I quickly startled awake and the vibration of the car that was once comforting was now just making my

brain hurt. Where had I left him? My heart was pounding so fast it felt like it was going to fall right out of my chest. I yelled at my mom, who was reading a book in the passenger seat of the car.

“Mom!” I yelled, “I think we left Hippo behind!”

She stopped reading and turned to face me. “Do you remember when you had him last?” she questioned, clearly startled by my yelling.

“Umm…” I thought out loud, “I was at the lakeside cabin watching the movie on the couch with Peggy and you guys.” Peggy was the owner of the lakeside cabin we visited for a while. She was also my Mom’s friend from high school. My mom quickly grabbed her phone, which was sitting on the dashboard. “What are you doing?” I blurted out, trying not to yell again, for fear I would wake my sister. That would just have cause more unnecessary trouble.

“Texting Peggy.” Mom answered, typing away at her phone. “I’m going to ask if she can look for him and send him in the mail to our house.” She sent the text, told me to relax, and went back to reading her book. I was terrified. What if she couldn’t find him?

 After arriving home, the first thing I did was run to the mailbox, to find it empty.

“Where is he?” I cried out, disappointed that he wasn’t there. “You told me Peggy found him and was gonna send him!”

“She is.” my Mother replied. “She told me it would take a week to ship.”

So, sleepless night after sleepless night I counted down the days till Hippo would come in the mail, checking the mailbox every day just in case he came early. Finally, the day had arrived! I dashed to the mail box, my bare feet burning on the hot cement driveway. I slammed open the mail box and there he was! Well, there was a box that had him, but still I grabbed the box and the few letters that there were in there with him, and ran inside the house where my Dad was waiting with a knife to open the box. I rushed into the living room, put the box on the table, and plopped onto the couch with a satisfying floomp! My Dad slowly cut open the box to reveal HIPPO! I grabbed him out of the box and put him to my face. Ahhh… he smelled like home. I was ecstatic to finally have him back!

Looking back, some may say, “All that just for an old, worn out, stuffed animal?” To which I say “Yes, all that!” Whether it’s something as simple as a stuffed animal or as great as the death of a loved one, losing something treasured can be a very scary experience at any age.