

1st Place, Middle School

What is Pain?

by Mallory Beard

Pain is when you're 3,
running to the kitchen to meet your dog,
and fall,
receiving a stinging wound.

Pain is when you're 5,
and you get your first real spanking,
for not minding, and talking back.

Pain is when you're 7,
and you get called ugly for the first time,
and you look at yourself,
and start to pick out every imperfection you have.

Pain is when you're 9,
and Mommy and Daddy just weren't enough for each other,
and you're torn by the sudden change.

Pain is when you're 11,
and you start a new school,
and get broken down the first day.

Pain is when you're 13,
and find yourself changing - rapidly -
into something you're not.

Pain is when you're 14,
and your "friends" leave you,
turn their backs on you,
and hurt you.

I guess pain is a whole lot of things.

Pain is never sorry,
but it sure makes you sorrowful.
It shakes you and rattles your bones,
teasing and taunting you.
But one thing pain never does -
is warn you.