

By Fatimah, age 18

### My Rocking Horse Chester

My mother would stand at the cooker stirring our supper. With a gleam in her eye she would watch me, as I ran towards Chester. He was huge, life size, a real horse. I would place my foot in the stirrup and hoist my tiny body over, slinging my other leg into the second stirrup effortlessly. And that is when the kitchen would transform itself. As I pushed my body forward, Chester would gallop beneath me, extracting a squeal of delight from my gasping lips as I felt the air rush by me and imagined the lush dense forest I was riding in, and the echoing of hooves hitting the ground. Confidently, I would lean forwards sinking my fingers into the soft fur, pressing my nose into the mane, the scent of sandalwood instantly soothing me. Once I tired of rocking back and forth, I would slowly dismount, under my mother's watchful eye. And then I would stand back and stare in awe at Chester, my glorious, regal rocking horse. My palms itched to glide over the comforting cool leather of the mahogany coloured saddle. To hold the beautifully stitched reins in my youthful hands. But most of all, I spent all day waiting for the moment I could saunter to the front of my horse, reach up my short arms and hold his solemn face in my hands and stare into his deep umber eyes. I would look into them and see my own guileless reflection, of childlike awe. My racing heart would slow and my eyes would twinkle. Finally, it was time to say goodbye. With a gentle kiss to his white stripe and a swift pat to his flank, I would set off, taking with me the warmth and contentment from my ride.

