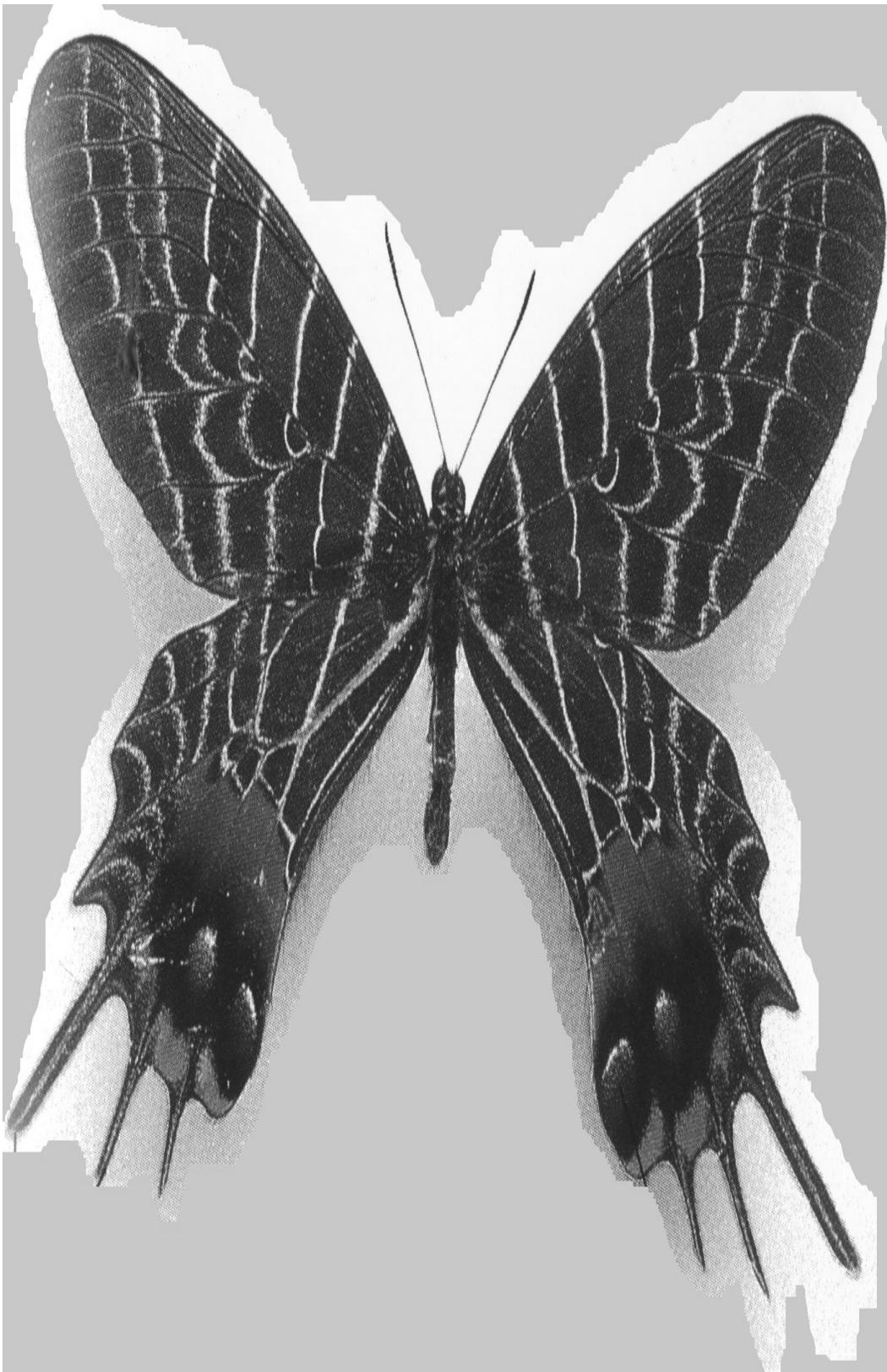


BUTTERFLY MOTHER



*Poetry from the Children
of Hill Country Youth Ranch
for all children
living without their mothers*

Vol.IV Copyright 1998
Youth Ranch Publishing



Children come to live at Hill Country Youth Ranch for various reasons—neglect, abuse, abandonment . . . often they have been orphaned. *BUTTERFLY MOTHER* is a collection of poetry written by children living without their mothers. Please remember these young poets in your prayers and thoughts, and when you do, don't forget to recognize their courage.



Thank you,
Carol Priour
Expressive Arts Director, HCYR
Editor, *BUTTERFLY MOTHER*

SILENT WISH

My wish today
Is for all mothers everywhere
To love their children
Every day.
And be ready to catch them
If they should fall.
Come to them
Even if they don't know how to call.

David age 14

**HERE AT HCYR
As the light breaks
Through the darkness,
As we see God's glory shine
Through the leaves and the
branches,
We feel His love
Coming down upon us.**

David age 15



GOLDEN EAGLE

I'd like to be an eagle
A golden one...
Then I'd be
Free...

And fly over snowy hills
To catch a fish
For my babies.

Birds

Take care of their babies.



Michael age 12

BUTTERFLY MOTHER



BACK TO COLOR

*The whole world was black
when my dad killed my mom.*

*I felt like I
was coming to an end, too.
No one to live for.*

*Then one day my Self
came back
into the world.*

*And so did the colors.
Lori, age 14*

GONE

*BANG!
A car backfiring?
Go check!...
Is Mama ok?*

*...Can't stop the tears...
Mama's ...dead!
Gone forever!...*

*Gone...
But not from my heart.*

Sara, age 10

MOTHER...FATHER...ME

**MOTHER...left when I was three months old.
FATHER...hit me...and used my body for himself.
L...am learning how to get on with my life...
WITHOUT MY PARENTS.**

**Without parents who care
There are many things you don't learn to do-
Things that some people would call simple-
Like taking a shower every day,
And keeping yourself neat...**

**There are still times when I get angry
'Cause I don't know some things,
And I start to feel different...
And ashamed...
Not like others...not normal.**

**But now there are people who care about me-
They tell me
That if I need help
Just ask...
And they will help me.**

Crystal age 16



PLEASE HELP US

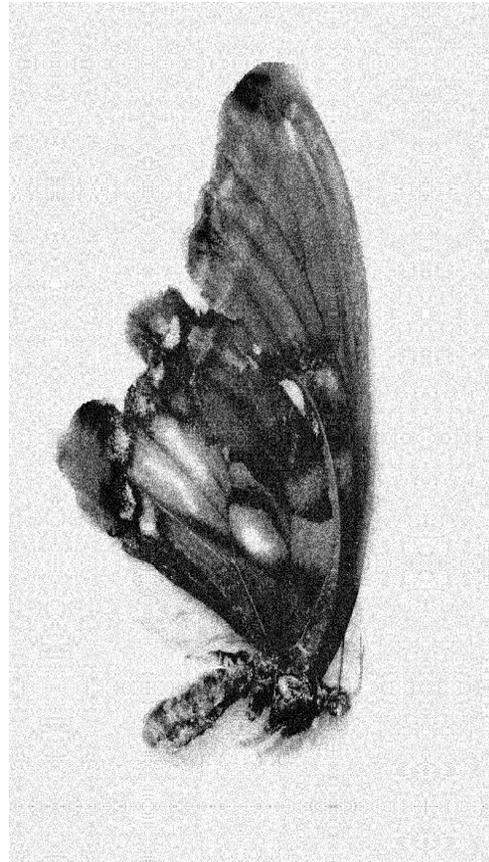
Facing my mom after all she's done is hard...
I don't know if I can.

Finding my mom is hard...
Behind the drugs, behind the pain, behind bars...
I don't know if I can.

I wish so hard that she could find her way out...
Out of the drugs and anger...out of jail...
I don't know if she can.

Oh Heavenly Father, please help us,
I know You can.

Amanda age 13



Butterfly Mother

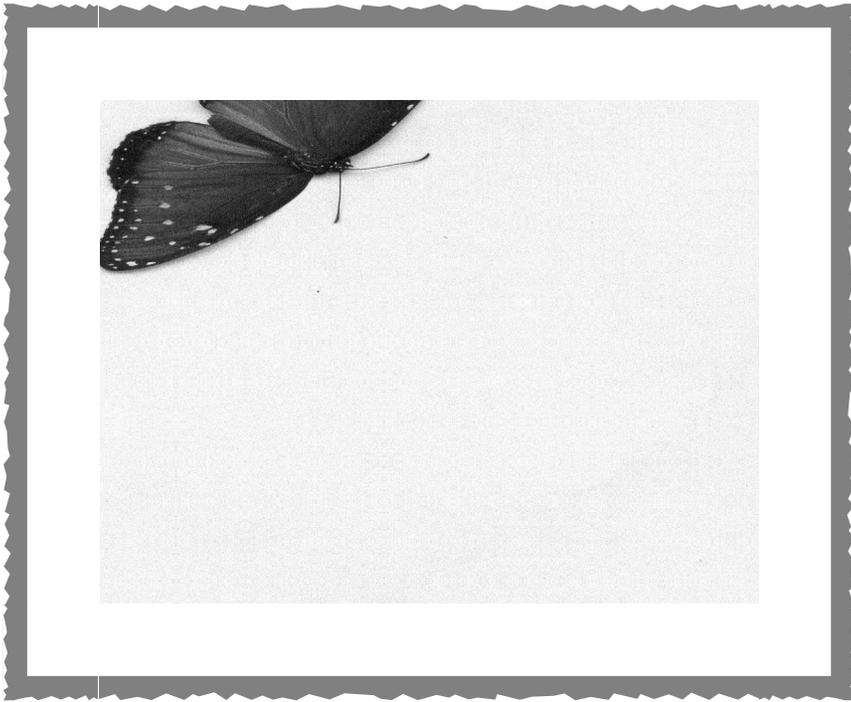
I still remember her.
Her name was Nancy
And she liked to listen to music.
She loved horses
And swimming.

I still remember her.
Her name was Nancy
And she was very very beautiful.
She liked to buy me things.

I still remember her.
As I go from place to place,
She stays with me
In my heart.

I remember her smile.
She was like a nice beautiful
Butterfly Mother.
And she flew away.

Anita age 14

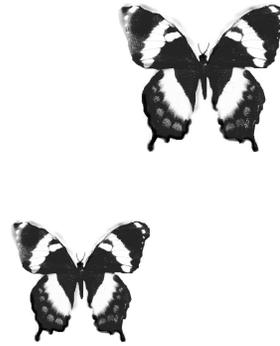


FLY AWAY

It was all the drugs and alcohol
That took my Mama away.
It's been months since she's been gone,
And I still don't know how to leave her behind.

I wish I could take her way up in the sky
And leave the bad things in her life below.
We could fly so high...
Away from all her lies.

Daisy age 13



HAPPY WITH ME

I was just a boy
Trying hard to be loved...
Trying hard to be a man.
*Maybe if I do everything for her
then maybe she
will be happy...*
Happy with me.

I took care of Dad when he was sick
So Mom wouldn't have to.

I was eleven.
She still wasn't happy.
...Never was
Happy with me.

When the state came
to take me to a new home
it was ok with her.
I wondered if *then*
She'd be
Happy.

*I'm happy with me now, but sometimes
on her birthday I think of her
and wonder who washes the dishes
and takes out the trash
and takes the beatings and all the yelling...
and forgives her again and again
even though she never asks.*



NOT READY

I was *not ready* to hear
What I heard today...
Another teenage mother
Has a baby on the way.



So another little baby
Will be born into this world
To another mother not ready
To be more than just a girl...

So when her baby cries
She won't care...
She'll be thinking of the parties,
How she'll wear her hair...



When the baby lies alone,
Crying in his bed...
His mother will be thinking
Of her own dreams, instead.

The child can't reach her,
'Cause his mother is lost...
She'll forget all about him;
And not even consider the cost.

This mother not ready
To be responsible for another...
How do I know her so well?...
She's just like my own mother.



David age 16

TOYS

**My mom is just a child
Trapped in a child's mind.
And my sister and me...
We're the broken toys
She left behind.**

Daisy age 13



IT WAS HER

It was her who couldn't
get me back
It was her who did drugs.
It was her who couldn't stop.
It was her whose lies
hurt me inside.
It was her who *sometimes* gave
happiness.
It was her who
I loved so much.
It was her that died,
And she was my mom.

It is me who wants
a better life
for *my* children.

And I wonder...
What will I tell them about her?

Ricquel age 13



MAMA

*I still love her...
With all my heart.
I wish we had never been torn
Apart.*

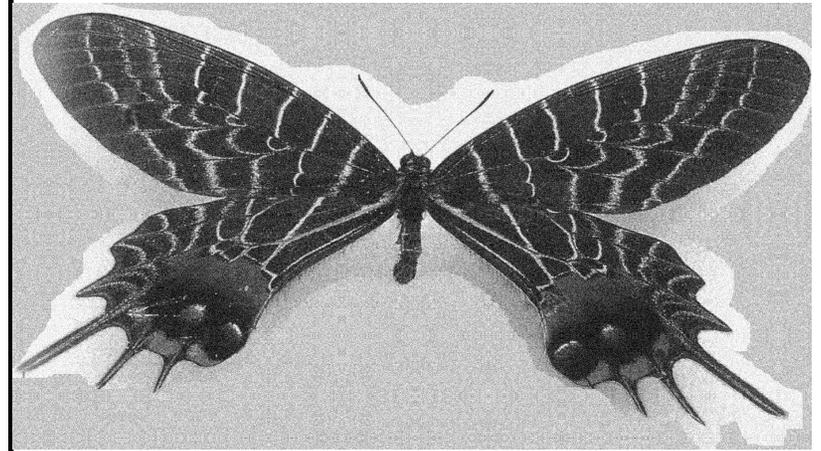
*She left me behind
Without even a sign.*

*When she left
I felt it deep in my heart...a BURN*

*But I guess we never know
When it will be our turn.*

Isaac age 13

Note: Isaac's mother was killed in an auto accident.



I USED TO DREAM

For Frances

I used to dream
She'd come back for me...
A white limousine, an apology.
"I have a mama that loves me, too"...
(I'd tell my friends)...
"Just like you do".

I'd dream she'd say
She'd come to take me away.
Then she would wipe away my tears
And I'd forget all those lonely years...
But dreams like that,
They never last.

Now all I want
From her is a prayer.
I'm hoping that she prays for me
And wonders what's become of me,
Some night
Somewhere
When she's combing her hair.

Just for a moment
If she looks inside
She'll find me waiting there for her
Very quiet...still wishing I will
Hear her sweet prayer
And know she cares.

Carol Priour



MY MOM GONE TO HEAVEN

When I was feeling down
She was never around.

Sometimes I cry about the past
My dream that didn't last.

She died in jail of some disease like cancer.
I wish I had been there-
I would have said a prayer...
Asking God to *please help my mother.*

I remember her lucky number-
it was seven...
But now she is gone to heaven.

Ricquel age 13



IN MY HEART

In my heart
Mama talks to me
Says she loves me
Says she misses me
And that she is protecting me.

In my heart
She is a pretty young lady
Says she'd like to see me right now
Says she doesn't want me
To worry anymore.

In her heart
I see me
As a little princess.

Anita age 14

CONFUSION

Dad is in prison
For killing Mom.
Grandparents couldn't keep me.
When I went to a foster home it didn't work out.

I wasn't old enough to understand what was happening
So I got angry.
I thought it was others who made me angry
But now I know it's me.

I thought about
What I was going to be when I grew up.
I know I don't want nuthin' to do with drugs...
That's what Dad did...
That's why he killed her.
I haven't heard from him.
I never want to.



I thought about my life.
How I was acting,
Wouldn't get me anywhere in life.
One night I sat down and thought...
I thought about all the things I had done in the past.

I made a decision...
To let go of all those things.
What's done is already done.
And there's nothing I can do about those things now.

I'm not as confused as I was.
Things are changing.
I want my life to be something.

WHY?



Why should I behave?
My mom is dead.
My father left me.
All the people I have left
Are my brothers
And my sister...
Are they worth living for?
God please help me
To understand life.

Adriana age 15

Note: Adriana's mother was a victim of domestic violence. She was beaten to death. Many women die this way every day, right here in America, in their own homes. Often they leave behind confused and heartbroken children.

WHERE

I have looked and looked for her everywhere...
Why wasn't she there when I needed her?
Where was she?

I grew up without her
Now look where I am...
Looking into the blue sky and thinking
Where...where...where is my mother...

And will she ever come back again...
And if she never comes,
Where will she be...

Just tell me *WHERE*...

Please.

Where will she be.
Where?



Maria age 15

SHE IS MY AUDIENCE

Mama has been gone a long long time...

She is still my audience
When I sing
She listens to me
Doing my best for her
On a stage in my heart.

Sometimes

I pretend that she
Is dancing beside me
Whispering to me
To remember to be good

Because she
Will always be
My audience.

Anita age 14



THE TRUTH

I thought my mother would always
Be there for me
I loved her so much that I couldn't see...THE TRUTH
The truth was that she didn't want me
That she never loved me
She just let me...be.

Chris age 17

MOTHER

*I wish I could hold you.
I wish I could
Tell you my name.
But you seem so far away
I can't reach you.*



*As I throw the thought
Of ever knowing you,
My dear mother
Into the wind...

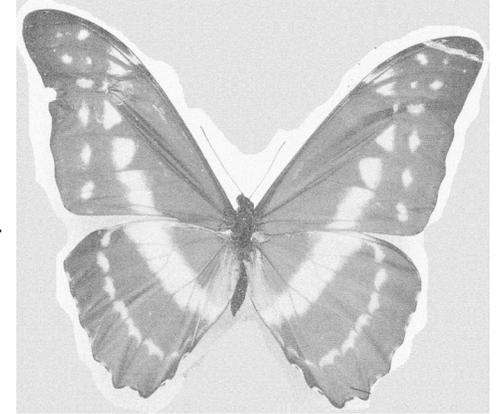
It is taken away
With the drifting currents
Of my emotions.*

Catherine age 17

MY MOTHER'S EYES

*My mother's eyes never changed-
Not when she
Was looking
At me.*

*Her eyes
Were so full of hate-
MEAN
CRUEL
RED
Like a devil.*



*She looked so beautiful when she smiled-
I wanted so bad
For her to smile
At me.*

*I wanted her to look at me
With love-
To care for me...*

But her eyes were so full of hate...

I'M GLAD I HAVE MY FATHER'S EYES.

Veronica age 14

SCARS

In my home
I got hit
Every day
For every little thing
I got hit
With everything you can think of
Whatever she could reach
I have scars.
I have scars...
Most of them are in my heart.

Veronica age 14

WHILE YOU WERE GONE (a message to Mama)

A year without you,
The abuse went on and on.
A year without you,
I was half gone.

Lost in *his* world
Of drugs and alcohol.
I should not have been there
Not at all.

I took my life in my own hands
Because of my dad.
He always beat me...
He made me feel so bad.

I prayed to God to *please give me wings*;
I wanted to fly.
But since I never got them
The only way out was to die.

Well, I'm still here...
Most of the hurt is gone.
I'm feeling better
I see that life goes on.

Mariah age 15



I REMEMBER

I remember thinking
“Mama’s been drinking
... I hope she
Won’t see
Me”.

I remember hiding
Behind the door
Wishing she
Wouldn’t hit me
Anymore...

Holding my breath
Trying to be quiet
When she was in the room...
“Maybe she’ll fall asleep...
Maybe...soon.

Roni age 13



A BIRD

*I want to be a bird
Cause birds can fly up in the sky
Where they don’t have to worry.*

*They don’t have to worry ‘bout
nuthin’*

*And if they have babies
They just
Take care of them...*

*A bird would never give her baby
away
Like my mama did.*

*I wonder if
I could fly
High enough
To see
God...*

Veronica age 14