

“A thing of beauty is a joy forever: Its loveliness increases; it will never pass into nothingness; but still will keep a bower quiet for us, and a sleep full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing...”

John Keats

Catch and Release

Memories of warm summers nights in my hometown make me think of fireflies. Those mysterious glowing insects were kind enough to hover so peacefully in full view, trusting us to hold them gently in our hands to have a careful look. We often placed these amazing creatures in glass jars so that we could gaze at them longer and appreciate their immense beauty up close, finally releasing them back to nature when we'd had enough, and they had too.

Every single moment of every day possesses countless opportunities to borrow from nature a few moments of sheer beauty and amazement, only to release them back to their source when we are finished refreshing our souls. We can always relish the sweet fragrance of a blossoming lily, stand in awe at the majestic brilliance of a sunset, delight in the early morning song of a nightingale, and witness the love of a mother's tender caress.

Must we be blind to the everyday miracles that are swept into a heap of lost treasures?

Whether these moments last a few seconds, a minute, or an hour is beyond our dominion. One thing is for certain: these are but fleeting moments in the course of our day that give us much-needed refuge from the appointments we must keep, the bills we must pay, and the sometimes cruel fragments of everyday reality that beg for a sign that we are part of something bigger. However great or small, all forays into times of joy are fleeting, rendering them all the more precious and worthwhile.

Like the firefly, these moments are plentiful and accommodating to our slow-footed attempts to catch them. Yet they will slow down for us just enough that we can borrow them for our glass jar and enjoy them while they are in full glow. And like

the firefly caught in the jar, we must not overstay our welcome, for there is work to be done, and the exquisiteness of these moments can only exist in contrast to those which are not.

Catch and release.