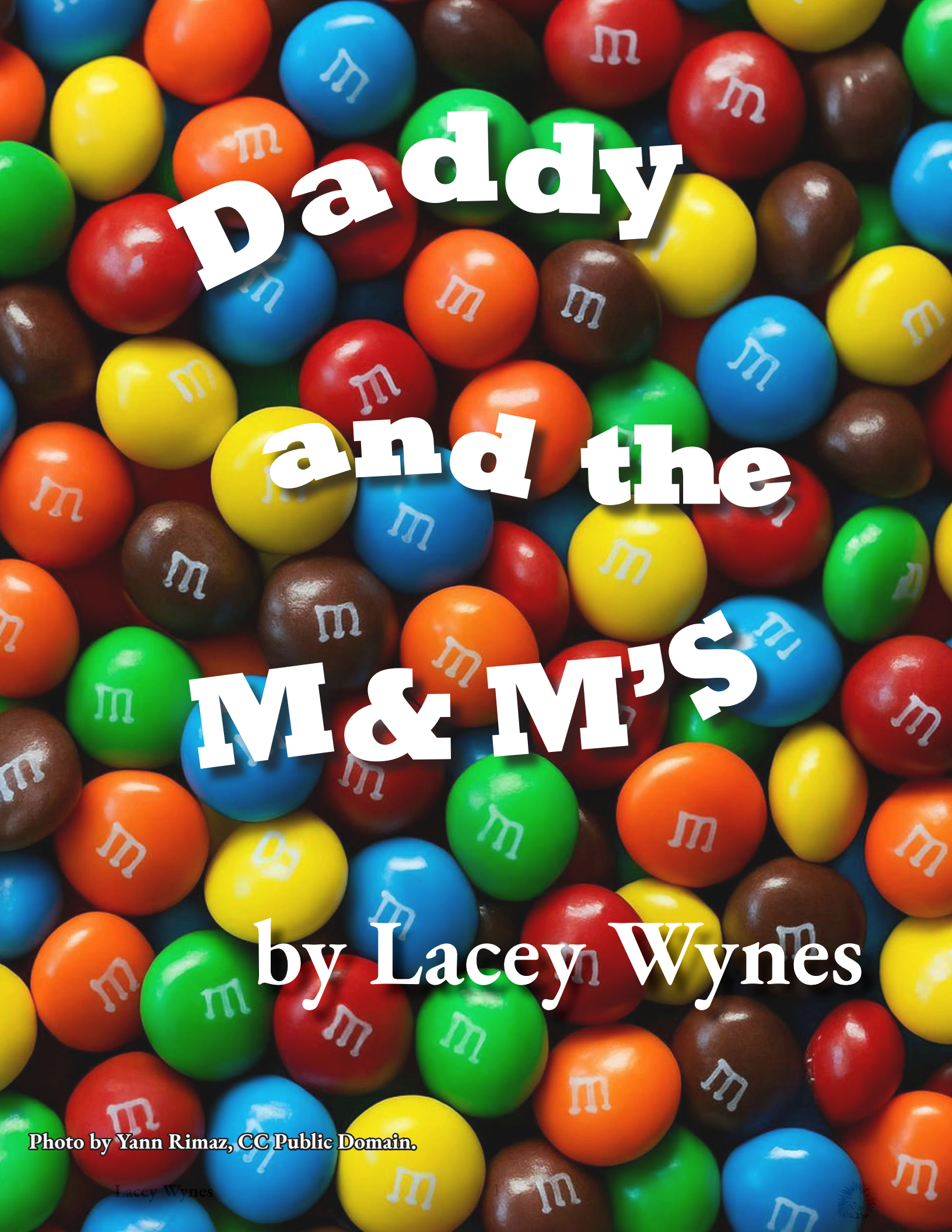




Daddy and the M&M'S

by Lacey Wynes

Photo by Yann Rimaz, CC Public Domain.

Lacey Wynes

It had been a long, hot day, and he was exhausted. Warehouse work in the California summer heat was always draining. He stopped at the convenience store on the corner to get a hydration drink for the ride home. On the way to the counter, he saw a display of family size M&M'S. The packaging announced the addition of a new color, blue. Placing two bags on the counter, he thought about how the kids loved M&M'S and how they loved it when different editions came out, like the seasonal ones for holidays.



Photo by Angela Mai, with permission.

He walked through the door into a blast of cool air. *Ahhh, the air feels so great!* With six kids (including a niece and nephew) ranging in age from three to sixteen

years old, the house was always a whirl of noise and activity. The kids ran to greet him, seeing the candy in his hands.

"Daddy, Daddy!" and "Uncle!" they shouted with excitement. "Can we have some, can we?"

"Yes, just wait a minute, and let me sit down."

The TV was blaring cartoons, and the school-age kids were at the table doing homework. He plopped onto the couch and was promptly surrounded by small children, jumping up and down with excitement, hands out in anticipation.

"Now Daddy, now?" all but one of the younger ones asked.

"Where's my Peanut? Where's my baby girl?" he asked, looking around for the toddler of the bunch.

She was to his right, looking at the others and then at him, wondering what all the fuss was about. He grabbed her and placed her next to him on the couch.

"Are you ready to see the new color they came up with?"

"Yaaaaa!" More jumping from the other kids.

"It's blue." Opening the first bag, he reached in and found one, holding it up for them to see.

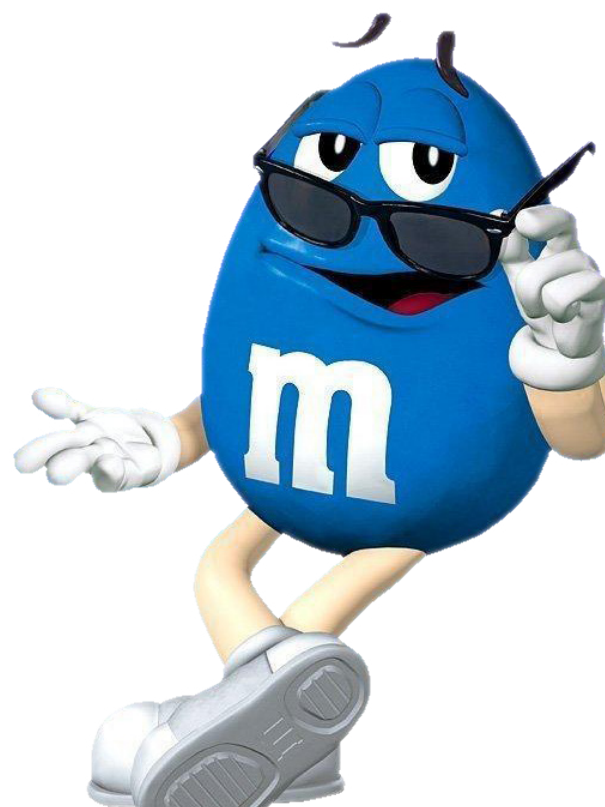


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"Blue, let me try." The older brunette girl reached out her hand even further.

"Me," said the nephew.

"Do your hands like this." He demonstrated his hand cupped, pouring some M&M'S into it, which he in turn poured into each tiny hand in front of him.

Next, the older kids arrived, hands at the ready, and they were also rewarded.

As each of the children collected

their prize, they turned in excitement and sat or stood as they examined and then devoured the colorful morsels.

"Now slow down!" he told them. "How can you taste the colors if you don't slow down?"

"What? Colors don't taste Daddy. They are all the same," one of the older kids said.

Winking at her he stated, "Oh yes they do, but you have to eat them one at a time, and if you close your eyes, you can really tell the difference."

Nodding, the older children returned to their homework. He had included them in this grown-up secret, a game to get the little ones to slow down. As keepers of the secret, they felt especially important and played along.

"Mmmm, you're right Dad, I can taste the difference."

Not to be outdone by the big kids, the little brunette said to the nephew, "Close your eyes, and let me give you one in your mouth, and tell me what is the color."

The nephew responded, eyes



closed, head tilted slightly back, and mouth gaping. She placed a blue one into his mouth because that was the new color.

“Blue!” He guessed, as it hit his tongue.

“Now me.” The brunette closed her eyes and opened her mouth.



“Blue,” she said in the same fashion, and in fact, it was a blue one.

“Again!” And they started to go back and forth. They were always correct, as each child had selected in hand the candy before the other child had closed their eyes.

“Peanut, here for you. Open your mouth.” The father placed an M&M on her tongue. She closed her mouth and mashed it around, feeling the sensation, saliva seeping from the corners of her mouth and running down her face.

“Good, huh?” He placed a few on the couch next to where she sat.

Examining them, she picked one up, surrounding it in her palm. Bringing her fist to her mouth, she spread open her fingers to plunge the candy onto her tongue.

“Good job!” He praised her effort.

The little ones appeared again at his knee, hands outstretched, and he filled them again. He sunk further into the couch and put his head back, closing his eyes for comfort. The sounds of the children were soothing.

He was home, his kids were happy, there was air conditioning, and all was right with the world. He felt a tiny hand bearing down on his chest and the toddler pressing against his shoulder.

“Da,” she said.

“Hmmm?” He was starting to drift into a shallow slumber.

“Da.” He opened his eyes just enough to see she had a brown M&M and was reaching for his mouth. *Isn't she clever, to imitate the other kids*, he thought as he closed his mouth.

Wait, what???!!!!

Not Candy! Not Candy! It can't be!!!

He sat up abruptly, spitting out the horrid treat she had so lovingly given him. He looked over towards Peanut to see that her diaper was halfway down to her knees.

This true story was related with the names removed and the permission of Daddy.



About the Author

Lacey Wynes, a recent Technical and Professional Writing graduate, has been in various roles in public service for over 25 years. Her tenacity and attention to detail have contributed to her ability to take on complex projects and meet challenging deadlines. Although she was raised in Central California, she considers Arkansas her home. She considers her greatest accomplishments to be the memories she has made with her family members of the years. She enjoys gardening and spending time with her family.

