

It was 11AM when she got the call saying they were being summoned to the hospital. Things had taken a turn for the worse. They gathered there with a few close friends and spent some time with their dear friend. The bone marrow transplant was successful but his weakened immune system was having difficulty battling infection.

As they prepared to return the next morning, they received the awful news. He did not survive again the leukemia he had survived as a child. So much pain, so courageous a fight.

Many sad days and weeks passed. A memorial picnic was arranged. It was a lovely day. Good music, good food. Stories, photos, and memories were shared. One of his friends brought along a frog balloon. She never discovered its significance, yet it was fascinating to a set of three-year-old twin girls.

Upon leaving, the girls asked if they could have the balloon and they took it home.

The girls adored it. In the days following they would run barefoot through the grass in their sundresses, taking turns trailing the balloon behind them all the while laughing, calling "Froggy! Froggy!".

One evening later that week, they were playing as usual, when piercing cries shattered the relative quiet. In the innocent eyes of a three-year old, the unthinkable happened.

During their play, the weight separated from the balloon, leaving one holding the string and the other holding the balloon. The younger twin innocently let go of the now unweighted balloon and it began to float away. The neighbor tried to catch it as it floated towards the fence. By the time the parents reached them, it was too late. The realization of what was happening sank in. They began crying, but this was very different. It was not the cry of a bump or scrape. It was the first cry of loss. An utterly sad, mournful cry. The younger twin (who felt responsible) conveyed her disbelief crying, "I just let go and it went away."

They all watched as the balloon floated up to amazing heights. The girls sobbed first: "Come back Froggy, come back!" and then, as it went ever higher to the clouds and began to disappear from sight, "Bye-bye Froggy, bye-bye." Their father gathered them up and tried to console the inconsolable saying "It's ok, it's ok. He's free now."

Yes, she thought, he is, isn't he.