

THE COLLEGE APPS BLUES

by Rachel B. Sobel, Ph.D.

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T’was the day before Christmas, and like many others
On line one was a student, line two his scared mother.
They were both freaking out, neither sleeping nor eating –
“Can we talk to you now, can we please have a meeting?”

“What’s the problem”, I asked, though I knew that the matter
at hand, which was making them mad as a hatter,
was college admissions, the fear that the boy
would have no future prospects, a life without joy.

So we met and I listened and both of them spewed
out their worries and fears and then we reviewed
where he was in the process of getting together
his apps and his scores and all of his letters.

“I’m writing an essay – the 19th revision –
Oh why did I not go for early decision?!
I play sports and I act, and I’m great as a dancer –
But I should have done more...I should have cured cancer!

To Pittsburgh? Purdue? Princeton? Pepperdine? Penn?
Lafayette? Lehigh? Loyola? What then??
Business school? Law school? M.D.? Ph.D.?
I’m feeling that I must know NOW what I’ll be!”

He finally stopped and we sat there a while.
He started to settle, I started to smile.
His breathing slowed down, the anxiety broke.
And I looked at him gently, then finally spoke.

I said, “Things will be fine, just enjoy being young,
for college is not only work – it is fun.
And – oh- by the way, it’s OK, for today,
to not have your entire life planned out this way.

I know you are nervous and fear lacking knowledge,
but “fit” is what’s key when you’re choosing a college.
The right place for you is the place where you can
safely “try on” who you’ll be as a man.

And now you are ready, your apps are complete,
your essays are written, so please take a seat.”
And he sat at the keyboard and started to grin
as he clicked on <SUBMIT> and sent all his apps in.