MEMOIR
by Jenna

I picked it up by the chain, and put it around my neck. A surge of happiness swiftly swept over me like venom in the blood stream. As I touched the key shaped pendant, I held it up to my ear. I pretended to unlock something just like Nan did. My face lit up with a euphoric glow. I was excited and speechless.

I remembered all the stories Nan used to tell me about her vibrant childhood, about the evergreen willow that she climbed every day in the seventh paddock. On her tenth birthday, she found a sick baby tui and nurtured it back to glowing health.

On that same day, Nan had been given one small present. She told me she was brimming with cherished overjoyed tears, as she opened and looked at the first present she had ever received in her life - a key shaped pendant encrusted with a 2 carat diamond attached to a long silver metal chain.

One day at the age of seven, I was trying desperately to reach for the cookie jar on the top shelf. Sweat started to form on my forehead. ‘Reach...reach’ I chanted in my head, when suddenly, I heard Nan coming towards the room. As quick as lightning I jumped off the chair, grabbed the nearest magazine and plonked myself down on the chair, pretending to read. Nan walked in and sat on the chair next to me, and for some reason, asked me to close my eyes, and cup my hands, so there I was, eyes closed with my hands outstretched unaware that I was about to receive something as precious as gold.
At first my head was filled with a feeble disappointment that there was a piece of string in my hand and not a cookie or sweet, but then I noticed it was Nan’s favourite necklace, she wore it all the time. I looked at it for a while, then gave it back to Nan and commented about how pretty it looked. But for some reason, Nan wanted me to keep it. I laughed. I knew I could never keep the pendant for it was all Nan had of her childhood.

For days on end, Nan refused to take back the pendant of her childhood. And for days my guilty conscience nagged at me like crazy. On the last day of our stay in New Zealand I asked Nan why she had given me the pendant. She said she knew she was getting old and one day will forget where she put it. She said she would rather keep it in younger safer hands. From that day on, my conscience eased and I didn’t feel guilty anymore.

I look at the silver necklace around my neck. It fills my body with a longing for my family in New Zealand, but at the same time, it makes me excited and ecstatic that I am the one to behold it.