

# The Army Wife

By Cameron Makeever

Lillie, an army general, felt extremely bad about handing Jerry the dirty, crumpled note from his wife of nine years, Melinda. She put her arms around Jerry's body and felt his tense muscles clenching under his fleece jacket.

Melinda had gone to fight in the awful war in Iraq four months ago; she had assured him with an unsure, fake smile that she wouldn't get hurt, but he hadn't been convinced.

Jerry felt his heart fluttering fast under his rib cage as he opened the grimy envelope even though he knew the terrible news that would be scrawled in Melinda's handwriting.

Reading the letter, Jerry felt a single heavy tear escape from his eye and make a thick, salty line down his cheek. Lillie knew what the short message said without reading it. Reaching out a slender, tanned arm towards Jerry, she whispered, "She loved you, you know."

His heart skipped a beat. Melinda had written about the shockingly nasty wound on her chest that was making it hard for her to breathe. Jerry's knees buckled, causing him to collapse on the floor. Even though he was in distress, something small, dainty, and gold slid out of the crummy envelope and caught his eye. He started bawling at the sight of Melinda's wedding ring. He noticed a post script on the back of the letter. Melinda had given Jerry her ring back because she knew death was soon to come; she wasn't going to make it back home to her loving husband and wanted him to keep the ring forever.

# The Fields

By Alex Henderson

"Come on, guys, hurry up!" Dylan shouted back at us. We struggled to keep up, but he was so excited, he seemed to be running faster with each step. It had seemed like a boring idea, but we were growing steadily curious as we witnessed Dylan's energy.

Earlier that day, we, Jennifer, Michael and I, had been sitting around doing absolutely nothing. Dylan had dropped by, out of breath with excitement, and told us all about this "amazing" place on the other side of the forest. So we had driven over to the forest, and Dylan told us we should enter through it, since he hadn't waited around long enough to find out if it was private property, and we didn't want to risk being discovered. So here we were, acting as if we were twelve again.

"Are we almost there?" Michael was probably the most excited after Dylan.

"Yeah, we're getting real close!" was Dylan's reply. He emerged from the forest on the bank of a stream, and slowed down to let us catch up. "Ok guys, it's just over this stream," he explained, while we were getting our breath back. We jumped over to the other side, and climbed a small hill.

The most amazing sight waited for us on the other side. Golden fields stretched before us, vast and plentiful. It was amazing here; not quiet, due to the stream and the wind running through the grass, but somehow much more peaceful than the suburbs. A whistling echoed in our ears as we stared out, and Dylan's face was split by a wide grin. "So, whaddya think?" he queried with a smug tone. We didn't answer, just kept staring out, struck by the immenseness and beauty. A wide blue sky hung over us; an ocean dotted with small, puffy icebergs stretched over our heads like Michelangelo's canvas. I started down the hill to see if I could find any signs of someone owning the property. Fortunately, I couldn't see any fencing, so it didn't seem like anyone lived here or owned the land. My friends followed after me, looking around with wonder on their faces, except for Dylan, who still looked rather smug. I knew I probably had the same awe-struck look on my face. We had discovered a haven like no other.