

## **The Little Thought Machine**

There was once a little boy  
And everything he thought, was.

It started one day by the creek that ran outside his house.  
He had been playing in the water, and he thought about how cool it would be if there was a turtle in there with him.  
To his surprise, the turtle appeared.

And the little boy smiled.

He thought of snow, it snowed.  
He thought of a crisp dollar bill, it formed in his hands.  
He thought of a warm blanket, it appeared wrapped around his shoulders.

He thought of little things like those.  
Big things he didn't dare change.  
History, people, time.  
He didn't think of doing that.

He liked to think of the little things.

When he showed his parents his gift, they asked him to think of more money and a brighter future.  
He could only think of one of those things.  
Without pause, he thought of stacks of hundred dollar bills resting in a pile in their living room.  
And sure enough, the money appeared. The little boy couldn't remember the last time he had seen them so happy, and for a while, he was happy with them.

But with their newfound fortune, the parents soon forgot about the boy, and he became a little sadder.

So the little boy began looking for other people to show his gift to.

The next day at school, his teacher was reprimanding him for his low test scores.  
He asked if he could take another, and the teacher let him.

With the paper in front of him, the little boy simply thought of the right answers.  
The words and numbers appeared one by one until the test had been completed.  
Turning in his paper, the teacher looked at him funny and then accused him of cheating, sending him out of the room.

The teacher never called on him in class ever again, and the little boy grew a little quieter.

On the third day, the little boy walked home with a little girl.  
He always thought that she was cute, but he was sure he wasn't the one who did that.

On that third day, the little boy offered to carry her books, yet his arms could not hold them, as he was already carrying his own. So he thought of a skateboard with a rope tied to his waist that trailed along behind him, where he would put her books.

The little girl was impressed, and she asked what else he could do.  
Feeling ambitious, he thought of rain.

Clouds suddenly rolled in, and a vicious downpour began.

As the water came down, she shrieked at him.  
Apparently this was her best dress.  
And her books were ruined now too.  
Quickly thinking, he thought of the sun, of a dry dress, of new books.  
But the little boy was thinking too much. Instead of a sun, way out in space, a stack of books appeared at the center of our solar system. The little girl suddenly burst into flames, and on the skateboard formed a neatly folded dress.

The little girl couldn't understand what was happening, and she was afraid. She screamed and clawed at the little boy, shouting at him to turn everything back.

The little boy was scared, and he couldn't think straight. He put the sun back, but then the girl suddenly became a book and the folded dress a fish. And then the houses around them turned into trees and all of a sudden he was all alone deep within a forest. The little girl, and everyone else, were long gone.

And so, the little boy began to cry.

He opened his eyes and saw that he was on the moon. And when he blinked, the Earth was gone.

The little boy stopped crying and stood up. When he stood up, he was in orbit around the sun. And when he reached out towards it, he was in emptiness.

Pure emptiness.

The little boy floated there for a very long time.  
As long as it took for him to stop thinking.  
It took a very long time.  
And the little boy grew a little bit older.

But the little boy managed to slow himself down.  
And eventually, his thoughts began to slow down as well.  
He felt peaceful.  
And so, with the very last thought in his head, the little boy thought of the day he discovered his gift.  
He had been outside by a creek and he had thought of a turtle.  
The little boy began thinking of that moment, right before the turtle appeared.  
And as he thought, he could feel the brisk autumn breeze on his shoulders  
The chill of the water on his feet.  
He inhaled and opened his eyes.  
And before he did anything else,  
He thought of not being able to think anymore.

The little boy thought of a turtle.  
And to his relief,  
The turtle never came.