



A Grandmother's Memory

The new Autumn is approaching rapidly and it has jogged my memory of so many years ago when I waved my youngest child off at the school gate on his very first day at big school. He had been waiting with frustrated excitement since his sister had done the same the year before. All through the summer holidays we had bought both of their uniforms, shoes satchels etc. and I had spent some time sewing on their name tabs, yes you did hear correctly, we used to sew on name tabs. With marked apprehension on both sides, the day had begun. Believe it or not the sun was shining high in the sky as we set off on this September day of great adventure. As we neared the school gate the excitement died down and the butterflies began. "What if I don't like it?" my son had said. Well what could a mother say? Of course you will, all the news friends you will meet, followed by a list of other encouraging words. Now the moment was here to say goodbye until the end of the day. This moment when the responsibility of your child's welfare passes to another. With a final hug and smile, he is gone. You turn, tears streaming down your face, a million worries immediately fill your mind. What if he falls down in the playground, who will hug the pain of his wound away? What if he is given vegetable he doesn't like at lunch? As these thoughts occupy your mind you suddenly find yourself turning the key of your front door and entering a mysteriously quiet house. You will get on with the jobs you have promised yourself to do when you have time, but somehow the heart isn't there, part of your motherhood has gone and you feel redundant. You spend your day not doing anything really well and waiting for that magic 3.30pm. Outside the school gate you chat with other mums waiting for your little darlings to arrive. Here they come, chattering excitedly with their new friends. Obviously their day went well. So thank goodness all the anxieties you felt were unfounded and you know that your children are on their way to adulthood.