

Epiphany

By Shannon Page
OXBOW HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

When you think you know something but aren't quite sure, everything "can become clear to you in just one moment. When a problem has been eating at you for five whole months it can disappear in just one quick moment. Sometimes you may not even know that the moment ever even occurred. Sometimes it happens when you least expect it. Maybe your problem is that you love someone with what you claim is all your heart. Maybe, though, you aren't quite sure. Maybe there's that small voice in your head and when you say "I love you" and he asks, "Do you?" the voice tells you no. Maybe you keep the voice quiet, ignore it. Maybe that just doesn't work. Until finally things start building up. Until finally you realize what has been bothering you all along. Until finally you're left fighting with the love of your life in a tiny trailer bathroom. Until that thing that's been bugging you comes out. Then finally the tears start falling. Then finally words that maybe you didn't mean to say come out. Then finally somewhere between all the tears and all the truth, something changes. It's not really obvious what made that moment happen. All that matters is that the moment was there. All that matters is that when he says "Do you?" you can look at him and smile, and with no voice in your head, say yes.

Parts of me

By Eliza Letourneau
MONKTON CENTRAL SCHOOL, GRADE 5

When I look into my closet I see many parts of me. It is filled with memories and junk. I love looking into my closet and seeing everything. It is a jumble of parts of my life.

When I look on the floor I see many parts of me. I see three suitcases (mine and my brother Andre's) and I think of all the trips on which we've been. Also on the floor I see an old rubber backpack I used to use with my sister when we played together. Then I see a set of three drawers. Inside of them are old toys such as Fashion Polly's. Then I see mounds of boxes filled with my summer clothes.

Hanging on the first rack are my skirts and a few fancy shirts. Some of the skirts were my sister Kristi's. They remind me of all the Christmas concerts we've had at Mount Abe. Also there are a few empty hangers that will be filled at some point. There are a couple fancy jackets, too.

On the second rack there are more clothes. There are all the dresses that I own and mostly never wear. Also there are a few dresses of my mom's and some of Andre's old suits. Then there is an old clown suit my mom wore for Halloween a long time ago. It has a colorful wig that goes with it.

This is what I see when I look into my closet. It is all part of what I am and it makes me smile sometimes to look into my closet.

Six

By Rafferty Parke
STOWE HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 11

It is midnight in June.

Six teenage girls sit on the edge of a lighted pool, feet of various sizes and legs of various lengths dangling into the clear glowing water. Pajama bottoms are rolled up to the knees, and a blanket is draped across a few pairs of shoulders.

One turns to look at the rest, her thick blonde tresses flopping to one side. Their forms are darkly silhouetted, save for their faces which are illuminated in turquoise. They are laughing at a shared joke, each unique laugh resonating across the water to form a sort of haphazard harmony.

The blonde joins in, gasping for the cool summer air. Her stomach drops at the idea of leaving the others. She has half a summer of uncertainty ahead of her. As she would later realize, that half summer would be an unparalleled adventure that would open her up to new people, new places and new sides of herself.

For now, though, she sits with these girls, her counterparts, her sisters. She listens as their voices fill the night, water splashing at their feet.

Closet of nightmares

By Louis Sullivan
LYMAN C. HUNT MIDDLE SCHOOL

It's there before me now; it waits for me, like the alligator waits for its prey. Only a few feet remain between me and my doom.

They said it had to be done; I had to clean out my closet. It won't kill you, they said.

Ha! They know nothing, nothing of that which resides behind the evil door. But now, here I am, and the whole house reverberates with the beating of my heart. THUD! THUD!

I reach out shaking fingers to grasp the old doorknob. My hand twists and then pulls back, almost without conscious thought behind it.

The door swings outward on rusted hinges, the squeal drowning out my scream as the horror within awakens.

I'm covered in a tidal wave of mysterious objects, and they are trying to kill me. Yet somehow I know that this is not the monstrosity itself. No! They are only its minions, cavalry if you will. It is hopeless, yet I know I must fight!

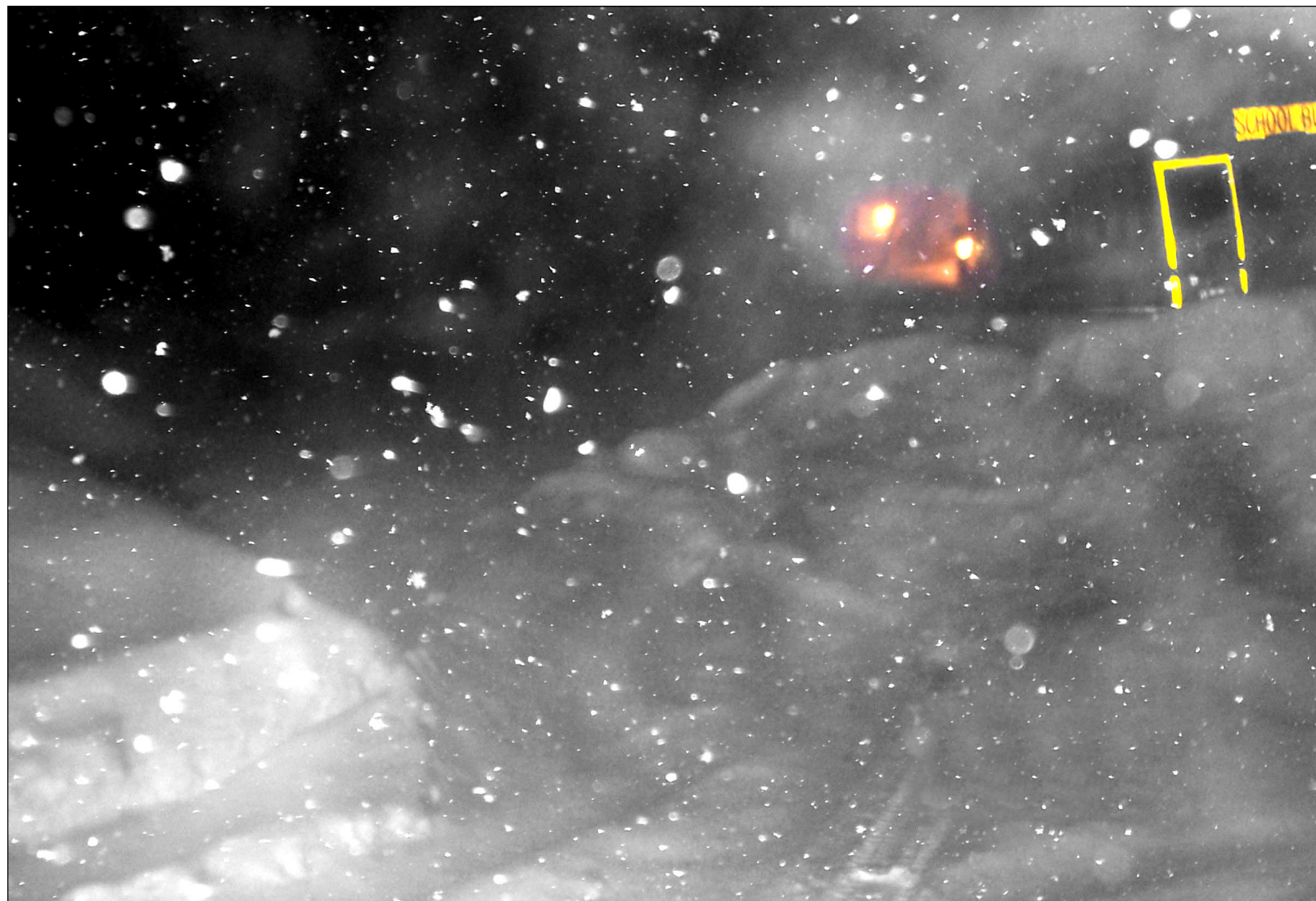
I kick thrash, punch and bite, but it's no use. I've been beaten.

"Oh, stop being overdramatic and clean. It's not like your closet is alive." My mom's voice causes me to lift my head out of the pile. I'm safe, for now.

Getting to my feet, I survey the battlefield. The carnage is horrible, junk littered all over the place.

"Until next time," an old shoe slips to the floor as I say this. "A treaty you say? Never. Sworn enemies we are now, sworn enemies we shall always be!" I walk from the room to prepare for the next confrontation.

COLOR SHINES THROUGH



This photograph is by Amy Coleman, a student at Essex High School. Here is how she describes her work: "My theme is 'memories.' This shows black and white pictures of something a little depressing or not that special, but then I add color to a specific part of it that adds meaning. This is only my second time using digital, but I think it's going well. I like the effect of the color in just one spot of the pictures."

Monster in the closet

By Dustin Finer
WOODSTOCK UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

In the dark depth of my closet I sometimes see glowing eyes. If I listen closely, late at night, there is a faint growling mumble under my laundry pile. In the back corner of my closet, behind the old posters and projects long forgotten, a monster waits.

But sometimes, this monster leaves the closet and follows me. It reminds me that I didn't do my work, that I shouldn't have said that cutting remark, not to forget this, to always remember that. It glares me down at night, delving into all of my shortcomings, forcing me to be honest about my faults. It's too much to bear. Back in the closet.

Night after night, the monster crawls out: slithering, clawing, whispering.

"Monster! Back in the closet."
"Hsssssssss...why did you lie to your teacher."

"I...well, I know it was wrong, I won't do it again."

"Liessssssssss," it hisses.

"No, Monster! I'm done with you. I messed up. I'll apologize tomorrow." I can see him weakening. I know I'm finally doing the right thing. "From now on I am going to do what's right. I don't need you any more." He disappears. Now there are only dirty socks in my closet. I'll clean those up tomorrow.

Forever friend

By Patric Roberts
HARTFORD MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 7

In my own opinion, I don't like to go in my closet. It's not because it is a mess or there is a monster. Well, actually, there is sort of a monster. It's my imaginary friend from when I was three. All my other imaginary friends disappeared, but this one is persistent.

His name is Timmy. He is very talkative and very annoying. I thought he was funny when I was three. Since then every time I open my closet, there he is blabbing about something. I just can't get him out of my hair. He's like that old dog you have that doesn't leave you alone. He's like a little sibling who wants to be with you every second. In the short time that I open my closet to get clothes or something, he asks about 300 questions such as how's your life or how's your family? The moral of this story is don't create or buy something you can't get rid of.

Closet of colors

By Sarah Kendrick
BRATTLEBORO AREA MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 7

Open my closet
Red at the front
Leading the line of clothes
A rainbow looking up at me
Red, orange, yellow, green
Stripes, dots, and hearts
Blue, purple, pink
Arranged behind my closet door
A shower of colors parade in a line
Red at the front
Black, white, grey at the end
Hiding behind
Waiting to charge
A rainbow awaits behind my closet door

Closets

By Rebecca Valley
ST. ALBANS TOWN EDUCATIONAL CENTER, GRADE 8

I hear them	And my heaviest blankets.
Yelling.	But in the closet
I hear them	I enter a world
Through	Of darkness
The sheetrock	Where my parents
And chipping paint	And my friends
And doors	And my pillows
Of heavy wood.	And blankets
I hear them	Don't exist anymore.
Through my hands	My world
And my pillows	Of silence.

Inside my closet!

By Myah Purvis
EDMUNDS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, GRADE 4

Inside my closet I see many things. But there is one thing I see only at night. It is a monster! It is really hairy, green and frightening. It sits there at night watching me try to sleep. Every time I look it's staring at me. I finally fall asleep and get some rest. When I awake, I peek in my closet. The monster is not there. But what I see is...my green fluffy coat!

The magic within

By Chloe Dickinson
WOODSTOCK UNION HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 10

Little tufts of hair peeking around the corner
A dark mysterious cave on the other side,
One hand reaches in, dreading what could grab it
Suspense grows until finally a thread of hope is found!
A little string hanging from ceiling pulled
And light floods the closet.
One small step forward
Two darting looks and a smile.
Piles and piles of dress ups
She entered there a child and came out a princess
This is the magic of a Closet!

My imaginary closet

By Miranda Shepard
ROCHESTER HIGH SCHOOL, GRADE 9

My imaginary closet,
Is always very clean.
The carpet is made of white shag,
The walls are painted bright green.
It's big enough to hold a football stadium,
But instead, clothes fill the room,
The lighting's brightness is nearly blinding,
The smell always-sweet perfume.
It holds millions of dollars worth of jeans,
Mom says "way too many shirts,"
Countless numbers of pullovers,
An endless amount of skirts.
Shoes to match every outfit,
Many different color tank tops,
All sorts of leggings,
Most all from different shops.
There are many nice things to wear,
Everything a teenage girl has been wanting,
So many outfits to choose from,
The choices are nearly daunting.
There are V-necks and turtlenecks,
A lot of colors in the same sweater,
Because of the price this closet costs,
My mom thinks drawers are better.

I remember

By Rebecca White
HARTFORD MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL, GRADE 8

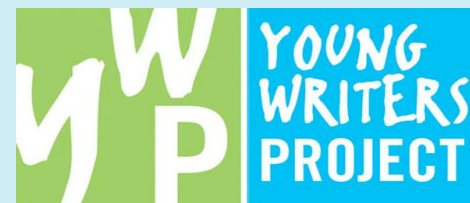
I remember the sounds of crying children and women screaming at their husbands. Parked car alarms barked down the street with ear-bleeding capacity. The smell of gasoline along with the ever-present food rot stench burned my nostrils. I had never taken notice of these common things; thought that everywhere was like this place. Just like a mouse born and raised in box wouldn't think there was another place beside the box itself.

I had sunk down against my shadowed white walls; the dark consumed most of my room. I scrunched up against my knees to calm down. I had known they were coming, not only from the pounding of footsteps clanging up my apartment building stairs, But I had sensed something horrible was close at hand.

"She's not here," my mom had said weakly. I couldn't see her face but I knew she was crying.

"Even if she was I'd never let your filthy hands touch her!" She spat, anger bubbling up in her voice.

The feet moved past my mother and shaded the bottom of the door. I knew right then I had to get out, if anything I had to jump. The moonlight leaked into my bedroom from the window, as if it were a spotlight giving me directions.



YWP is a grassroots nonprofit that helps students write better and gain an audience for their best work. YWP offers writing ideas or prompts, special projects and a safe Web site, www.youngwritersproject.org, where students share their writing, comment on the news and each other's work, participate in group discussions and work on projects. YWP is indebted to the generosity of the Vermont Business Roundtable which is funding its core work for the second year.



Announcements

High School Book Blog-In. If you like books and you're a high school student, go to YWP's Web site — youngwritersproject.org — to participate in forums on the 15 finalist books for the Green Mountain Book Award. Look for more information and links on the front page of the site.

2008 Prompts. If you are looking for some writing ideas, check out the YWP's weekly prompts that are scheduled through the rest of this year. Go to the Web site, click on "Publish" in the top menu bar and follow the "Prompts" link.