

# Where did I go?

BY SARA ENGERMAN  
Bellows Falls Union High School, Grade 10

I used to be a child  
An innocent child  
One who had only tasted guilt from stolen cookies  
Danced like ballerinas  
Floating through the air  
Things were so simple  
They were alright  
I did fine on my own without depression or curiosity  
The kind that kills the cat  
Had an imagination the size of Neverland  
Nothing ever got boring  
Flying high up in my thoughts  
My little make-believe games that seemed so fun  
And now  
Where did I go?  
I suppose I'll find myself after I get out of this changing room  
And finish trying on all these different suits  
I'll find one I like  
And be with me  
Why are things so complicated difficult to understand? Will they one day become clear?  
Will I ever find the key  
To the door  
That's labeled me.

## A close encounter

BY ETHAN KABLE  
Frances C. Richmond Middle School, Grade 7

... There was a huge cow moose walking up the trail in the opposite direction! Surprised and scared my sister almost screamed, which is the absolute wrong thing to do. Knowing that, my dad swiftly covered my sister's mouth and pulled both of us onto the steep embankment. My mind and heart were racing with both fear and adrenalin and by the looks of it, my sister felt the same way. The crunching of saplings got louder and louder everything around us seemed to stop. No more chirping birds or excited hikers just my sister, my dad, me and the moose not 10 feet away. Nobody wanted to make a noise. Moose can be more protective of their young than even a bear! Keeping this in mind we all held our breath and prayed for the best. Then the moose started crunching on the very bush we were hiding behind, and we all realized that she might just be out looking for a snack. The danger wasn't over yet, and none of us had stopped sweating. But we could tell that the moose was probably more interested in the bushes than us.

After a few minutes, the moose started slowly moving away from the bushes that surrounded us and thankfully decided to seek a more delectable shrub. Finally, we all could breath again.

Mom came around the corner and asked, "Did you see that moose?" we told her we saw him from close enough. When we think back to that day, we always remember the close encounter with a hungry moose.



## THIS WEEK: "Stuck" & "India"

Each week students respond to prompts provided by Young Writers Project. Best work is submitted to [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org) by students and teachers from Vermont and New Hampshire. A team of students help select work. For more student writing go to [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org). Students are welcome to join and share additional work on the site.

### ABOUT THE PROJECT

YWP is an independent nonprofit that engages students to write, helps them improve and connects them with authentic audiences for their best work.

YWP runs [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org) — a supportive online community for students; trains college mentors to provide students with feedback and builds Digital Writing Classrooms for schools. For more go to [ywpschools.net](http://ywpschools.net).

### YWP NEWS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Vermont Writes Day 2010

**Tuesday, February 9**

A day for schools, teachers, students, administrators to STOP what they are doing and write for SEVEN minutes.

For more: [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org)

## These are the hours

BY ALANA REDDEN  
Leland and Gray Union High School, Grade 8

Three separate women,  
Three different times,  
Three individual lives.  
One lost, lonely,  
Sinking in the luxury  
Of day-to-day life.  
She is the painter who does not know how to paint with color.  
One strong, independent,  
Living with her best days behind her.  
She is the musician who can no longer hear her own melodies.  
One leading a life  
That does not want to be lead.  
She is the convict trapped in the prison of her own life.  
Three worlds,  
Three women,  
One similarity.  
Their hours are controlled by  
The dark veil of the inevitable  
And only each other can understand.

## Choosing sides

BY KATELYN IRELAND  
Crossett Brook Middle School, Grade 7

"She's on my side!"  
"No! She's on mine, right?"  
Here I am stuck in this position. What do I do? Whose side am I on? I look back and forth at their furious faces. I take a huge breath, turn around and walk away, leaving them in the dust.

## The apology

BY JESSICA YOUNG  
Leland and Gray Union High School, Grade 9

I can't seem to find the words that will make you stay.  
I can't seem to find the reason behind all this.  
I can't find myself.  
Here he is, lying on the kitchen floor.  
And there you go, right out the front door.  
We no longer needed each other.  
We no longer loved each other.  
But I love you.  
And I need you.  
Don't take your anger out on him.  
Take it out on me.  
I'd rather have your words crash down on me, than be hit with silence.  
It was a mistake  
The secret.  
I realize that I hurt you.  
And it kills me.  
If I could take it all back, I would.  
You think you might turn around,  
I think you should.  
Please don't go away.  
I wrote your name in my heart.  
And forever it will stay.

## Stuck

BY ZACH MERRIAM  
Benson Village School, Grade 8

Can't move  
body's frozen  
scream for help  
no one comes  
then it happens  
I wake up

## Dee Dee

BY MOYA CAVANAGH  
Mount Mansfield Union High School, Grade 10

I once saw a picture,  
A woman with henna-laced palms and bangle-weighted wrists  
funneling clean water from a flooding spigot down into her son's waiting mouth.  
His eyes looked into mine, as his little hands reached up,  
tilting the improvised cup to his lips.  
Upon first glance, I thought he was my cousin.  
My family,  
here now, healthy and whole —  
lucky.  
Partition,  
fracturing a nation as Gandhi cried.  
My grandfather, age 14, watching towns burning from a roof top.  
A Sikh in the Punjab, a child fighting to survive.  
Below him, his mother, wondering how to protect her children as the mob came.  
Death trains stopped, ransacked, left lifeless...  
Massacres in the streets —  
Delhi, Islamabad, Pune, Mangalore.  
Refugee camps, "quagmires" of sorrow and destitution.  
Gandhi crying, Gandhi fasting, Gandhi praying...  
Up, up and out,  
here now.  
My little cousins, healthy, beautiful and strong —existent.  
When I was young, India was my fairytale world.  
It was smiling aunties, the smells and tastes of my grandfather's kitchen.  
I was in it, sitting, sweltering in the temple, children's heads kept hooded for respect.  
I wore it, handed down in salwars and dupurtas, all the colors of heaven flowing like water against my skin...  
When I was young, dressing for a wedding, I was a princess off to a ball —  
always the most beautiful.  
On days when I feel cold and alone,  
I open the closet, let the garments fall onto my body.  
I can hear his voice speaking to me,  
telling me stories to make me strong, as the two of us sat late into the night  
nursing cooling cups of tea.  
Today it is raining. Inder is here blessing us —  
my great grandmother keeping her children safe.  
My henna-darkened fingers place halwa on my cousin's tongue.  
His eyes, staring deep into mine, as he takes his first taste—  
Awed.  
He is so beautiful and I am so blessed.

### NEXT PROMPT

**General.** Send us your best stories, poems or essays. **Due Friday.**

Submit at:  
[youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org)