

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.

Help me

By TAYLOR SANDERS

Lyman C. Hunt Middle School, Grade 8

I need your help through this mess.
I hate feeling helpless,
I truly wish you were here.
I need a shoulder to cry on
And a hand to hold.
So come stand beside me,
if you're weak or strong.
I just need a little comfort.
I need help before I fall.



THIS WEEK: “Stuck” & “India”

Each week students respond to prompts provided by Young Writers Project. Best work is submitted to youngwritersproject.org by students and teachers from Vermont and New Hampshire. A team of students helps select work for publication. For more student writing go to 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 — 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.

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

CONSTRAINED



ALMIR CIBRA, *Essex High School, Grade 12*

The bazaar

The sun shines beautifully,
on the dusty street.
Young women in vibrant saris
bustle about.
Small children hide under their skirts,
their deep brown eyes
stare at the busy world around them.
Cars honk from a nearby road,
but no one seems to notice.
Or maybe they just don't mind it.
Occasionally,
a cow will wander by.
It might be given a thoughtless,
yet loving,
pat on the nose.

By OONAGH CAVANAGH

Browns River Middle School, Grade 7

Things are moving quickly,
as they always do here.
The incredibly bright tones
of the spices,
that come in large canvas bags
add to the exaggerated colors
of this street.
For everyone's at the bazaar
to find
that one treasure
or necessity,
they can't live without.
Here,
in India.

Enigma

By Basundhara Mukherjee

Frederick H. Tuttle Middle School, Grade 8

Tropical trees and vibrant birds soaring.
Maybe a little different than one would envision.
Black and yellow blurs swathing the autos
and taxis that are roaming the roads.
Rickshaws being led by various people.
Women roaming with their lively saris and
Salwaar kameez, their purses hanging down
the side of their waist, and their hair clipped
into a bun.
Pani Puri and Bhel Puri are being sold on the
street stands, a true delicacy in my mind, and
people gobbling them, though there is the
myth that they makes people ill.
Down at the market, people are simultane-
ously conversing; some with acquaintances
they've spotted, and others demanding their
daily food.
The heat is unbearable, people turning on
their fans whenever possible. The windows
are open in most houses, with dust flying in.
On the modern side of the town, people are
wandering the newly-made air-conditioned
malls, bigger than one could ever imagine.
Of course, that's the new part, and only sel-
dom do locals visit.
This is India; or at least what I've seen of it.
There are other parts, of course.
Maybe in those parts they don't have Pani
Puri and Bhel Puri. Maybe they only have
local markets, with no “modern” malls.
A country with so much diversity.
Every region speaks a different language,
most of them derived from Sanskrit.
They all have their own customs, food and
everything.
It's India. A true mystery.

Between two walls

By NATHAN KAKALEC

Rick Marcotte Central School, Grade 5

I'm stuck in a
room. The walls
are closing in.
Climbing up, up
Almost at the
top.
Oh no. I'm stuck
between two walls.
With some butter,
a prod and a poke.
I'm out! Not in!
My homework is
in the bin.

NEXT PROMPT

General. Send us your best non-prompt-generated writing.

Due Friday

Submit at:

youngwritersproject.org