

# An event of the worst sort

By **REBECCA LAUREN MAHANY**  
Rice Memorial High School, Grade 9

*(Excerpt: Full story at [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org))*

I had seen my cat, Storm, play with and bite the Christmas tree lights before that night. And yesterday, I laughed when Dad pointed out the yellow glow in her mouth. I want to travel through time and snatch that laughter back. And I want to unplug those Christmas tree lights so that the next event would have never taken place. My parents and I were talking, about what I can't recall, when Something Not Right caught our attention. It was Storm.

She writhed and flipped, attached to the lights somehow; I thought the cord was strangling her. Dad jumped up. Mom jumped up. Storm jumped around trying desperately to free herself, like the one fish I had hooked that wasn't a catfish at my grandparents' house. That fish, too, had flailed futilely. The tree fell over; the lights on the tree went dark and she ran. She had not been strangled; she had been electrocuted. (That word is too serious. Shocked. That's it. Electrocuted things die. Shocked things don't. She can't die. She can't.)

I followed her to where she had taken refuge—the downstairs bathroom in the bathtub. She crouched in one corner, the black pupils much, much larger than they needed to be, considering the light was on; nearly eclipsing the green of her eyes. And there was foam at her mouth. I reached out a hand but she didn't respond. "I'll stay with her," I said, but I almost knew that someone would say no. But anyway, it didn't matter, because everything was OK. She was alive.



## THIS WEEK: General Writing

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 helps select work for publication. 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

YWP has recently received a generous grant from the **Vermont Humanities Council** to hold in-person and online workshops with Vermont authors.

Please check in at [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org) for details of the upcoming forums that begin in March.

The sessions are free.

## Tears

By **GRACE YU**  
Albert D. Lawton School, Grade 7

I can't cry,  
I will not cry.  
Because it doesn't  
Make me feel better.  
So I bite my lip  
And focus on the pain.  
Keeping tears at bay  
In my eyes,  
Not on my face.

### NEXT PROMPT

**Cold.** Hate it? Love it? Write about an experience you have had with cold.  
*Alternate: Rules.* What's the most pointless rule you've encountered? Tell a story about how you got around it or had it changed. **Due Friday.**

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

## Trapped

By **IAN ANTHONY HORTON**  
Rice Memorial High School, Grade 10

Trapped on the inside,  
waiting to get free.  
Wishing to escape,  
while wanting to flee.  
Lost and forsaken,  
abandoned and untaken.  
Broken and misused,  
assaulted and accused.  
Bound up by love  
and tied down by care.  
Beaten and abused  
with a thousand blind eyes all aglare.

## These questions

By **BRIDGET IVERSON**  
Mount Mansfield Union High School, Grade 11

Caught up in my little world,  
tangled in my web. We debate  
late-night philosophy and we agree  
it's useless, pointless, meaningless  
in the end, but then  
what does it matter?  
We get our kicks where we can.  
& when we sign off  
we return to our respective beds,  
sit on the ends with our feet on the frames  
& think about the future  
& fear  
& who we are  
& who we do not want to be.  
Lonely, these questions.  
Lonelier, these answers.

## A rant

By **BRAEDEN HUGHES**  
Mount Mansfield Union High School, Grade 9

*(Excerpt: Full story at [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org))*  
I am tired of listening to sentences  
that are half profanity,  
because I do not understand how  
swearing makes these immature  
idiots feel more grown up.  
They cannot spell,  
employ proper grammar  
or multiply decimals,  
yet despite, or maybe  
because  
of this, they are  
considered cool.  
Since when is popularity  
measured in how awful  
your grades are?

## Excuses

By **TYLER HARRIS**  
Edmunds Middle School, Grade 7

Dear Mrs. Snoo,

I was not able to do my homework tonight. The reason is that these aliens came down from the planet Hoth. They really wanted to know what Earth was like. So they invited me to their spaceship. I told them about all kinds of stuff, like the food and the weather. They seemed really surprised at how smart I was, so of course I had to tell them about school, and what a wonderful teacher you are. They were very interested in the kind of work we do. So I showed them how to write English. When they left, they said they wanted something to use as proof that they really did come to Earth, and the only thing I had on me was my Language Arts homework. So I gave it to them. I believe this was a very good cause, and worthy of sacrificing a homework assignment for. Will you still give me credit?

Thank you,  
Tyler Harris

P.S. Do I get extra credit? Because if it weren't for me, they would not know what a great teacher you were...

**THANKS to Jonah Ibson's Language Arts classes at Waits River Valley School for assisting with this week's selection process.**

## Wet field

By **TOMMY ZYCH**  
Shelburne Community School, Grade 4

*(Excerpt: Full story at [youngwritersproject.org](http://youngwritersproject.org))*  
... When we arrive on the first muddy day we find a spot with no water. We don't realize it is wet. So we argue about who should go first  
"You should go first," says my buddy.  
"No you go first," I say.  
"I'll stay behind while you guys decide," complains my other friend, who is slowly walking away.

I lie, "You know what? I have to go home." I start to walk away. Then all of a sudden, my youngest friend runs right into the mud.

Bam! We all start to laugh.  
"I can't believe he went in there without an argument."

"Neither can I," agrees my pal.  
After we take our shoes off we start to play in the mud too. We stay until our moms call us inside. ...

## Hunter and prey

By **SARAH CLAUSS**  
Shelburne Community School, Grade 4

The wind whips up the tiny snowflakes, roaring like fire as away it goes.  
Fierce as a lion, swift as an eagle, hunting for harder prey to prove its strength.  
The wind believes it is a champion.  
But the rocks do not.