

Week 24: "Pride;" "That is the Last Time I Will Ever..."

One last time down

By Melissa Soule

Leland and Gray Union High School,
Grade 9

Heartless, soulless, icebound goliath,
 Careening in blunted peaks towards an unhappily
 overcast sky,
 Fierce, unforgiving winds whip the summit,
 Tossing carefully plaited vermillion hair asunder.
 A glowing golden sun slowly sets in a graceful arc,
 Illuminating every sparkling crystal,
 Giving the roving landscape two warring
 dimensions;
 Warm light to dark.
 Creeping shadow follows the disappearance,
 A cold aftertaste to the meager glow.
 Darkness gnaws its way up the mountain,
 Devouring a winding path through the light in
 tandem with the departing sun,
 Until naught but the greatest jagged vertex
 remains,
 Bathed a deep titian, pulsing with a semblance of
 forgotten heat.
 Suddenly, like a bird keying up for flight,
 The scene shifts, the wandering shades blurring
 into a flickering passage,
 Fuchsia, ivory, sapphire and deep emerald
 fir, splashed vigorously onto a soft black
 background.
 Even farther in the distance, the rolling hills
 of icy aqua fly past, too slow to keep up.
 Those same mussed braids, the same hue as
 the lost sun-painted sky,
 Now whipped in a wind of self-creation.
 Seeming to delight in their wild voyage downhill,
 Whispering softly against your face, one with
 heart and soul.
 This final journey of the season, cherished so
 close to last until the next year ...
 Reveling in snowbound flight, one last time.



CHILLING BEAUTY

Samantha Owen, a senior at Essex High School, says this about her photo project: "Winter can be a very interesting season when it snows. I used the snow in my photos to show the beauty and detail in nature that might be overlooked otherwise. The sparkling snow can be seen as a single snowflake or in masses that cover trees, mimicking the exact lines of the branches. I decided to take the original colors out of the photos and use a sepia tone because this seemed to bring out the photos' features. I really wanted to share the different aspects and angles of winter that many people miss."

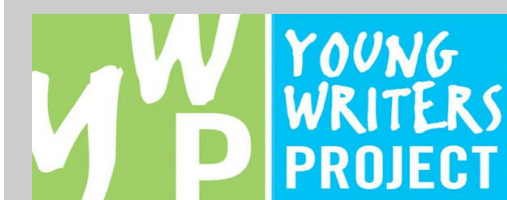


Last time for love

By John Riker

Mount St. Joseph Academy, Grade 9

This is the last time I will ever Love
 It's like a glove
 It engulfs you and surrounds you.
 It drowns you in a pool with no bottom
 It is cold
 But we keep on stroking and hoping.
 But, no, we keep choking
 Love is the boy holding your head under!
 At last you give in and you sink
 Sink to the endless depths of love.
 As you sink deeper and deeper you search for
 that hand
 At last you understand.
 Love
 Is not to be understood!



YWP is a grassroots nonprofit that helps students write better and gain an audience for their best work. YWP offers writing prompts, special projects and a safe Web site, 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.



DEADLINE APPROACHING:

CHAMPLAIN COLLEGE
WRITING CONFERENCE

Don't miss out on this year's CC Young Vermont Writers' Conference. Held on Memorial Day weekend, this conference is a great experience. **Deadline for applications is April 1.** Go to: www.champlain.edu/write/ for more information and application forms. Or call: (802) 865-6451

On the Web
at

youngwritersproject.org

CHANGE YOUR HIGH SCHOOL! A special challenge on the site: Tell us one thing you'd change to improve your high school. Your voice matters: Educational leaders and the Vermont Principals Association are developing a program aimed at helping students get more voice in school decisions and curriculum. Your voice will help focus that project.

That is the last time I make that mistake

By Miranda Axworthy | Essex High School, Grade 9

The distorted guitars and hardcore screams of metal blasted into my ears as I felt my ribs being slowly crushed. The people around me had decided to cram me into a space that was half my size, and they were relentless about keeping me there. The flow of the crowd was moving to the right and I had no choice but to go with them. I wasn't even sure if my feet were on the ground anymore. In any case, I was completely at the mercy of the metal heads around me.

I sang as many of the words as possible by figuring out how the song was going. I had never actually listened to this band, but blending in was for my own safety. If the others in the crowd knew I wasn't really into metal, I was doomed. As it was, I wasn't quite sure if it was possible to survive the show. I suddenly realized that I couldn't breathe, so I used all of my strength to push myself away from the guy in front of me so I could snatch a couple of quick breaths, but, almost immediately, the crowd shoved me back to suffocating.

Just as I was focusing that things couldn't get any worse, someone landed on me. You got it: crowd surfers. Oh, how I hate them. My neck was bent into an awkward position as the bouncers tried to get the guy off of the crowd. After what felt like forever, he was gone. I straightened up quickly, not wanting to be caught off guard again, but barely a minute had gone by, when there was another one. My face was pressed into someone's back, and I couldn't breathe for a few panicked moments, but then the weight lifted and air returned to my starving lungs.

The second song was ending. How many did they have? I was sure it couldn't be more than five, since they only had a half-hour

set, but I didn't know if I could last. The only reason I was there was because one of my favorite bands was next. After the fourth song, I heard the singer stop to talk. Unfortunately, this didn't calm anyone down. I started listening to what he was saying.

"So, I'm sure you all have heard of something called..." he paused for effect before shouting, "THE WALL OF DEATH!"

Oh, no, I thought, although I had no idea what the wall of death was. I'm dead. I'm gonna die. Oh, I am so doomed.

As what could have been my last thoughts raced through my mind, a huge space opened up in the crowd, right next to me. I turned toward it and my eyes went wide as I realized what would happen. When the band started playing again, everyone was going to rush each other. The name didn't help with the vivid image in my head. I turned desperately to the guy next to me.

"Get me out of here, man," I begged. "I'm serious, I'm gonna get killed."

He grinned and got me out of harm's way, although I did receive some of the aftershock.

When the set finally ended and the band I wanted to see had played their time, I hurried out of the crowd and searched for my best friend, who had gotten separated from me. I hoped she was OK.

When I found her, we swapped stories. We agreed that it had been among the most fun, and most terrifying, experiences of our lives. Although it had been amazing, I made a mental note: That was the last time I was going to be in the second row of a metal concert.

A last time

By Courtney Perry

Bellows Falls Union High School, Grade 9

There is a last time for everything
 A last time for everything and nothing will
 ever change that

There was a last time for me to see you,
 It was the last time I'll ever see you and nothing
 can fix that

There is a last time to mourn for what you
 have lost,
 A time to grieve for those who have gone and
 no one should ever take that away

There is a last time to cry when I remember you,
 A final time to allow bitter tears to stain the
 fragments of you that I can still recall

And finally:
 There is a first time for me to smile when I
 think of you and a kinder time for me to laugh
 at silly pictures of you and to rejoice when I
 realize how lucky I was to know you.

There is a last time for everything and nothing
 can change that,
 But for every tearful last time that we may
 suffer through

There is always a smiling first time waiting
 somewhere in the future,
 Just out of sight around the bend

Troublesome pride

By Emma Seaver

Hartford Memorial Middle School, Grade 8

Pride can get you into trouble.
 If you're too proud
 You could get hurt. Being proud
 of acing your science test
 and being so proud you can't
 apologize
 are two different things.
 You ace a science test,
 You get a pat on the back.
 You can't say sorry
 you get your teeth kicked in.
 Pride can be dangerous.

The last time for an unscheduled nap

By Briana Patten | Mount St. Joseph Academy, Grade 9

I had just come back from my basketball game that was two hours away, and after having one sub throughout the whole game, I was wiped out. Annoyingly enough, I had about two hours of homework, and three tests to study for, but I knew there was no way I could think until I got some sleep.

"Maybe I'll just take a little nap, then get to work after." Without taking a shower or turning off my light, I collapsed on my bed, and as I was falling asleep, I thought to myself, "O.K, I'll just wake up in an hour and get the job done." Obviously I didn't wake up in an hour, and the next thing I knew the faint sound of

my radio alarm was coming into focus. I forced myself to open an eye and to my dismay found out it had been going off for 20 minutes. "Aw, man."

I scrambled into the shower and was back out before I knew it. There was now 20 minutes before we had to leave and still I hadn't done any homework, eaten breakfast, or gotten my basketball stuff together. With a soaking wet head, I rushed to the car and we drove off to school. Of course I was late, and as I was getting my pass, I couldn't help but think, "That is the last time I will ever 'take a nap' before I do homework."

The wisest child

By Hanna Kingston

Mount Mansfield Union High School, Grade 9

The little child with the emerald eyes
 He lies in the grass and looks up at the sky
 And he sees not the moon nor the stars or the sun
 He sees empty space for him to fly
 He knows that a star is a great thing to be
 But he fears not the others who want destiny
 For stars are small and the heavens large
 And there's room for us all to be seen