

I'm tired

By Jenna Rickson | Essex High School, Grade 11

Why can't my mind wrap around that it's not her, but a demon hidden somewhere deep? I know she can't help it when her fists begin to fly or when you become the target in the battle of battles, one you can never win, a battle that leaves bruises on my skin and gashes in my heart. And though I want to believe that things will get better once she's gone, I can't imagine a world without her in it, blue eyes that sparkle in the sun and a fiery temper that unleashes on the people around her. I'm getting tired — tired of getting punched, tired of the rude nothings that roll so easily off her tongue. But I'm especially tired for my mother who does it day in and day out, dealing with the seat cushion still wet with yesterday's urine, a zombie that won't go to school and in turn makes her late for work — a job we need desperately to survive. What will it take for her to realize that maybe it's getting too much for us all to handle and that maybe it's time to move on,

start life anew and shake away the ghost of yesterday? Mum's getting older and I am concerned for her health, and she's the only one who can present some type of authority to a creature not of this world. She takes most of the beating, the anger that flows over the brim of the cup that is my sister's life. My sister — my cocky 'joybringer,' laced in confusion and helplessness, has an iron hand no blacksmith could get the kinks out of, a pain no amount of anti-depressants will reverse and a defiance that not even the world's best drill sergeant could beat out of her. Maybe someday life will be normal a place where I don't have to keep looking over my shoulder, feeling unsafe in my own house, fearing teeth, nails and brass knuckles that draw blood instantly upon contact. Maybe someday we can get through this chaos enough to see that we are people, actual living beings, deserving of a happy 'normal' life, one without the agony of another confusing meltdown, overstimulation poking impatience. I guess I'll need to plead extra hard with God to keep me safe, bring some tranquillity in this chaos, because I'm really, really tired and I'm not sure how much longer I can survive.

Pakistan

By Fatima Nizamuddin
Albert D. Lawton School, Grade 6

"The pure land."
Tall buildings, restaurant chains, traffic jams, busy workers
Grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles
An uncle's wedding
Friends, family, fun, fantastic
Drums beating, BBQ chicken sizzling on the grill
Hot and spicy biryani served on huge platters
Hip hop music pumps through the hall
People cheer crazily
Girls dance in multicolored ghararas swinging with delight
Music, boom box, disco light
Happy, hopeful, loved.
An old, bearded man gets ready for work around 6:30 a.m.
Destitute, wrinkled, worn out
Preparing his cart with fruits, vegetables and children's toys
Mangos, kiwi, bananas, apricots
Pakistan — where I'm from
My home, my country, the place I belong.

Just one of those days

By Catherine Richards
Shoreham Elementary School, Grade 6

Today was one of those days you can never forget. It was an early spring evening, right at sunset. A cold, strong wind lashed around me like a stinging whip. The front lawn looked soft and inviting, but it was actually cold and saturated with water. The sunset's gentle hues mixed gracefully together, reminding me of that slow, smooth motion of a ballerina's slender, pink-slippered foot as she raises it to the side. The wind whipped a few stray hairs around my cold face, and my chin turned scarlet from the biting cold. Any other day I would have pushed the hair away or cupped my chin to warm it, but not now. Right now I was in that distant place of peacefulness unlike all others. My mind was clear from the clean air and it felt good as it filled my lungs. Best of all, as I stood solidly and straight, I rose my arms to the wind and closed my eyes; I felt the most amazing feeling of flying.

Love and the ocean

By Thomas Lee Miller
Vergennes Union High School, Grade 11

I stand alone
On this sandy shore
Looking to the west
The sun sets
This is our final test
We've challenged hopes
We've chased our dreams
And to the ocean
We have come
We let the waves
Come over us
As we had let life do
And we learn slowly about
Our lives
While watching the tides...
(For the full poem, go to youngwritersproject.org)

The bullies

By Amanda Allen
St. Johnsbury Academy, Grade 9

I wish it would stop
The bullying is starting
I wish it would stop
Calling me names
I cannot repeat
I wish it would stop
Pushing the table
Towards my chest
I wish it would stop
People avoiding me
I wish it would stop
Talking about me
Behind my back
I wish it would stop
Regretting me being
Their project partner
I wish it would stop
The boys being rude
I wish it would stop
Throwing stuff around
When teachers aren't near
I wish it would stop
The bullying is starting again.

Spring haikus

By Carrie Lord
Albert D. Lawton Intermediate School, Grade 7

Goodbye, cruel winter
You've contained us for so long
Let us breathe fresh air

Set free the flowers
Let the birds sing their songs and
Bugs buzz in rhythm

Naked, vacant trees
Once stretching lean, horrid limbs
Will be richly clothed

Prepare to stay up
To watch the sunset and stars
In placid twilight

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because strong writing skills are essential for success. We run a safe Web site for students — youngwritersproject.org — that is a vibrant, supportive community. YWP also builds and supports *online classrooms* used by schools and after-school programs; trains college mentors to provide feedback; and helps teachers integrate technology in their classrooms and through workshops and a growing library of best practices on ywpvt.net.

UPCOMING EVENTS

VERMONT WRITES DAY III MAY 5, 2009

Students, teachers, staff write for 7 minutes about FARMING

for more:
youngwritersproject.org

POETRY SLAM!

Tuesday, May 12, 6:30 p.m.

YWP Offices
Champlain Mill, Winooski