

The last straw

BY TOMMY BOWEN
Benson Village School, Grade 7

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| The last straw | It feels as if my legs |
| I tell you to stop | Are glued to the floor |
| You don't listen | I face you |
| You agitate me | We are face to face |
| I try to shake it off | I yell like an animal |
| Like a wet dog | Taken down |
| I can't walk it off | The last straw |

She stands there

BY SHANNON MORIARITY
Benson Village School, Grade 8

She stands there
Words spilling from her mouth
Creating a pool of lies around her.
Drowning anyone who gets too close
Making them believe
Every word she speaks
Every lie she tells.
They fall for her trap
Fall for her lies.
She stands there
A pen in hand
As she scribbles out the truth
With words of her own.
The paper's tacked to the wall
For everyone to see
For everyone to believe
That the real truth is fake.
That's she right
We're wrong.
When it's the other way around.
She stands there
Taping over our mouths
So we can't speak
So we can't prove her wrong.
Our screams are silenced
To just a whisper behind the door.
She stands there
Blocking us from getting through.
A barrier keeping out the truth
Forcing us into the shadows
Into the corner.
She stands there
Pushing us off the cliff.
And we keep falling
Farther and farther.
Until we crash far below her.
Defeated.
Never able to contradict
Her again.
Never able to tell the truth.
She stands there
Ruling over them.
Leading them in
The opposite direction
And they just follow
She their queen
They her subjects.

UP CLOSE AND BEAUTIFUL



KELSEY GUZIAK, *Essex High School*

Guziak writes about her pictures: "I took these photos while on vacation in Florida. Because almost everything there looked different compared to the environment in Vermont, I decided to base my project on the outside, natural world. The bright colors and exotic surroundings inspired me to capture things that normally seem ordinary, but in a photo look interesting and colorful. My photos show texture of outside sceneries, but from a closeup perspective."

Ants

BY BRIANA PATTEN
Mount St. Joseph Academy, Grade 9

"ANTS!!!" I shriek.
My patience level has reached its peak.
Where do they come from?! Can't they just go??
How do we get rid of them? I just do not know.
They're on the counters, inside the sink;
I even found one in my Mom's drink.
This is the last straw, I can't take it any more!
I'm gonna have to call the exterminator.
"Hi. Yes, I'm in need of your service.
What do you mean, you're a Nervous Purvis?!"
You don't like ants? You silly fool!
But you went to the exterminating school!!
I just want them gone! Is that too much to ask?"
To calm my nerves, I took a swig from my flask.
"C'mon buddy, suck it up, be a man.
If I can do it, anyone can."
And with that, I hung up, ready to start.
My blood pressure was off the chart.
I took my vacuum and plugged it in.
And now it was time for the process to begin.
Like a madman I scurried throughout the room
the place soon to be the ants' new tomb.

Mom

BY AMBERLY ONDRIA
Poultney High School, Grade 11

Mom, you always hold your head up high.
You never let me see you cry.
The one who's always there for me
And soon you'll have to let me be free.
Just one more year and things will quiet down.
Coming home, there won't be a sound.
But don't fret mom, because I will always call.
And I'll never forget all those times you caught my fall.
The girls' nights we had.
Some of those movies were really bad.
Those dinners we cooked when dad wasn't
around.
Surprisingly they didn't turn our stomachs upside
down.
Along with all the good times there were the bad.
The moments that I never thought I'd come out of
being sad.
Because of the boys who broke my heart.
You were the one who had to watch me fall apart.
In your arms I'd lay there and stay
Whether I had a good or bad day.
Mom, you're always there for me.
And soon you'll have to let me be free.
But when that time comes,
I'll never forget all you've done.
I love you mom, my best friend.
You'll always be with me, right till the end.

Farm life

BY CAITLYN SANTI
Homeschooled, Roxbury, Grade 10

My life is a farm life and even though it's just a small farm with only a few cows and horses, there is a lot of hard work that has to be done every day. Even though sometimes I get frustrated and annoyed, most of the things we do for work are actually fun. It's hard to explain to most people how work can be fun but if you're working with your family, anything can be fun. Believe it or not, one of my favorite things to do is stack hay bales. To be a good farmer you have to not be afraid of hard work or getting covered in mud (because you probably will).

I think another important part of farming is having a loving family behind you. I have a family that I know would be here no matter what. I know someday I will grow up but I will never leave Vermont or stop farming. I've lived in Vermont my whole life and I love farming because of the feeling of self-reliance and independence you get when things go well, and, when things don't go well, you always have your family to help you no matter what happens. This is why I think families are so important to farming (just like they have been for hundreds of years) and it is also why I love my family and my life so much.

Dear friend

BY LYDIA DUCHARME
Hazen Union High School, Grade 10

It's funny how things change
How people seem to change.
The once convincing facade falls.
The true you reveals itself
Or, perchance
The true me.
No matter, you nor me
We know it's different now.
We've changed
Wait -- not changed -- grew.
Grew into our true selves
Farther and farther from each other.
It's funny how people change.

Natural disaster

BY KRISTIANA LETOURNEAU
Mount Abraham Union High School, GRADE 10

For over a week
Your lifeless body lay
Trapped beneath a mountain of rubble
The only remains of what was once
Some kind of store, with a church in the back.
What did this building mean to you?
Perhaps you worked there, at the store
Selling hardware, all kinds of marvelous tools
Providing people with the means
To start, to build a strong foundation for a new life.
Or maybe you were a sinner
Your soul in dire need of saving
You wanted to rush right through that store
Into the church, searching for someone
You needed to pour out the truth
Separate it from all the lies
Needed an ear unknown to you
To tell you everything would be alright.
But perhaps this building was only that:
A building and you simply sought shelter
As the winds whipped faster around you.
They saw your hand reaching up
From amidst the broken brick
You never made it inside that day.
What a pity, because you were so young
Your wedding band still smooth, unblemished
She paced in the front hall for hours
But you did not return, nor will you now
You promised you'd always be there
Through thick and thin, for better or for worse
But only as long as you both shall live
She wept bitterly, and now she is numb
Gazing blankly out the window
The trees strewn about the yard like forgotten toys.
More than 27 injured, and you alone, lost
Another good thing consumed by evil
Just another storm, natural and inevitable
It could have been anyone, and yet it was you
You whose life we mourn in silent solitude.



YWP, an independent nonprofit, aims to help students write better. In the last two years it has received 7,000 submissions. YWP:

- publishes great student work in newspapers, on radio and on stage;
- runs a safe Web site for students: youngwritersproject.org;
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The Vermont Business Roundtable has supported YWP for two years. YWP needs your help to continue.

Go to youngwritersproject.org and click "SUPPORT" for information.



This newspaper series finishes up next week. However, youngwritersproject.org will live on throughout the summer. Check it out.

An unknown story

BY RACHEL DUBOIS
Benson Village School, Grade 8

| | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| This paper is blank | Deep inside |
| Waiting for words | Are thoughts |
| To be written | That I won't |
| On its lines | I can't |
| For my thoughts | Tell |
| To be spilled | But it's waiting |
| Into phrases | Patiently |
| To be read later | For me |
| To the unknown | To confess |
| It stares back at me | My story |
| But I can't think | That I |
| Of what to say | |

Where I'm from

BY BRITTNEY CRAWFORD
Rutland Middle School, Grade 8

I am from a woman
from a man that once were in love
I am from a true love
from a broken heart
I am from a thousand memories
from the many to come
I am from a first kiss
from a last good-bye
I am from laughter
from my family
I am from the heart
from me

Redemption

BY ERIN TRZCINSKI
Rutland High School, Grade 11

I know I'm beyond your forgiveness
I know that I've scarred you.
But, please, at least hear me out
Listen to what I know is true.
You don't really understand
I do love you, more than anything.
You were the first to treat me like a person
And, in return, I destroyed your everything.
I've hurt you more than I'll ever know
Strangled your heart and broken it, too.
Ripped the wings off the back of my angel
Shattered the very essence that is you.
But you can't leave me, I need you!
Without you, I'll go even more insane!
You're the one person that I've ever loved
That can pierce the madness of my brain.
You are the light to my darkness,
The beautiful angel of my life.
Being with you can bring me some peace
Put at bay all of the pain and strife.
I can never express how sorry I am
I wish I could take everything back.
I want to redeem myself in your eyes
Show you that my soul is not completely black.
I promise you, I swear to you
I'm going to make things right.
I swear that I want to make you happy
And end, Love, your eternal night.