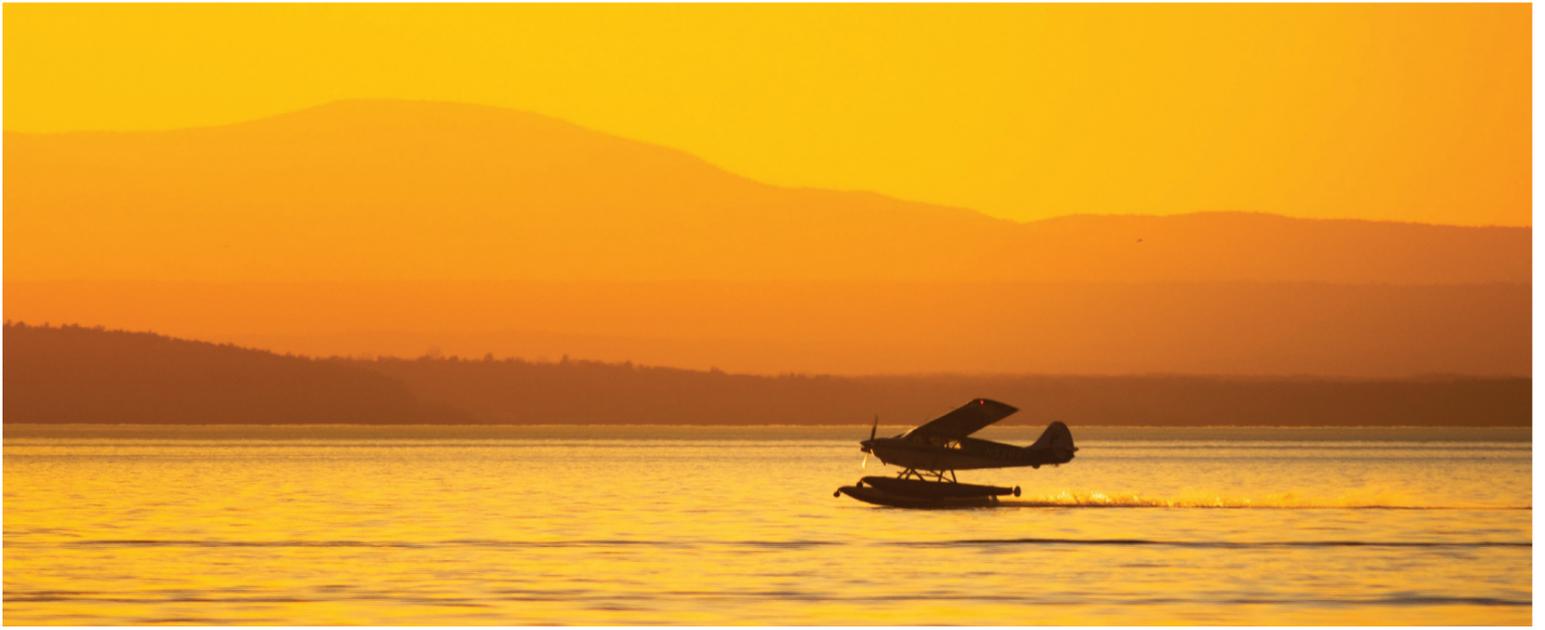


YOUNG WRITERS PROJECT



“It Was All Yellow,” by Lauren McCabe, 16, South Burlington



Warrior woman

A warrior-princess with golden armor and an aluminum core told me to keep my anger. Let it boil and let it rise until the steam hits your tongue, and when they chime how you're too young, breathe fire from your soul. Let your words be the embers fallen at their feet. Don't let your tears put out heat – watch it burn slowly. Warrior, goddess, princess, queen, with armor that's both palpable and strong, teaches me how my anger is passion and my directness is professional. Shows me that saying no is not being disagreeable, just as crying is not weak or womanly, but human. These lessons I know to be true, if they are the only facts that I'll ever know. Because warrior, goddess, princess, queen, is what I see in tide pools on sunny days, and when her gaze meets mine, mouth in a straight line – not smiling to appease the masses – my own reflection floods the frame.

– MARIA BEAULIEU, 17, MILTON

Insomnia

Tonight, I can't sleep. I haven't written in a while; my canvas lies blank, awoken from insomnia. The train gives me muse: the sound of horns through my fan at midnight, like singing angels, still so clear in my mind that I have to blink twice into reality. The limbo of late and too late, so close to dreams, although recently they're nightmares. I wish to dream of singing angels. I feel dull, these past days, months. Anticipation of the world around me, some lively part of fate that seems to only stay quiet. I wonder if the world talks, but through fans, in distorted pitch or muffled song. I wonder if the world talks to me, through dreams. The ones that sit in my memory, the ones that wake me at night – those ones may be the world calling my name through the dark, fate in muffled song.

– BELLA BAILEY, 17, MILTON

ABOUT YWP



Young Writers Project is a creative online community of writers and visual artists, based in Burlington since 2006. This page features highlights of the writing, photos, and art submitted each week to YWP's website. We invite all youth, ages 13-18, to sign up for a free account on youngwritersproject.org. Youth who are 12 may also join with a parental permission form found on the site. Teachers of younger students are encouraged to open accounts and submit work on behalf of their students. Join us and experience the YWP community: Create and connect with other young writers and artists, be inspired, and get published!

Scratches

Skin pulled taut and tight, burning like the light that seeps through cracks underneath the door. From stray branches and walking through the woods, balking at the idea of no path. Water rests on skin as the drain pulls water in, and we are clean, as clean as can be. Pillow soft and wet from hair, the scratched skin no longer fair. Skin is pulled taut and tight as we drift off to sleep.

– RUTH KNOX, 13, ESSEX JCT.

Tires persisting

My bike tires whirl, moving along the dirt. They grip the rocks and roots, saying their hellos and goodbyes, pushing me forward. The grass and mud fights the force, but the bike persists. It holds its own, fighting and continuing to go forward. They do their job, rushing me along the trails without complaint. The sticks admit defeat, cracking and crunching, realizing the bike is stronger. My bike tires whirl, inspiring me to persist.

– MAELYN SLAVIK, 12, BURLINGTON

A beautiful sunset

The sun will set with grace. It will paint the sky all vibrant colors, every color blending into the next, creating a beautiful painting. The stars will slowly appear, shining bright like fairy lights you'd hang on your wall. The breeze gently pushes through the trees. It breaks the peaceful silence, creating a soft melody. The water's current gently crashes into the rocks, the sound adding onto the wind's melody, creating a beautiful song to go along with the beautiful scenery.

– RILEY BERNATCHY, 14, CAMBRIDGE

Garden of love

Tried to hide my soul, but you can only run so far when you're running from yourself. I ran for years until I tripped, and the truth caught up to me. It scared me, so I kept running. But the glimpse I got sparked curiosity, and the curiosity made me turn around and face myself. At first it was hard. Slowly, surely, my love for a side of myself I'd never seen before grew, blossomed, flowered into a garden within my heart. A beautiful rainbow. And I'm still picking out the weeds, but I can appreciate my heart for what it is: amazing, colorful, beautiful, unique. As close to perfect as I'll get. A hundred different plants in a sun-filled world, where all of us grow together in a garden of love...

– SOFI MORTON, 12, HINESBURG

School

School is a place where we should feel safe. It should feel like a second home. We practice fire drills and lockdowns and escape routes, but we think that a school shooting will never happen to us. *Why this school out of all the others?* That's probably what the 19 students and two teachers thought at their school, and what many others thought before it happened. We should prepare for the worst, as this may happen to us. When we leave for school in the morning and say goodbye to our parents, it could be the last time we ever see them.

– KATIE LADIEU, 13, ENOSBURG FALLS

Young girl, my hero

Young girl, you are beautiful. Your smile beams light and joy. Your laugh is infectious. If only more people were like you. You are a princess wearing gowns and tiaras, slipping on your little, silver shoe that fits like a glove. You, my dear, are loved by them all. A storyteller is what you are, jumping from this story to the next. There is no keeping up with your tumbling words, and those words are lovely, truly wonderful. When I grow up, I want to be like you. I want to laugh so much it starts to hurt. I want to share my stories with everyone I meet. I want to dress up and no longer fear what people will say. You, my darling, are my hero, someone I will think of in moments of fear. Your laugh will stay in my head, drowning out the noise from the rest of the world. Thank you for simply being you. Thank you for giving me hope.

– ASHLYN FOLEY, 17, BURLINGTON

Only a memory

The wind brushes my cheek with a kiss. Neck craned, my eyes skim the sky in bliss, the scene before me a canvas to interpret. I stare, deep within the soul of each star. This game I refuse to forfeit. A world where magic still survives, leaping and twirling in front of my eyes. I'm afraid this beauty does not last. The sun soon comes up, the night simply a memory of the past.

– WHITNEY DYKSTRA, 15, MONKTON

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Young Writers Project
47 Maple St., Suite 216
Burlington, VT 05401.

Contact: Susan Reid, YWP Executive Director, sreid@youngwritersproject.org; (802) 324-9538

SPECIAL THANKS THIS WEEK

THE OAKLAND FOUNDATION