

To Belong Again

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Grade Nine

Sentence: "Or forbidden cigarettes."

Jenny's life is a mixture of yelling into her pillow, homework and a boy named Fredrick. She doesn't know how to write poetry, she can't cook or bake and her grades are just average. Her life is of outlawed alcohol or forbidden cigarettes. Of hiding her belly button piercing and the tiny tattoo of a bird on her chest.

Her house is full of useless junk that is never used. Like the small broom-like thing that hangs on the wall, when has anyone ever used that thing? Why hasn't anyone thrown it out yet? Someone should throw it out.

Actually, she should throw it out. She'll do it right now. She will march into the kitchen, grab that stupid broom and throw it in the garbage can. She would do it if she wasn't too much of a coward. She can't rebel with confidence if she knows her mother will find out and she's positive her mother will find out. She's like a detective when it comes to things that are missing. Her mother is the police officer of their immaculate home and knows exactly where everything is hidden.

Jenny knows she has to do something. In some way, she must rebel against something. She has to prove herself. Maybe it's a teenage urge but she just has to do something so she can say she's done something. Her tattoo and piercing are old news, everyone has them nowadays. She can't get another tattoo because she already struggles to hide the one she's already got. Jenny is stuck. She's out of inspiration and stuck contemplating what to do next. Her rebellious nature is blocked. What's happening to her?

Her life is a circus act. She always needs to do something new to wow the crowd. She does things so she can fit in with her friends and so that she can finally feel good about herself. Jenny's craving of scandalous acts have woven their way deep into her soul. It's part of her identity. She can never escape. She knows it, she loves it. Yet sometimes in the dead of night she fears it. If people only like her when she's acting, do people really like her at all?

Although her need to rebel is strong, it never used to be that way. She used to love pleasing her mother. She would try her absolute hardest in school, even though she would only make it up to just above average. If you had asked eleven year old Jenny what she thought of smoking, tattoos and alcohol, she would have scrunched up her face and lectured you on why they were bad. Did you know that smoking takes approximately eleven minutes off your life each cigarette? Do you realize what those tattoos will look like when you're a grandma? Didn't you read that article on why alcohol is awful for teens and every time you pass out it is because you've lost too many brain cells? Are you not a well-educated person? Did your mom not tell you these things?

Eleven year old Jenny didn't have many friends. She loved reading and writing and school. Her friends weren't the most interesting but at least they used to be real. Real friends who liked her for who she really was. Those were her true friends. It all changed when she moved to a new

school. Here you had to fit in or else you were ravaged. At lunch you either had friends or you moved. It was hard to make friends unless you were really trying.

And man, she tried. She needed to fit in because she wanted satisfaction. If she didn't have friends, who would she turn to in times of need? Not that she could turn to her friends now anyways. They're all too focused on their own lives.

Frederick is her little bit of salvation. He understands her desire to throw away useless things. Sometimes they talk about books they're read. They both don't belong in their current groups. One time when it was just the two of them for lunch, Frederick suggested they sit with a table that already had people at it. There was one table that would have been perfect for them; it only had two seats. But she agreed to sit with him at a table with people they normally wouldn't have been seen with. They actually had fun.

So sometimes, Jenny controls her acting and sits with the table of people she shouldn't be sitting with. They're her friends. They talk to her about real problems.

Jenny's life is a mixture of slowly migrating to a table of people who really understand her and taming her urge to stop acting like herself. Of talking to Frederick and fixing herself so that she belongs again.