

## IN THE SPACES

I lived in the spaces, the open spaces, where my words took me, began to take me, when a little girl. Songs and stories spilled out into a living room, a stage opening and closing with a blanket sliding across a bar [????]. As a teenager then transforming as adult, I drew on writing longer songs and stories, then poetry. Words carried out and through, no one confined them.

I am afraid of water, yet I used to write poetry while swimming laps at the Y. No matter how confined I felt by my depression and the small rooms I shut myself away in, my words slipped out through the cracks and into the open.

**[Continue editing and writing]**

Tonight in the labyrinth I gathered all the Cindys and Jarelles, and I took them out with me to sit on a bench, the Cindys on one side, the Jarelles on the other. I gather them close to me and made them a promise. The words would not end with them. I would find a way to live in the spaces again. To be free in the wind of the open field of the prairies, the water, the road on my motorcycle. I would find a way to release my heart so the words, my words, could be again.

I am a writer. First. An editor, second. I forgot that. I forgot. And lost faith in the writer. But this writer has much to say, in the open spaces, the spaces where she lives, truly. Not at a desk, in a cubicle, in an old building of dust, where her talents are used for others, not herself. She cannot be free there, to live in the open. Perhaps that is why her soul has come apart, lying in pieces here and there, still alive, but broken shadows of what the soul should be.

I lived in the spaces—and that is where I will live again.

Jarelle Sara Stein, January 2016