



I only have a minute to write because Mom said I could take a recess from my Math lesson. She gave me a new drum that Aunt Vanessa decorated with beads and paint. I like it, but not as much as you. Mom also said she bought new incense at the Farmer's Market that we can share, but I don't really care because I hate incense. I think I'd rather sit next to grandpa while he smoked a cigarette than burn incense. I wish she'd just buy a giant candle that smells like cinnamon or something. Anyway, I'm really tired today because I stayed up so late writing and drawing and thinking about everything. Mom called me a slug and cut our early morning walk short because I was going too slow and couldn't keep up with her. She blamed my laziness on the cookies, but you and I know better. When she tried to explain what a lichen was, I pretended to fall asleep on a tree stump and started snoring really loud. I laughed so hard at myself that Mom gave up and took me home. But now we're working on Math (YUCK) so

We're going to a drum circle this afternoon and I'm so excited because my cousin Shelby is coming. Yea! She is my favorite cousin, and I love talking to her even though my mom says she's too mainstream. That's because Shelby goes to public high school and dyes her hair blonde and isn't vegan and stuff. But I like her even if she is mainstream, because she treats me like a grown-up. She doesn't usually go to the drum circles, but today is Uncle Rick's birthday, so she's coming this time. Maybe Mom will let her drive me home! That would be the best. I wish Shelby could teach me my lessons, instead of Mom always doing it. Aunt Vanessa says Shelby speaks really good Spanish and I think I'd be a great Spanish speaker, too, if I had Shelby for a teacher. When I asked Mom if she'd let Shelby teach me, she just said, "I have more education than any other teacher around, and a load of debt to prove it." So I guess that means

~~and I should have~~





Dear Diary,

Mom signed me up for a gymnastics class today! And guess what? It's not a private lesson! There's like eight other kids in the class and they all go to real school. Anyway, Shelby takes gymnastics at the same gym, so I'm sure it will be great. Maybe we'll even be in the same class someday! After I get really good at it, I mean. She's probably a lot better than me, but I can't ask her because I'm still grounded from talking to her since Mom found out she gave me the bad CDs. My first class is tomorrow, and Mom gave me her old leotard to wear. It's a little faded, but it fits perfectly. I could kiss her I'm so happy!

Dear Diary,

I saw Shelby at the gym today! She was eating a bagel with cream cheese and I almost asked her for a bite because I've always wondered what that tastes like, but I couldn't, because cream cheese has cheese in it. Shelby's class is right after mine and my mom picked me up late, so I got to watch Shelby's class for a while. They do back-handsprings and back-walkovers and are really good. It was so amazing. They get to listen to the radio the whole time, and I overheard them talking about playing soccer, and decorating lockers, and sneaking out on Friday night. I could have listened all day, but my stupid mom picked me up before I could hear anything else. Anyways, I really like my gymnastics class. I'm the only homeschooler, but I recognized some of the kids from the dance studio, and one girl named Maria had come to a drum circle before, so we're sort of friends. I think my favorite thing to do in gymnastics is bars. But I like beam, too, and of course, floor is really fun. I don't know! I can't make up my mind. P.S. I got an A+ on my English test so things are going GRRREAT!



never had regular ears doesn't mean your ears are better than hers." She totally confused me, and I didn't see how having dreadlocks since I wa



place

Shelby said. But I doubt it. I didn't see any girls with dreadlocks on their team. At least I can do a cartwheel on the beam! I'm so glad I'm not grounded from Shelby anymore.

Dear Diary,

This is Top Secret news. You can't tell anyone. It's so Top Secret that instead of doing my Math homework, I'm writing in you. Okay. Here's the news. Today my mom let Shelby give me a ride home from gymnastics again, but instead of taking me straight home, she took me to McDonald's!!!! I almost peed my pants because I was so scared my mom would find out, but Shelby reminded me that my mom would rather go to a Snoop Dog concert than go to a fast food place. Still, I kept looking at the door until Shelby got annoyed and said, "Do you want to be here, or not?" I did want to be there, because I'd never been there before, but I worried that they didn't have any food I could eat. "Duh," Shelby said, "Of course they don't have vegan food. This is McDonald's. If you're going to order anything, you gotta get a cheeseburger." At first, I didn't understand what she was s't ~~Agone~~,Ti

took the biggest bite of my life and closed my eyes till I finished swallowing. I ate meat. And oh, my gosh, it was good. My mom never told me meat tasted that good! Of course, after I remembered all the horrible stories my mom told me about animals being tortured by people, I ran to the bathroom and threw it all up. But still, it was great. Can you believe it? I felt kind of guilty when my mom tried to serve me roasted vegetables and rice for dinner, because she'd been cooking just for me. I kept the wrapper, though. It's in my pocket and it still smells like cheese.

Dear Diary,

My mom has been crying for two hours since Aunt Vanessa called and told her that I ate meat. I can't believe Shelby told her mom and now my mom knows and she won't even talk to me. "I'm not mad. I'm sad," she said to me, and then she started hiccupping so bad that she couldn't even finish her dinner. I think she's smoking in the bathroom now, and she thinks I don't know, because she opened the window, but my window is open, too, so I can smell it. I tried to tell her that it didn't matter, because I threw it up anyway, but she said if I think it doesn't matter, than I am not her daughter anymore. But I wonder how she can say that, when I have the same freckles as her, and the same reddish dreadlocks as her, and know all the same things as her, because she's my teacher, too. Of course I am her daughter. No one else matches her like I do. But she's still sad at me, and there is no one that can make her feel better, especially me, and all of it is my fault because I ate meat. I guess she thinks that now, I am mainstream, too.