So Close to Ten

**By:** Alyse D., Bluffton, South Carolina, Age 11
**Gender:** Any
**Genre:** Dramatic
**Description:** Alyse has been putting off riding a roller coaster for too long. So today she will ride. Whether Alyse enjoys the ride or not remains to be seen.

You want to hear about the scariest experience of my life? It happened on a roller coaster. Strapped in tightly, I looked up at the tall menacing incline of the Rip Rocket. The harsh winds blew in my face and made my hair knotty as I checked my belt for the fiftieth time. Why did I have to do this? Why did I have to ride my first roller coaster… today? I was this close to making it through my single-digit years without riding one. I didn’t agree to it, but, according to my dad, “It’s time.” I didn’t like it, but he was right. My sisters rode their first roller coaster way before me. Even though I didn’t want to at first, I’m glad I did. Universal was a lot more fun now that I rode coasters. When we reached the coaster, my grandma asked me the long-asked question. “(fill in your name), are you going to go on?” Of course I said no, but apparently they didn’t hear me, because they shoved me into the line! First, we went up a mountain of steep, grimy, paralyzing steps, flinching after each thump on the concrete. Next, we got into the depressingly short loading line, and there it was. That rickety paint-chipped cart would be the last thing I would ever see. It was our turn. We crawled in and I could hear the screams of the past riders. I embraced the feeling that I would soon be at peace. “3, 2, 1…Off you go!” The cart lurched, and the screams of the past were now my own. “I love roller coasters!!!”