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### Who am I?

Asking me who I am is a very difficult question for me to answer. I could start by telling you that my name is Anna, that I grew up in California, and that I've always lived in the same house, but that doesn't give you much idea of who I am as a person. I could also bore you with the sad story of the girl I knew in middle school who took her own life and how I'm a much different person because of that, but it's been done so many times before. It lacks originality and meaning now to other people. All of that information *is* part of who I am, but it doesn't define me. Quite frankly, I'm not sure what does define me.

There are several things that I love to do in my life and perhaps they'll shed a light upon who I am. First and foremost, I love to dance. Well, I loved to dance. I'd done it all my life and had you asked me four years ago who I was, I would have responded without hesitation, "I am a dancer." Now, I am not so sure that I am worthy of that title anymore. I had to stop competitive dance my freshman year of high school because my dad quit his job and we could no longer afford it. I was able to dance through my school, but it just wasn't the same. It was much more political and not about the love of dance. It turned me off to the beautiful art I had once spent every afternoon doing. I just started ballet again here at Rider, but I'm not sure my heart is in it anymore.

Another passion of mine is writing. I love reading, and the idea that one day I could write a book that takes people away from their everyday struggles into a world they don't want to leave just fills my heart with hope. I know how books have changed my life and I want to do that for other people. I want to write a book as moving as *The Lovely Bones* or a Sarah Dessen novel. I want to make people cry at the end of reading my book, not because it is sad, but rather because it is over.

I know that I have a lot to learn in life, believe me. I know I'm just beginning my journey and I will fail along the way, but I *want* to fail sometimes because that's how you learn. One of my favorite quotes is a Japanese proverb, "Fall down seven times, stand up eight." I'm dedicated to my craft, to what I do, to whom I love, and to things I can do to better the world. I hate disappointing people, when they know I can do better. I hate disappointing myself when I know I can do better. I can be counted on to keep trying. I do not give up; it's not in my nature.

So when I'm asked who I am, I cannot give a direct answer. I am many things; I am complicated. I change all the time and I am okay with that. I embrace it because I would not want to be who I was two years ago. I've lived and learned much more within that time and I have grown because of it. My life is unpredictable and I like that. I like trying to unravel a mystery. Who am I? I don't know yet.