

## Interview with Alice

Yes, I'm Alice. No, I've never been interviewed before. Oh! This is going in the newspaper? What if I say something my friends don't like? Oh dear. Easy questions you say? What kind of questions?

Oh, I live with my mom and dad in Point Reyes Station. They are in real estate. Mom sells houses in Petaluma. 'Tell them that it's West Petaluma, honey,' she says to me, so yes, that side, West Petaluma. Dad's an office manager at another firm. No, they do not work together, and yes, there's a reason for that. Stubborn? My parents? I don't know about that. They travel a lot. Bring me? No, never.

I stay with my Grandma and sometimes Beth Ann. You met my Grandma? If you had, you'd never forget her. She's shorter than I am, but, by the way, Grandpa, he's huge, and he towers over her. You should see them together – cute as buttons, they are. They've lived here since forever.

Mom and Dad go to conferences. I don't know, some environmental stuff? Out here, everything's environmental. You name it, they're on it, and they're gone.

Beth Ann? She's my mother's best friend's daughter, if you know what I mean. I do stay with her sometimes. She's cool, but ... Loves clothes a lot more than I do. I just want to be dressed in the morning, make sure I have on jeans and a top, but that Beth Ann – always looking for trouble, if you know what I mean. She likes me better now, now that I helped her escape from that guy in the truck.

He sure wasn't who Beth Ann thought he was. Yeah ... my mom is overprotective, but in this case ... she was right. Beth Ann – she smiles at me now, and doesn't roll her eyes so much anymore when I'm there for the weekend. Mostly, I stay with Grandma. I love her. She bakes, yeah, well, sort of, but she's hella great at cards.

Any problems? That's a personal kind of question. Books? I loved The Hunger Games. Movies? Um, not many movies out here. When I stay home, when I have to stay home, at Grandma's, when I've had another nosebleed, she watches crime dramas with me. I like 'em too.

The doctors say it's stress, you know, my bloody noses, but I don't think so. It's some chemical imbalance thing. Sometimes I'll be talking to someone, like a boy or something, and wham, my nose will start bleeding. No, not so good on dates. I've only been on one. I have a reputation. No, not that kind of reputation, I'm only fifteen, come on. Hookups? What, me? Never.

I love animals, dogs mostly, but calves and colts – I almost had a pet skunk once, but Mom wouldn't have it. Of course I knew how to feed it. I would have pet baby squirrels, but Mom insisted I take them to Wild Care, which we did. We need to check, maybe that little squirrel is all grown up now.

Of course I love school. Doesn't everybody? No, I know some kids don't. I love the smell of the textbooks, the way they crack when you open them when they're new. We don't have new textbooks in English and history and stuff, just chemistry and second-year algebra. The formulas dance around the page, and I like to dance with them. They're willing partners. Easier to make friends with fractions than with people, you know.

I don't go out much for sports. Cross country running is fine – I have to race out through the woods and meadows and along the beach, but organized sports, no. The girls pick teams, and no need for me to get hurt like that.

Say, is this going to take any longer? Grandma's waving at me through the kitchen window, and you know how she gets. Cross Grandma and you're in for it. Oh no, please don't put that in the paper. I'm late enough as it is. Coming, Grandma!