Ditching the Acceptable Writing Assignment

**Writing by Tirzah Lewis**

**Can she Sang? Skit-Skat-Scuttle-Scoot-Flip-Flop-Flee**

You cannot, so don’t even try. What is the dream that I deny?

**A career singing Jazz-Inspired Lullabies**

*Yep-You read that right.*

**What does it look like?**

Me and a mic. Dim lights in stores chock full of colorful books and blocks and stuffies. Parent criss-cross-applesauce on the floor in half circles holding miniature audience members with uplifted, expectant, tiny faces.

**What does it feel like?**

The excitement of performance, the serenity of bedtime after the outburst of a second-wind and ripples of sugar-rushes have left the room. The sizzle of energy just before the crack of the spine of a brand-new book.

**What does it sound like?**

Rhythmic baby cries punctuated by harassed shushes (accompanied by apologetic glances of adult eyes finished with shimmering gratitude when met with an understanding smile). Silence upset by excited chattering about nonsense words from story and song. Requests for register assistance at the front. The tinkle of doorbells as customers come and go in a world just outside of our inner circle.

**What does it smell like?**

Baby wipes and milk-breath and new pages fresh from the printers with the lingering waft of coffee floating in the air. Summer-sweat and winter-wet from days spent in waterparks that melt into wooly slipcovered winters of mother and fathers seeking something beyond their four walls to keep their littles occupied for just 30 minutes… please!

**What does it look like in motion?**

Jibs and Jabs, wide arm circles, heads thrown back, and belly jiggles. Arms and legs swaying in time to the rhythm of story and music. Necks crank and balance shifts as bodies rock side to side. Small and big feet stomp and little bodies jump and mine does too. Mine does all these things as invitation to the excitement of another world. Eyes close and arms rock in the one profession where falling asleep during a performance is the ultimate compliment

**What happens if you indulge it? Who do you become?**

I don’t know. I respond to the craziest of my callings! I become an enigma, a story to be shared rather than a profession to be declared. A challenge to be explained by my parents; a joy to behold. A purveyor of possibility to the smallest among us. A creator for the joy of it. A holder of space for the sacredness of innocence and imagination.

**What happens if you ignore its lure? What does it deny you?**

I miss the chance to be something different. I don’t get to be and see the sparkle of deep knowing in children’s eyes. I miss singing love and life into tiny lives and rest and resilience into the lives of tired caregivers. It denies me possibility to do and be completely different from what I was raised to be and do. It denies me the opportunity to have impact in my own way. I deny myself the courage and confidence of taking a true, unadulterated, chance.