

Ballet  
Stephanie W.  
Old Donation School, 7

I watch her dance  
The lines  
Technique  
Emotion  
Passion  
Beauty  
She is a role model, a display for the children to watch and admire all day

A priceless doll

Living proof that no one could be good enough  
Not with her dancing

On the wooden floor  
The polished wooden floor  
The old floor  
The floor i urge to dance on  
The way you do

I observe as you compliment her  
you admire her  
You want to be her

Everyone does.

Even if she's in pain  
She feels numb;  
Drained  
Starving  
Comparing

It's never enough

Ballet

A little girl who loved dancing  
A teenager who is held captive

“She loves dancing.”  
Does she?

“It’s her passion”  
Is it?

She knows what she wants to be when shes an adult  
A professional dancer

But you can’t be a professional dancer if you’re not good enough;  
Not skinny enough  
Not pretty enough  
Not enough technique;

Lines  
Footwork  
Effort.

But what if I'm never enough?

You promised if I worked hard I'd get somewhere.

I starved  
I stopped smiling  
I labored hours into the night  
Woken daily by sore muscles;  
Dull headaches  
Bruises  
Blisters  
Bloody shoes

Yet I'm still not happy.

And when I really make every effort in the center of the room

Simply for validation  
For you to notice my small improvement

Even if my feet really do feel numb  
With the wooden box gashing my toes every step I extract  
On the wooden floor  
The wooden polished floor  
The old floor  
The floor I fell on  
Passed out on  
Cried on

The floor I wish to dance on  
The way I used to.

You remain silent.

No sorrow  
mercy  
Emotion  
Effort

You did this to me  
To all the other dancers  
By yourself

You simply stand against the doorway  
Looking at her

The role model  
The priceless doll

Tell me why I knew it all along?

But I can't quit now

I'll let down my childhood dream  
Money was spent  
Years were taken

I've been held captive; confined

Because of you,

Ballet.