

Rat-a-tat-tat, brr-a-dot. That's rhythm! And if you listen closely you can hear the beat of my life, the arpeggios leaving me breathless, the crescendi making my life happy. The decrescendos accomplish just the opposite. I live life with a sixteenth-note feel, never losing a beat or slowing down. If I drop a stick, I pick it up and keep on going. Never losing sight of the task at hand.

I am a drummer, and when I play the drums of life, I play it to relieve my stress, to escape life's pressure but only for awhile. I play because it's a part of me. This drum, this rhythm, and beat of my life that I have, is because I've worked for it. Yes, there have been countless times where I have wanted to give up and just take the easy route out. But the rat-a-tat-tat brings me back. It makes me realize who I am.

As I play that rat-a-tat-tat I don't think of where I am but rather where I'm going and how I'm getting there. I am where I am because of the people around me like my parents, who bought my first snare drum in fifth grade and my Pearl drum set in sixth grade. They have given me more than just my first snare drum, and my Pearl drum set. What they gave me they did not buy. They gave me my motivation, reassurance, understanding, and that if I try hard enough and practice long enough I'll be successful. They've put up with the loud banging coming from below, but they know it's who I am and what I play is all a part of me.

While I march down life's countless paths I learn to explore my options and to learn from what I explored, for my success lies within my experiences. These experiences, much like practicing, is all about learning and discovering that special combination of technique and confidence; the one that not only feels right, but is. And when I reach the right combination it will transpire just right, with not to much resonance, for I do not want to be oppressed from my future, and not to much pulsation, because it's satisfactory to be heard but unsatisfactory to be over heard.

Meanwhile, although just for a moment, I take a break from life's presto exasperation and slow down to nothing but a largo. I can hear the faint whisper of a dry, crisp drum. What is it that it whispers? It whispers *appassionato*, while expressing arpeggios and *marcatos* leaving me breathless, and the finale leaving me wanting more.

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Your last line reflects my evaluation of the paper.

