

So Mom, What Did You Think?

She'd been there before, maybe like a million times. Well, not that many, although, a million wouldn't even be enough. Two million wouldn't be enough. She realistically could sit there in that same familiar spot for hours on end, days on end, maybe even weeks! Yeah, it all felt very familiar, sitting in the numbered seat beside people she loved or maybe all alone sandwiched in by strangers. Feeling the crisp paper printed with song titles and names of people she knew and some she didn't, opening it over and over again and really just reading that name. It was always in print several times and she loved that! It made her proud! Very proud! It almost made her feel entitled, like the show about to begin was choreographed and rehearsed just for her. That name, the name that she had given her. Like an assignment, but so full of love. She sat in the dimmed theater waiting for the lights to go out. Finally, there was darkness, except for the stage. Her eyes always opened wider to make sure that she didn't miss one single second of the performance. It was like she kept blinking to get a clearer vision. And then it happened...the music, the figures streaming across the dance floor, her heart beating faster searching for the profile that she knew best...the one that she was there to see. Is it that one, no, I don't know, that one...oh my God, where is she? There she is! She knew it was her and from that moment on, her eyes never left that figure. It was like they were glued to the one dancer that would connect her, the woman in the audience, to the stage.

She always made her feel like she was an important part of her dancing career. She never made her feel left out or like just "the woman in the audience." This lucky woman had five senses that any mother would have died for. Eyes full of beautiful dancing, ears full of music which she connected to, not to mention the many "thank yous." In her laundry room was the scent of sweat from dance gear and costumes full of the smell of hard work. The feel of a warm, appreciative hug after every performance, but most of all was the taste of victory, if you will. Her most important job was to be a good mother and look what has emerged...this beautiful woman, her youngest daughter.

As she watches the first dance, the one her daughter didn't really like, she smiles and is thankful that she followed through with all of the dances she was chosen for. It meant more minutes on stage, more pictures in her mind to remember when the curtain closed. She caught herself thinking "how could I have missed last year's performance?" "What kept me from being in that audience?" "Never again will I miss such an opportunity." Okay, so it was a little different than what she was used to seeing. She knew it would be. Then she comes out again, a more upbeat song, more flash...more her daughter! There was more smiling, a glance between Mom and Dad, a shared grin, a breath of fresh air...and next, the solo. Her heart was beating fast again, knowing that she was nervous about making a mistake on stage. It was like my heart was beating in her chest, or vice versa. She is nervous, I am nervous, she is sad, I am sad, she is

disappointed, I am disappointed, she is on cloud nine, I am there with her. You get the picture! So the music begins, it's rather solemn. She'd been briefed that the story was of a young girl growing up and then growing old. She watched and waited for the "older woman" to appear. There she was and there was the bench. It was like the bench was "life". She danced around it, she danced on top of it, she used it to rest, to contemplate, to stay strong. All of a sudden, she was seeing this "old woman" as herself, but it was really her daughter. The tears were brimming in her eyes and then the four dancers came together for a finale. The lyrics of the unknown song made the tears spill down her cheeks. It was the realization that this dancer was not a little girl anymore, but rather a young woman and she was her daughter, her pride and joy. The woman in the audience continued to watch after an intermission, loving the next two dance pieces. They were full of energy, spunk, spice, technique she was familiar with. But most of all, starring the dancer she had come to watch. As the lights come up and the curtain closes, she takes a deep breath, knowing that there was a second performance tomorrow night.

She had been there before, maybe like a million times. Or maybe a million and one!