

The Surprise Job

by RV Staff Writer E.T.

Tiegan loves to sing, but sometimes her family likes the house to be quiet. One day she decides to sing outside. What will the neighbors think? Students will read the passage and answer follow-up questions about character and other story elements.

Tiegan always liked to sing. Her earliest memories all have songs in them. Tiegan liked to sing in the bath tub when she was getting ready for bed, and she liked to sing in the morning while she walked to school.

Sometimes, though, Tiegan's family liked the house to be quiet. Mom liked to solve crossword puzzles, and Dad liked to watch the news on TV each night. "It's quiet time, Tiegan," they would say. Then Tiegan had to find something else to do. She had plenty of puzzles and games, but she didn't like them as much as singing.

One summer day, Tiegan was singing her favorite songs in the living room. Dad came downstairs and said, "Tiegan, I have a headache. Can you go outside and play? I really need it to be quiet so I can take a nap."

Tiegan sighed and went outside. It was a sunny day, and many people were outside riding bikes and walking their dogs. She sat at the curb and looked around.

Then she started to hum. She was careful to be quiet at first, but soon the humming turned to singing. "Dad probably can't hear me anyway," she thought, "so it's probably okay to sing outside."

The sun was very warm, and Tiegan took off her baseball cap. Now she could feel a cool breeze across her forehead, which felt nice. She dropped her hat on the sidewalk and kept singing.

Just as Tiegan finished one of her favorite songs, a man with a small dog stopped in front of her. "That was a beautiful song," he said. And he dropped a dollar into her hat.

Before Tiegan could say anything, the man walked away with his dogs.

Tiegan wasn't sure what to do with the dollar, but she did want to keep singing. As she started her next song, Mrs. Maudslay came out of her house and looked over the fence. "Are you starting a new job, Tiegan?"

"What do you mean?" asked Tiegan. "I'm just playing and singing."

"Oh," said Mrs. Maudslay. "I thought maybe you were busking, since you have your hat out."

"What's busking?" asked Tiegan.

Mrs. Maudslay chuckled. "Busking is when a street performer puts out a hat to collect money. People like to drop in a dollar or two to show that they liked the show."

Tiegan hadn't meant to start a new job, but since her hat was already out, she decided to keep singing. Soon enough, people walked past and stopped to listen. When they were ready to move on, they dropped some money into her hat.

By the end of the afternoon, Tiegan's hat was full. Singing didn't feel like work, but She had earned enough money to take Dad out for ice cream just as soon as he was feeling better.

Questions

1. How does Tiegan's family feel about her singing?
2. How does Tiegan feel when the man drops money into her hat?
3. According to the passage, what does the word "busking" mean?
4. Do you think you would like to try busking? Why or why not?