

Watching My Daughter's Tap Recital

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I think of Mrs. B, my typing teacher
that summer before high school,
and how my mother would drop me off
those too-bright Saturday mornings
to slump before a Smith Corona
in the cool, tiled basement classroom
of the all-boys prep, and I remember
the satisfying snap of the letters
hammering the ribbon to the clean
white page, tattooing their gibberish
(asdfg) amidst the dropped-coins clatter
of my classmates, all of us stumbling
to keep up with her endlessly patient
encouragement to work the pinky,
semicolon P, semicolon P, over
and over in a gently lilting cadence
coaxing those synapses that free me,
thirty-odd years on, to type without
hunting or pecking or ever much
considering (her routine over, we're
wildly applauding) those drawn-out
hours, that once hypnotic voice.