

So You Want To Be A Teacher

If it doesn't come bursting out of you
In spite of everything
Don't do it.

Unless it comes unasked
Out of your heart
Out of your mind
Out of your gut
Don't do it.

If you have to sit for hours
Staring at your computer screen
Or hunched over your tablet
Looking for a lesson plan
Don't do it.

If you're doing it for money
Or fame, or someone else
Don't do it.

If you're doing it to meet
The woman of your dreams
Or the man of your lonely heart
Don't do it.

If you have to sit there
Worrying about tomorrow's lesson
Over and over.
Don't do it.

If it's hard work just thinking
About doing it
Don't do it.

If you're trying to teach like somebody else
Forget about it.
If all you got is a worksheet and commands
Run away.

If you have to wait for the lesson
To roar out of you
Then wait patiently.

If it never does roar out of you
Do something else.

If you first have to read about it,
Or learn about it, study it, figure it out
Don't do it.

If you first have to check
With your colleagues or girlfriend
Or with your principal

Or with anybody at all,
You're not ready.

Don't be like so many teachers.
Don't be like so many 1,000s of people
Who call themselves teachers
Who the government deems teachers.
Don't be dull, and boring, and pretentious.
Don't be consumed with self-love
The classrooms of the world have
Yawned themselves to sleep over your kind.
Don't add to that.
Don't do it.

Unless the lesson comes out of your soul
Like a rocket
Unless not being a teacher
Would drive you to madness
To suicide, to murder.
Don't do it.

Unless the ideas inside you
Are burning your gut.
Unless you get up always thinking
Of the possibilities possible
In your class

Don't do it.

When it is truly time
And if you have been chosen
Teaching will do it by itself
It will keep on doing it
Until you die
Or it dies in you.
There is no other way
And there never was.

Don't try.
It's the trying that gets in the way.
Start. Teach.
Do it.