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## Sleepy Boy

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## Vocation

By Kate Kettelkamp

They asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up,  
and I said, “a teacher”  
because I didn’t know how else to say,  
an inspirer,  
a challenger,  
a shaker, a mover,



a firm believer in the hope of the next generation.  
I didn’t think I could answer,  
“a revolutionary”  
because revolutionaries don’t have salaries,  
even though they’re paid in change.  
And optimists don’t have health benefits,  
other than lifted spirits.  
Dreamers have no job security,  
apart from the world’s endless need for dreams.  
They asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up,  
and I said, “a social worker”  
because I didn’t know how else to say,  
an advocate,  
a peacemaker,  
a counselor, a friend,  
a voice for the silenced and oppressed.  
I didn’t think I could answer  
“a liberator”  
because liberators don’t have vacation time  
in the endless fight for freedom.  
And crusaders don’t have life insurance,  
even though they’re on the front lines.  
Empowerers don’t have 401(k) plans,  
but will always see returns on their investments.  
So finally,  
when they asked me what I wanted to be when I  
grew up,  
I said, “a writer,”  
and I still didn’t know what to say  
to make them understand,  
but I had a pen.

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**SLEEPY BOY**  
WATERCOLOR  
TORI FOX