

Holiday Joy

A remarkable voice lured me across the street filled with steady, noisy, holiday traffic. A woman's voice singing Christmas carols was caressing my heart into the spirit of the season. Making my way closer to her presence in front of the shopping center, I couldn't help but notice the frenzy of shoppers scurrying about with armfuls of packages. You would pay mega bucks to hear a singer of this caliber perform on stage. Here she was offering freely her gift to all, and not one passerby seemed to be acknowledging her virtuoso voice. It thoroughly astounds me that people are moving about so fast that they can't slow down to heed such a glorious moment. Well, not me. I'm going to stand here and enjoy this wonderful singing.

Oh dear, the singer is looking straight at me, and her index finger is motioning for me to come closer. I willingly advance. Standing in one another's presence she thanks me for listening and invites me sing along. I love to sing, although to do so confidently in public makes me apprehensive. Shyness can slip in and take over my world. I never know whether I will retreat inward or burst forth without hesitation. It all depends upon my mood and the moment at hand.

On this particular occasion, I conceded to joining her. It's Christmas after all. There we stood, just the two of us, singing 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas' over and over again like a chant. My voice grew stronger as I eased into it and the shyness dissolved in my willingness to step out and play.

In the middle of singing our third round, a mother and daughter took sight of us on the way to their car. The child kept tugging at her mom's coat and pointing our way. She wanted so much to join us in celebrative singing, but her mom convinced her otherwise, took hold of her hand, and off they dashed. Watching that scene play out between mother and daughter triggered the following thought.

Not that long ago, people weren't in such a rush. It was a slower, softer, kinder time when folks were open to meeting others and engaging in spontaneous joy-making. I miss those times of child-like awe and wonder. What gave me the strength to step out and sing today was for the sake of bringing back those magical times. It was my way of saying 'yes!' to more open-hearted, free-spirited days.