

Lyrics: Tia DeShazor
Music: Andy Roninson
Excerpt from "The Rocket Thrower"

Set in 1964 against the backdrop of the Harlem Rebellion, Shirley, mother of 16 year old Pud worries that her child, Pud, who wants to be an astronaut, does not have a grasp on reality. Verlene, Shirley's mother tries to console her.

VERLENE

Shirley, Pud is going to be Pud, I don't know why you are trying to fight it. Now you've been fussing all week! What is really going on?

Shirley shoots her a look.

VERLENE

Okay, besides that. Cause you know Pud ain't getting mixed up with that-

SHIRLEY

Don't have to be mixed up in it, to get swept up in it. I try to tell her- But the way she walks around without a care in the world, I wonder if she sees that any of it is going on!

SHE WAS THREE WITH A SPARK AND I WAS NAIVE
WHEN I SAID SHE COULD FLY, AND MADE HER BELIEVE
WHEN HARLEM WAS STRONG AND COULD CARRY THE WEIGHT OF YOUR
DREAMS
AND I'M TRYING

SHE WAS TEN AND WE PRAYED AND MARCHED IN SILENCE
AND WE HOPED FOR PEACE AND BELIEVED IN NONVIOLENCE,
BUT PATIENCE GROWS THIN WHEN THE WORLD HAS BEEN BUILT WITH
YOUR BLOOD SWEAT AND TEARS
AND I'M TRYING, I'M TRYING, I'M TRYING, I'M TRYING

I'M TRYING TO TELL HER THERE'S A WAR OUTSIDE
I'M TRYING TO WARN HER ABOUT HER RECKLESS PRIDE
I'M TRYING TO SHOW HER THE ROAD IS ROUGH
THAT BEING SMART
AND WORKING HARD
AND STAYING LATE
AND SAYING PLEASE
WILL NEVER BE ENOUGH

SHE'S SIXTEEN WITH A STREAK, SHE LEARNED THAT FROM ME
AND SHE THINKS THAT THE STARS, WILL MAKE HER FEEL FREE
BUT I HEAR THE LOUD STREETS, CAUSE WE'RE HERE ON THE GROUND
I TRY TO KEEP FAITH 'CAUSE STARS FADE, BUT SHE LIGHTS HER OWN WAY
I'M TRYING