

I Don't Wanna

Story By: Andrew Frinkle

Marcus was a pretty fun-loving boy, but only when he got to do what he wanted to do. If you tried to make him do something other than what he wanted, things could get U-G-L-Y!

Marcus' mom was a bit old-fashioned, and she'd been raised to learn many things. Marcus' dad was pretty much the same way. They both believed that Marcus should learn to do something other than watch TV and play video games. So, they had some suggestions.

"Marcus, you should learn to play a sport." His dad suggested. "How about baseball?"

"No way. I hate baseball. It's lame." Marcus replied snidely.

His dad had other suggestions. "Basketball, soccer, football..."

"I don't wanna!" Marcus whined.

Dad was not good with whining. It irritated him. He gave Marcus 'the look,' and it stopped. "You *will* choose a sport or physical activity. You will learn it. If you do not make the choice in a week or less, I will choose for you, and I will make certain it's the hottest, toughest, hardest sport possible – like rugby!"

Marcus grumbled as dad walked away. Mother wandered in the room next.

"What's wrong dear?" She asked.

"Dad wants me to play some sports. I hate sports. They're hot, sweaty, and boring."

"Exercise is good for you. Maybe you can find something that is exciting for you. Your father always loved floor hockey when he was a kid. He said he always wanted to fence with swords, too, but they didn't have anything near him. He learned it in college instead."

"Dad can use a sword?" Marcus was shocked.

Mom smiled. "I would like you to learn something for me, too."

Marcus groaned. "Uh oh, here it is. I don't wanna learn anything else!"

"I want you to learn to play an instrument."

Marcus' mouth opened and a stream of whines/screams/howls bubbled out. It was not pretty. The main chorus was, "I don't wanna!" That was mixed with some grunts and a lot of flailing about, including some kicking while on the floor. It was an impressive tantrum.

"How about the piano?" Mom suggested, making things much worse.

"Guitar?" The kicks slowed a bit when mom suggested this.

"Drums?" Marcus asked quietly.

"Absolutely not." Mom replied, and the kicking and screaming got W-O-R-S-E!

Dad appeared again, holding a wooden practice sword and looking cross.

"You *will* choose an instrument, young man. Do I make myself clear?"

Marcus cried and sniffled, but stopped whining.

"A week, son. A week." Dad reminded Marcus. He had a week to decide.

"I don't wanna..." Marcus whimpered as the two adults left the room.



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Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What does Dad suggest that Marcus should learn?
 - A. checkers
 - B. chess
 - C. a sport
 - D. wood carving

2. How does Marcus react to this?
 - A. He is upset.
 - B. He is happy.
 - C. He is excited.
 - D. He is sad.

3. How long does Dad give him to decide?
 - A. 1 day
 - B. 1 hour
 - C. 1 week
 - D. 1 minute

4. What does Mom suggest that Marcus should learn?
 - A. painting
 - B. flower arrangement
 - C. a musical instrument
 - D. dancing

5. How does Marcus react to this?
 - A. He is upset.
 - B. He is happy.
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