

One man's rage against the cubicle

By DIANE EVANS

DelMio.com

In a recent blog entry, Daniel Evans writes about a moment earlier this month that changed his life. It was a call from a New York literary agent, saying that Evans had a book deal. In a moment's time, he became an author - and no longer an unemployed dad.

"Just like that, the dream became real," Evans writes. "Just like that, my life changed direction."

You don't have to be an author, or an unemployed dad, to relate to Evans' experience of many dark days before the relief of seeing his life renewed.

In his blog, he describes job loss, depression, liberation and fatherhood.

Yet through the times of despair, he kept dreaming of a different life, and envisioning himself as the person he really wanted to be: an author, earning a living doing what he loved.

"So one night, about a year ago, I decided to quit dreaming," Evans says in the blog. "I sat down at my keyboard and began to write. I began to create the trappings of my dream in real life."

But not without pain, which he also describes:

"Rejection has reigned. Every small victory has been countered by enormous disappointment and despair. I have neglected friendships, responsibilities, family obligations. Phone calls and e-mails have gone unreturned. I have opened my soul to criticism, and I have convinced myself that this is my last best chance to accomplish something for myself - to escape the rut of cubicle jobs, financial desperation and career aimlessness."

His book, "Rage Against the Meshugenah," is being published by NAL (New American Library), which is part of Penquin Group. Meshugenah is Yiddish for "crazy."

On the subject of inspiring dreams, here's a children's book worth noting: It's "Wind Flyers," by Angela Johnson, illustrated by Loren Long and published in 2007 by Simon & Schuster. While it tells the story of the World War II Tuskegee Airmen, it's really a book about following your childhood dreams, even if they seem as out of reach as the sky.

A little boy learns the story of his great, great uncle, who loved to fly. As a child, his uncle's dream landed him in a pile of hay after leaping from a barn, but later spurred him to become an airman with the 322nd, one of just four black squadrons during World War II.

In evoking an image of the peace of flying, as well as the "magic" of soaring among the clouds, Angela Johnson writes,

"It's what heaven must be," Uncle says to me.

"With clouds, like soft blankets, saying, come on in and get warm.

Stay a while and be a wind flyer too."

Johnson, author of many children's books, is known for featuring black characters and addressing real life concerns such as teenage parenthood.