

STUTTER

By: Dilara S.

It takes me a while to raise my hand to sign up for the solo piece of the Forest Queen in our play called "The Mysterious Forest". I know this because I am the last to raise my hand, and the moment I raised it, I regretted it because Samuel Parker and Eli Bonney were snickering behind my back. "Very good everybody! Solo auditions are on wednesday next week!" Our music teacher Mrs. Cornelia says. Even though I already knew the lyrics I couldn't stand all the faces looking directly at me. I experienced this in 4th grade. I was chosen to read a speech and got totally humiliated. But this year it's 5th grade, and I have more courage and bravery now. Or at least that's what I thought. Samuel and Eli were gonna ruin it, same as they did last year.

Oh, I forgot to tell you, I have stuttering problems, which is basically the whole reason why Eli and Sam have been keeping me from doing what I want to do.

"Alright class, good job. You may leave now." Mrs. Cornelia says, distracting me from my thoughts. I wasn't so sure about the solo anymore. Should I do it or not? As everyone left, I went to Mrs. Cornelia's desk and asked her, between stutters, if I could quit auditioning for the solo piece.

"Oh Hannah, don't let that stop you from having fun." She says to me, I look at the frond to avoid eye contact. "I've heard you sing before and it was so beautiful and confident, bring out that feeling again." She said, "So, do you want to bring out that confidence?" I hesitated for a moment but then I told her, "Y-yeah" and for the rest of the day I felt a little better.

School was finally over and Sam and Eli were finally gone, for now. I lie down on my bed and look at the lyrics for "Together", the solo piece. I started to sing the lyrics and my voice felt so powerful and confident. After a few minutes, the song came to an end and I didn't even realize it. I repeated the song 4 times, wow, I was more happy and excited than ever! But, what if Mrs. Cornelia didn't choose me for the piece? I stood up from my bed and grabbed my phone, but as soon as I picked it up, James texted me. I read his text and I started to

laugh. He sent a picture of a llama wearing glasses, but when I read his message I stopped. "Are you gonna audition?". What should I say? I closed my eyes and put my phone in my pockets, and went on with my day.

I practiced and practiced, building up my confidence, until it was finally Wednesday, the audition day. I got on the bus to go to school and James sat next to me. "Hey Hannah!" He said to me, I said hi back but I feel guilty because I didn't answer his text. "So, are you auditioning?" He asked. I hesitated for a moment, but I nodded my head. He told me that he knew I was going to get the solo piece, but I still wasn't so sure.

Towards the end of music class, Mrs. Cornelia gathered all the auditioners and let all the other students go to class. "Alright, auditioners, who would like to go first?" She asked. Everybody sang and I was last, feeling so nervous. I slowly started to sing, letting my voice guide me. My voice grew louder and stronger every second, and I could feel everybody's eyes staring at me even though my eyes were closed. I slowly sang the last words, and stopped. There was silence and awe in the room, and Mrs. Cornelia smiled at me. "Thank you everyone, you may go to class, the soloist will be announced tonight." I went to class, praying that I would get chosen. James came up to me again and asked me how it went and if I got chosen, and it started to bother me because it gave me thoughts that made me feel bad. "Mrs. Cornelia will let us know tonight." I said, but I told him nothing more to relax and not worry about it. Even though the play was tomorrow and it felt impossible to relax.

I stood up until 9:30 waiting for the message, 9:31, 9:32, 9:33, and I started losing hope. I slowly set down the phone, getting ready to sleep, until a message came! I quickly picked up my phone again and see that the message was from Mrs. Cornelia. As I pressed on the message I prayed that I would get the solo piece, no matter what Sam and Eli do to me.

I started to read the message and I dropped my phone on the ground, and screamed in joy! "M-mom, d-dad!" They came rushing into the

room, their faces filled with horror. "What happened, are you okay?" Dad asked. I nodded but then told them, "I-i got the s-solo pi-piece!" They hugged me so tight and congratulated me and told me they knew that I could do it. That night I went to sleep dreaming of my solo piece.

It was finally the day of the play, and I was so nervous yet happy. My dress was so itchy but I couldn't focus on that, my mind was too excited! I'm finally on the stage, and my parents are smiling at me. I slowly start to sing just like I did at all the practices, but then my voice grows stronger. Sam and Eli's embarrassed faces made me smile. I bet they wish they never made fun of my stutters. Before I knew it, my piece was over and I was sitting behind the stage, flashing back to Sam and Eli's faces. Oh, the embarrassment on their faces. After the play, I went home with my parents and we ate a lot of ice cream to celebrate! Maybe next year I should join the choir?