



A Nerve-racking Ordeal

The crowd in the school hall were howling and cheering behind the huge red curtain, anticipating the next contestant for the school's Annual Singing Contest. I, on the other hand, was too nervous to speak, let alone sing.

Caroline was next. We didn't like each other very much but tended not to let it show. "Break a leg," I told her, forcing a smile. "Literally," I whispered under my breath when she stepped on stage. I closed my eyes and my arms clenched around my stomach, trying to calm the butterflies. I was after Caroline. But even for an obnoxious girl like her, she has an amazing voice. I peeked out on stage behind the drapes. Caroline confidently grabbed the microphone as the music pounded from the speakers. Her voice echoed a pop song and everybody started to sing along. I pulled out from my look-out spot and thought to myself, "Breathe, breathe, you can also do this."

Caroline's song ended and the crowd applauded the performance. The emcee thanked her and announced the next contestant. It was 'me'. It's too late to turn back now. I mustered every ounce of confidence I had and stepped into the spotlight. I stared at my shoes as I waltzed over to the microphone stand. I placed my sweaty palms to my side, and darted a daring glance at the audience which I immediately regretted. Their eyes pierced through mine as if they could sense my fears. The music filled the hall. I mumbled something intelligible and choked up. The crowd laughed. I took a deep breath and regained my composure. I aimed a look at the back of the hall, away from their stares and continued with my song.

About half way through, my confidence overrode me and I found comfort being on stage. I tried to make the song more lively by walking around, waving my arms over my head and sporting rock star poses. Unfortunately, due to my inexperience, my feet got caught in a mess with the wires. But the crowd didn't seem to take notice, so I tried to untangle myself as I continued to take in their admiration. But before long, I started to lose all my nerves and my confident buzz was crashed. I lost my balance and tumbled off the podium with a loud 'Bang'. People started to gather as I laid there in a tangled heap. Reality hit me and I got up to convince them I was fine. My face went red with embarrassment and heard them roar with laughter. I headed back stage where all the other singers were doubled over in tears from laughing. There's nothing I could do or say, so I took a seat in the corner and waited for the announcement of

results.

The last contestant had finally returned backstage and it seemed as though they'd forgotten about my accident. The emcee announced the third place and I showed my support by clapping. The emcee then announced second place and called my name. I was utterly shocked. I didn't want to return on stage though. "God, help me," I prayed silently. I made my way through the confused contestants to the stage and could tell it's not a dream by the look on their faces. Then I received a standing ovation and was touched by their admiration. I gave them a bow to show my appreciation and returned backstage. Caroline won first and was gushing over it with her friends. I was just glad the whole ordeal was over.

That's my incident in my school's singing contest. It is not the most successful but it's definitely one to remember.

