

Heidi's Favorite Day

Hannah Gurholt

Lake Forest College

Lake Forest, Illinois 60045

It was 8:00 in the morning, which meant it was time for Heidi to get up and start her day, although today was not like every other day. Today was special. Heidi's mom also knew that it was going to be a special day. When Heidi's mom went to wake her, Heidi was already full of energy. Today is the day! I am going to make so many new friends. I wonder what they will think of my singing. I can't wait for my solo. Okay, I must get ready now. "Let's go! Everyone is waiting for us," Heidi said with excitement. "Heidi, we still have 2 hours before your choir concert starts," said her mom. That wasn't nice of mom. Two hours is definitely not a long time. Heidi quickly shrugged off her mom's comment, not understanding the concept of hours or any time schedule for that matter. She had a very hard time with numbers and the idea of time; therefore, she coped by just ignoring the conversation as a whole. Heidi struggles with understanding numbers because she suffers from Williams Syndrome. However, Heidi also has a lot of unique talents because of her syndrome. One of these talents is music, so her mom had Heidi join a choir. Today, Heidi's choir would be performing an event for the first time ever.

Once Heidi and her mother arrived, they were told that Heidi had thirty minutes before she had to perform. Does that mean I can go look around? Yay! Who should I talk to first? Oh, there's a lot of people by the art exhibit. As she was looking at all the different pieces of artwork, never staying long at a certain piece due to her short attention span, Heidi was suddenly frightened by a very loud scream. She quickly covered her ears. Ow! Who did that? Was it that woman over there? She looks very upset. Why does she keep looking around so fast? Oh no, all the people are moving away from her. I should go comfort her. She looks like she could use a new friend.

[Heidi bravely decided to walk up to the distraught woman]

"Hi, my name is Heidi. Are you okay?" she said to the woman, but the mysterious woman would not make any eye contact. Why won't she look at me? Did I do something wrong? She looks like she's having a hard time trying to speak. Finally, she responded, "I'm not okay. I shouldn't have yelled. I just don't like when people ask me questions about 'why' I do something."

Heidi: "I'm sorry you feel that way. I won't ask you any of those questions. I get upset sometimes too. What is your name?"

Jessie: "My name is Jessie."

I wonder if any of these pieces of art are hers.

Heidi: "Can you show me some of your paintings?"

Jessie finally pointed at a painting while still managing to not make any eye contact with Heidi.

The painting showcased layers of math equations that formed different shapes.

Jessie: "I really like math."

Oh! I can test my new friend.

Heidi: "I have one for you, what is 1×1 ."

Jessie: "That's too easy. I like solving problems like 290×70 ."

Without attempting to solve the equation, Heidi quickly said "5."

Jessie: "That's not right. It's 20,300."

Heidi: "I don't like this game. Let's do something different."

Jessie decided to show Heidi another one of her paintings. This time it was of a house.

This is so pretty. Jessie is very talented.

Heidi: "Wow you are amazing."

Instead of replying, Jessie just ignored Heidi and looked down.

That was so rude of her.

Heidi: "Why didn't you say thank you when I gave you a compliment? You are hurting my feelings."

Is she going to apologize? She won't even look at me.

Jessie: "I'm sorry."

Heidi: "It's okay. I forgive you. Do you want to walk around? Do you want to go get food? Do you want to go meet my Mom?"

Jessie: "No. I'm supposed to stay here by my paintings."

Okay, well, I don't have to return to my choir director for a while. I can tell Jessie about why my face looks different. Maybe that's why she

won't ever look at me.

Heidi: "Is the reason you never look at me because of my face? It's because my 7th chromosome is messed up. It made my nose very round and my upper lip thin. I also have a problem with my heart. My doctor says my heart isn't as flexible as it should be. What about you?" Jessie continued to look down at the floor.

Heidi: "Come on, you can tell me. We're friends. I pinky promise I won't tell anyone."

Jessie's mom had been observing by the side. Since she knew Jessie would not respond, she decided to come help Jessie. Someone else is coming over. She looks so nice.

Jessie's mom: "Hello. To answer your question, Jessie has Autism."

I've never heard of that.

Heidi: "I'm Heidi, it's nice to meet you. What does Autism mean?"

Jessie's mom: "This means that Jessie has a hard time interacting with other people. However, Jessie is very talented at drawing and solving math equations."

Heidi: "I'm not good at either of those. I just like to make new friends and listen to music. I also really like to sing."

Jessie's Mom: "Are you supposed to be singing in the concert over there?" she asked as she pointed to the stage that Heidi's choir group was currently walking onto.

Oh no! I thought it had only been a couple minutes.

Heidi: "Jessie, will you please come here me sing? That's what friends do for each other."

Then, Heidi ran to meet her choir. She was greeted by her distraught mom and choir director.

Heidi's mom: "Heidi, where were you? I told you to be back here ten minutes ago."

I can tell that Mom and my choir direct are upset with me by their furrowed eyebrows and scowls. I made a mistake.

Heidi: "I'm sorry. Please don't be mad at me."

She then ran on the stage to sing with her choir. Heidi sang her heart out. She felt the beat, the pitch, the melody. She let the music flow through her.

It's time for my solo. Wait, is that Jessie in the crowd? She came? Oh yay!

Seeing Jessie in the crowd reassured Heidi that today was the best. She was able to share her love for music with her new best friend Jessie.

Today was the best day. I am so thankful that I was able to meet Jessie. I'm happy that she was able to show her talent. I hope that other people recognize what an amazing person she is. I feel like her mom said she had Autism with a sad expression, but there is no need to be ashamed. My mom always tells me that my syndrome just makes me more special. I hope Jessie knows that she is just as treasured in this world as anyone else.

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