

Dreams

“Dreams are what get you started. Discipline is what keeps you going.” I learned this in the spring of 2014, after watching the movie “*Frozen*”.

From the first time I heard the song, “*Let It Go*”, I wanted to sing it. I wanted to perform it. I didn’t know if I could or not, but I wanted to try. So at my next voice lesson, I went to my teacher, Miss Chavaleh, and I asked if I could sing it.

“A lot of my students are asking for that right now,” she said, “But I have told all of them the same thing I’m going to tell you.” My hopes died. I wished I hadn’t asked.

“Look at this piano piece,” She held out a sheet of music that looked very complicated. “Could you play this?”

“I could if I worked really hard at it,” I said. Miss Chavaleh was also my piano teacher.

“Just like this piece is hard, ‘*Let It Go*’ is also very advanced, and you are not ready for that yet. I’m not saying you can never sing it, just wait until you are a little older.” I was upset. I trudged through my voice lesson, and then walked back home. She had also told me that when you are younger, you can sing higher, but if I studied “*Let It Go*”, it could hurt my voice later. It was possible that if I sang it enthusiastically now, that when I was older and I sang that specific song, I would sound like I was still twelve.

“She said no,” I told my mom after telling my sister, Elise, that it was her turn for lessons.

“Well, that’s okay. She knows what is best for your voice,” she said. I was disappointed, but there was still a chance I could sing it. I would just have to wait until I

was older. The problem remained; I wanted to sing it now. So, despite the fact that it might hurt my voice, I sang.

I learned the song on the piano and I sang with gusto. When singing it I felt delighted, because I never knew I could sing so loud and so high. I had never felt this powerful when I sang. After a while though, my throat started hurting. The thought entered my mind that it might be because I sang when I wasn't supposed to. I became discouraged. I'll never be able to perform this song, I thought to myself. Maybe I had ruined my voice for good.

I confessed to my teacher what I had done. She said that my voice could be hurting because I sang too loud. I was miserable, and stopped singing that song. Still, I didn't completely. One day at voice lessons, I slyly asked Miss Chavaleh, "How high can I sing in chest voice?" Even though I knew I could sing very high, I wanted to show her. I couldn't just tell her that I could do it. Last time she didn't believe me, but this time I would have proof. She played a vocal exercise and I sang with all I had in me. She was astounded.

I told her how I had sung "*Let It Go*" and thought it had hurt my voice. She told me that it is normal to be a little raspy for ten minutes or so after singing that high. "In fact, it is actually good to sing that once a day to stretch yourself, like a vocal exercise," she said. I went home feeling happy and relieved. After a long time of feeling like I could never sing that song, I finally knew I could do it!

For a little while, I was content with singing to myself every day. I got what I wanted. Then I realized that what I really wanted was to perform it. Maybe if my voice teacher heard me sing it, she would let me sing it for convo. Convo is a monthly group

lesson when all of her students go to her church to sing their songs in front of each other and the student's families. That would be a little like performing it, but there would be no audience. Then, if she let me sing "*Let It Go*", I would have the option of choosing it to sing for full convo, which really is a performance. I decided to sing it for Miss Chavaleh.

At my next lesson, I asked if I could sing "*Let It Go*" for her. I tried to sing the best I could, and when I was finished, she said, "So, you're going to sing that for full convo, right?"

"You would let me?" I was amazed. This was way more than I had expected. "You told me that I couldn't."

"I didn't know you were a high belter," she replied. "I would like you to be either the first one to sing at full convo or the last one. Which one would you prefer?" I had never been asked this before. Usually she just put me in some random place in the middle. I knew that only her best students sang first or last. I thought for a moment. One thing that I hated about performances was waiting. Just sitting and waiting for my turn made me nervous. If I went last, I would have to wait for a very long time while all of her many students sang. If I went first, I would not have to wait at all. This idea appealed to me more than the other.

"I would like to go first," I told her. At home, I waited anxiously for my dad to come home from work. I was so excited to tell him the unbelievable news.

"Dad! You'll never guess what happened! I get to sing '*Let It Go*' for full convo!" I told him as he walked through the door. Then I told him how she offered me the first or last turn.

“Going last is a big honor. That’s where she puts her best students,” he said to me.

“Yes, I know, but I didn’t want to wait that long to sing. I would get nervous.” Maybe I should’ve picked last. A little bit of regret poked at me, but I shoved it away. There was nothing I could do about it now. I should just be happy that I could finally perform that song, I told myself. The only problem now was: what if I forgot the words? Or what if my voice cracked in the middle of the song? A ton of “what ifs” jumbled inside my head. I began to feel nervous. I have a long time until convo, I thought. So I tried my best not to think about it and to be happy, or at least pretend to be so I wouldn’t be so nervous.

When the day of the performance finally came, I was both overjoyed and terrified at the same time. We drove up to Miss Chavaleh’s church, where full convo was going to take place. I yawned. I yawn when I’m nervous, so that was not a great sign. Hopefully I didn’t look nervous. When we got inside, we sat down and waited while everyone was still getting there. A short time later, all the music students got into a group to take a picture. Then we went back to our seats to wait for the beginning of the performance, which meant it was almost my turn. My teacher gave a little speech, and then went over to the piano, where she would be accompanying all her vocal students as they sang. I yawned again. It was my turn now. I walked up onto the stage and stood in front of the microphone. I couldn’t stop shaking, and I could hear my heart thumping as if it wanted everyone to hear how nervous I was. Miss Chavaleh started playing and I sang. After a couple seconds, I stopped feeling nervous. I sang with all my heart.

“Here I stand, in the light of day,” I sang. I moved my head a couple inches away from the microphone before singing the last and loudest part of the song. Even though I wanted to sing with lots of volume, I didn’t want to blast everyone’s ears out. “Let the storm rage on!” I felt power and volume coursing through me. I drew the song to a close with the finishing words, “The cold never bothered me anyway.” As I walked off the stage, the applause for my singing rang in my ears. Relieved and happy, I sat back down. A feeling of triumph rose inside me. I had proved that I could do it.

My dream was to perform a song. At first, it didn’t seem like that would be possible, but I kept trying and made my dream a reality. But my dream didn’t stop there. Singing “*Let It Go*” unlocked many more opportunities for me. I went on to sing more belting songs and even sang “*Let It Go*” for a talent show in the Tulare County Fair. I made it into the finals and although I didn’t win, it was the excitement of singing on the stage that counted. So, instead of ending, my dream just got bigger.