

Will You Hear My Voice?

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About the play:

The play "*Will You Hear My Voice?*" revolves around Anne, a deaf teenager with a passion for dancing, and her journey to pursue her dreams despite societal and personal obstacles.

The play addresses themes of disability, acceptance, following one's dreams, and the power of perseverance, while also highlighting the complexities of family, friendship, and societal expectations.

Characters:

Anne – A deaf teenager who is passionate about dancing.

Lev – Anne's father, also deaf. Lev is an animator struggling to find work due to his disability.

Eleanor – The principal of the School of Arts.

Mike – A student at the School of Arts who plays guitar.

Hila – Another student at the School of Arts, a singer.

(Note: Anne and Lev communicate using both sign language and their voices simultaneously. Their vocal delivery has a distinct rhythm and intonation. They rely on lip reading to understand spoken words, so they must always maintain eye contact with the person speaking to them.)

Scene 1

(Morning. Anne and Lev stand in their new home, watching an animated film projected on the wall.)

Animation: A flock of birds flies toward the horizon. One little bird lags behind and can't catch up with the rest of the flock. The little bird is left alone.

(The animation ends.)

Anne: It's beautiful.

Lev: Thank you.

Anne: You've never made a film about migrating birds before.

Lev: Just about one bird.

Anne: The one that got left behind?

Lev: Yes.

Anne: Will they wait for her?

Lev: I don't know...

Anne: I hope they wait for her.

Lev: We'll see.

(Lev moves to the kitchen and begins preparing a sandwich. Anne steps behind him and gives him a big hug. Lev hugs her back, then signs "hurry up.")

Anne: I'm glad we moved here. It feels like... a fresh start.

Lev: I hope I find a job soon.

Anne: You'll find one today, Dad. I'm sure of it.

Lev: Let's hope so.

Anne: Did you send out your résumé?

Lev: Yes.

Anne: And your films?

Lev: Yes, I sent everything.

Anne: Did you mention that you're... deaf?

Lev: Yes. Deaf.

(He turns back to the sandwich, but Anne touches his arm to get his attention.)

Anne: Last time, that seemed to bother them at the interview.

Lev: Maybe my films weren't good enough.

Anne: Your films are amazing, Dad.

Lev: Maybe... but I haven't fit in yet.

Anne: You will. Everyone will want to work with you. You should put on your résumé that you're perfect!

Lev: Perfect?

(They both laugh.)

Anne: Then, in the middle of the interview, they'll realize you're deaf, and

they'll faint!

Lev: (Pretends to be shocked, dramatically running away) He's deaf! He can't hear! God help us!

(They laugh together. Lev finishes making the sandwich.)

Lev: Ready to go?

Anne: Almost! (She organizes herself in front of an imaginary mirror.)

Lev: (Standing behind her, speaking to her reflection) Are you excited?

Anne: A little.

(Lev hands her a backpack and slips the sandwich inside.)

Lev: They're waiting for you.

Anne: (Starts to leave, but then turns back) They'll show me the special classroom again...

Lev: Yes.

Anne: I don't want a special classroom.

Lev: We've talked about this.

Anne: I want to go to the School of Arts.

Lev: No.

Anne: Why not?

Lev: It's not the right fit. You need to go to the integrated school.

Anne: I don't want the integrated school. I've already signed up for

auditions at the School of Arts. (She pulls out a paper form and hands it to him.)

(Pause.)

Lev: You won't fit in there.

Anne: I can read lips! I can talk!

Lev: You'll be lonely there.

Anne: I don't care if I'm lonely! What matters is being where I want to be.

Lev: You're not like everyone else.

Anne: (Hurt, quietly) Why am I not like everyone else?

(Pause. Lev takes Anne in front of the mirror again, gently speaking to her reflection.)

Lev: Because you're adorable. You're lovely.

Anne: Every time you want to calm me down, you tell me how lovely I am.

Lev: You should hurry up.

(Anne is about to leave, but stops one last time, looking at Lev.)

Anne: Dad... In your film, make the other birds wait for her. Because she's not going to give up.

(She exits.)

Scene 2

(At the School of Arts. Hila is waiting anxiously. Mike enters with a guitar.)

Hila: Mike! Mike! You made it!

Mike: Sorry I'm late.

Hila: It's fine. At least you're here.

Mike: I had to take my brother to kindergarten.

Hila: Well, you made it just in time.

Mike: Are we up next?

Hila: Yeah, we're next. I'm so nervous, I feel like I'm going to explode.

What if I can't hit the right notes?

Mike: You will. You've got this.

Hila: Maybe we should change the song?

Mike: No way. You never change the song at the last minute. Want to rehearse?

Hila: Yeah, let's do it.

(Mike starts playing the guitar, and Hila begins singing.)

Hila (singing): "Imagine there's no heaven, it's easy if you try..." (Hila is clearly rushing.)

Mike: Hila, you're rushing. Slow down.

Hila: I told you, I can't hit the high notes.

Mike: You can. Trust me, you've done it before.

Hila: Let's try again. This time, I'll nail it.

(They start over, and it sounds better. While they rehearse, Anne enters and touches Hila's shoulder. The music stops.)

Hila: Yes?

Anne: Excuse me, where are the auditions?

Hila: (Turns her back to Anne) The auditions? They're here.

(Hila and Mike continue playing the song.)

Anne: (Touches Hila's shoulder again) Excuse me...

Hila: (Stops playing) We're kind of in the middle of something.

Anne: Where are the auditions?

Hila: I told you, they're here. What, are you deaf?

Anne: I couldn't see your lips.

Hila: What? Oh... Oh my god...

Mike: What?

Hila: She's... she's really deaf!

Mike: Deaf? What's she doing here?

Hila: (Speaking to Anne like a child) Sorry... The auditions are here, but you have to wait until they call your name.

Mike: Hila...

Hila: Good luck!

Anne: Thanks. Good luck to you too.

(Hila turns back to Mike, ready to continue their rehearsal. Eleanor enters from the audition room with a clipboard. Neither Hila nor Mike notices her at first.)

Eleanor: Silence, please!

(Hila and Mike stop abruptly.)

Eleanor: I'm happy to see all this creativity, but people are auditioning inside.

Mike and Hila: Sorry.

Eleanor: (Glancing at her clipboard) Mike and Hila?

Hila: That's us!

Eleanor: You play, and you sing?

Mike and Hila: Yes.

Eleanor: You're next. Please come in.

(Mike and Hila exit for their audition. Anne, now alone, begins stretching and practicing her dance quietly. Eleanor notices her.)

Eleanor: Hello? ...Hello? (Touches Anne's shoulder) Excuse me?

(Anne startles.)

Eleanor: Sorry, I called you several times, but you didn't answer.

Anne: Sorry.

Eleanor: Didn't you hear me?

Anne: No.

Eleanor: (Looks at her clipboard) What's your name?

Anne: Sorry?

Eleanor: (Looking at her) What is your name?

Anne: Anne.

Eleanor: Anne, is your hearing... impaired?

Anne: I'm not impaired.

Eleanor: Sorry?

Anne: It's called being hard of hearing.

Eleanor: Oh.

Anne: But I'm not hard of hearing. I'm completely deaf.

Eleanor: Oh... I see. Do you want to sit down?

Anne: I'm not handicapped. Just face me when you talk; I can read lips.

Eleanor: Right... Okay. Hello, I'm Eleanor, the schoolmaster.

Anne: The schoolmaster. Eleanor. (Signs her name in sign language)

Eleanor: Yes... Eleanor. I... understand you're here by mistake.

Anne: Why?

Eleanor: This is a School of Arts. I'm afraid we don't have a special classroom for students with hearing difficulties.

Anne: I want to study in the School of Arts.

Eleanor: I'm very sorry, but we don't have the facilities...

Anne: I don't need facilities.

Eleanor: Our school requires special facilities to accommodate pupils like you.

Anne: I want to audition.

Eleanor: I'm very sorry, but it's pointless.

Anne: Your website didn't say that kids who can't hear aren't allowed to sign up.

Eleanor: Of course not.

Anne: Then I have the right to audition.

Eleanor: It's your right, yes. But it wouldn't be fair to let you audition when I know we can't accept you, right?

Anne: I don't care.

Eleanor: It's not up to you. It's the school's decision... (pause) We'll consider it.

(Eleanor exits to the audition room, leaving Anne alone outside.)

Scene 3

(Lev is facing the crowd, he's in a job interview.)

Lev: Hi! Hello! My name is Lev... Lev. I sent my résumé. You invited me in for an interview... Yes, yes, I'm deaf. Completely deaf. Is that a problem? No? Good! I have my portfolio here. Would you like to see my films? ...Not now? Would you like me to talk about my life? ...Not now... So, what do you want? Do you think I'm an idiot?!

Scene 4

(At school. Hila and Mike come out of the audition, excited and nervous.

Anne is still waiting outside.)

Hila: She applauded!

Mike: I messed up on two chords.

Hila: So what? She clapped! That means we did great!

Mike: You did great, but you changed the key at the wrong time.

Hila: They probably didn't notice.

Mike: Why was she writing so much in her notebook?

Hila: She was probably writing that we got accepted!

Mike: I wish!

Hila: Didn't you see how she looked at us when I hit the high note?

Mike: No.

Hila: She was looking at you too!

Mike: Really?

Hila: Yes! I'm telling you... if we get accepted, I'm asking you out on a date.

Mike: What?

Hila: What? Uh... I said we have to get accepted!

(Eleanor enters, hangs her clipboard on the wall, and exits. Hila and

Mike rush to check the list, with Anne watching them.)

Hila: Mike, Hila... Mike, Hila... (disappointed) What?

Mike: What happened?

Hila: It says we need to do a second audition.

Mike: (Checks the list) A second audition...?

Hila: How is that possible? I thought we'd get accepted. We were really good.

Mike: You were great.

Hila: You too... I don't get it. I told you we should've changed the song! It's not good enough!

Mike: The song's fine. That's not the issue.

Hila: I can't even sing it right. We need something more modern! That'll do the trick!

Mike: No, no... We need to rehearse more, and I need to practice.

(Eleanor enters and goes to mark something on the list.)

Hila: Principal?

Eleanor: Yes?

Hila: Can we ask you something?

Eleanor: Go ahead.

Hila: Why didn't we get accepted?

Eleanor: Who said you weren't accepted?

Hila: The list says 'second audition.'

Eleanor: That's right. We decided there's a problem. We want to see you work together again. There was a small issue with your ability to listen. You're invited for a second audition tomorrow, and this time, we'll focus on your teamwork skills. The music room will be open all day for you to practice.

Hila: We don't really understand what you mean by that... we just—

Eleanor: I'll see you tomorrow at 6 PM, sharp.

Mike: Thank you! (to Hila) See? We just need more rehearsal.

Hila: I told you! I've got some ideas.

(Mike and Hila leave. Eleanor takes down her clipboard and turns to leave. Anne stands in her way; Eleanor accidentally bumps into her.)

Eleanor: Oh, I'm sorry. You're still here...?

Anne: Have you considered?

Eleanor: What?

Anne: Have you considered?

Eleanor: Considered what?

Anne: I want to audition.

Eleanor: Oh... I didn't... I haven't had the time today. The auditions are over for today.

Anne: Tomorrow then.

Eleanor: Tomorrow, we're only doing second auditions for those who

didn't perform well today.

Anne: So let me do a second audition.

Eleanor: Are you always this persistent? ...Come, Anne, sit down. (They both sit.) The School of Arts is not an easy place. It's highly competitive and relies on teamwork. I'm afraid it might be too much for you.

Anne: I can get along with anyone.

Eleanor: I think you've already got enough challenges to deal with. I suggest you attend the integrated school. They have a fantastic program, perfect for students like you.

Anne: I want to study here.

Eleanor: I'm sorry, but that's not possible. Good luck, Anne. (Eleanor turns to leave.)

Anne: My mom was a dancer too.

Eleanor: Oh... Is she still?

Anne: No... Mom's already... gone.

Eleanor: So is that what you want to study? Dancing?

Anne: Yes.

Eleanor: Was she also...?

Anne: No. Mom could hear.

Eleanor: And your dad?

Anne: Dad's deaf.

Eleanor: Does he know you're here, Anne?

Anne: Yes.

Eleanor: I think I should talk to him. Tell your dad I'd like to meet him.

Anne: I...

Eleanor: Goodbye, Anne. (Eleanor exits.)

Scene 5

(Anne and Lev's home. Lev is folding paper origami birds. Anne enters.)

Lev: How was the integrated school?

Anne: Good.

Lev: Have you met your new friends?

Anne: Yes.

Lev: (Shows her a paper bird) Pretty?

Anne: Very pretty. Did you get the job?

Lev: No.

Anne: Why?

Lev: I don't know.

Anne: Did they see your films?

Lev: No.

Anne: You were just talking?

Lev: Yes.

Anne: They think the customers won't understand you.

Lev: Yes.

Anne: That's not right! They're wrong. Why are you folding birds?

Lev: To sell.

Anne: Are you giving up?

Lev: Yes.

Anne: No. I won't let you give up. You animate films. You should work in a job that you love. You don't need to sell birds at the train station!

Lev: There's no choice!

Anne: You need to keep trying! Keep trying!

Lev: I can't do it anymore! (Lev throws the papers down on the floor.

Pause. Then he picks up the origami bird and hangs it on a bird mobile.

Anne picks up the papers.)

Anne: What happens to the bird in the end?

(Lev turns on the projector, and we see the animated video: The little bird is left alone. She's lonely. She's losing height. Heavy clouds gather, and rain and wind disturb her flight. She's weak.)

Anne: They didn't wait for her.

Lev: No.

Anne: I asked that they would wait for her.

(Lev shrugs.)

Scene 6

(Morning. Anne gets up quickly and prepares two sandwiches for school.

Lev enters.)

Anne: Good morning!

Lev: I'll come with you to the integrated school today. I want to meet your teachers.

Anne: You can't come today, Dad.

Lev: Are you ashamed of me?

Anne: I'm not ashamed of you. You're the best dad in the world! (She hands him a sandwich. He hugs her.)

Lev: Fine... Then at least give this bird to your principal. (Takes a paper bird from the mobile and hands it to Anne.)

Anne: Okay! I'll tell her it's a gift from my dad.

(Anne turns to leave, then turns back and signs "I love you" to Lev. He signs it back.)

Scene 7

(At the train station. Lev is standing with the bird mobile, trying to sell his paper birds. Eleanor enters, speaking on the phone while she waits for the train. Lev approaches Eleanor and offers her a bird. She waves him off.)

Eleanor (on the phone): ...But you understand that this girl will be completely lost at my school, right? ...You have an open spot for her? Oh, wonderful, thank you. I'll send her to you. Thanks a lot!

Scene 8

(At the school. Anne is there. Eleanor enters, busy with paperwork.)

Anne: Principal?

Eleanor: Oh, hi, Anne.

Anne: Hi!

Eleanor: Wait, I have a surprise for you... just a second... (vocally and in sign language) Good morning! How are you?

Anne: Very nice!

Eleanor (laughs): I went on YouTube yesterday and learned some sign language. I was just curious. Did you bring your dad to meet me today?

Anne: No, Dad couldn't come. He's working today. Maybe next week?

Eleanor: Never mind. Tell your dad I spoke to my friend this morning.

She's the principal at the integrated school, and she has a place for you!

She's excited to meet you, and she'd love to accept you. Goodbye,

Anne. It was nice knowing you.

Anne: My dad sent you a gift.

Eleanor: For me?

(Anne hands Eleanor the paper bird.)

Eleanor: Oh, that's very pretty! Is this what your dad does for a living?

Anne: Yes... no!

Eleanor: Yes or no?

Anne: My dad makes films. He's an animator. But no one hires him, so he has to sell birds at the train station.

Eleanor: Yeah, I know a lot of people who don't work in their dream job.

Anne: It's because he's deaf.

Eleanor: Tell your dad I said thank you. It was nice knowing you, Anne.

Anne: Principal... Can I join the team project in the music room?

Eleanor: Anne, I just told you they're waiting for you at the integrated school, right?

Anne: There's no entrance for deaf people?

Eleanor: Excuse me?

Anne: My dad says that in your world, there's "no entrance for deaf people."

Eleanor: I never said that.

Anne: Yes, you did. You won't let me join the team project in the music room.

Eleanor: Anne, believe me, I'd love to accept you, but I can't. I'm on your side! I'm protecting you.

Anne: I don't need you to protect me!

Eleanor: I think it's time for you to go home now.

Scene 9

(The music room. Mike and Hila enter. Mike is playing the guitar.)

Hila: That sounds great! You're amazing.

Mike: (stops playing) What?

Hila: Uh... I said it sounds amazing!

Mike: Oh, thanks!

Hila: So, let's start from the chorus?

Mike: Yeah.

(They play "Crazy" by Cee Lo Green.)

Hila (singing): "I think I'm crazy, I think I'm crazy..."

(Mike starts overplaying the guitar, clearly not listening to Hila's singing.)

Hila: Mike, Mike!

Mike: (stops playing) What?

Hila: You're not listening.

Mike: But that's how the song goes.

Hila: Yeah, but I'm singing, and you're lost in the guitar. So... just listen to me.

Mike: Fine.

Hila: Let's start over.

(Mike plays again, but this time the music sounds muffled and low. Anne is sitting outside, leaning on the wall. She suddenly feels the low-

frequency vibrations through the wall. She stands up and hugs the wall, moving to the rhythm. Then, she picks up her backpack, enters the music room, and touches Hila's shoulder from behind. Hila startles, and the music stops.)

Hila: You scared me! ...Hi!

Anne: Hello.

Hila: How are you?

Anne: Good.

Hila (to Mike): It's the... (to Anne) Do you need help?

Anne: No. The principal told me to come here.

Hila: Here? To the music room?

Anne: Yeah.

Hila: Why?

Anne: For the teamwork.

Hila and Mike (confused): What?!

Anne: To do the team project.

Hila: With us??

Anne: Yes.

Hila: Wait... You auditioned by yourself yesterday?

Anne: Yes.

Hila: And today, you're doing the second audition?

Anne: Yes.

Mike: And they want us to do a team project with you?

Anne: Yes, teamwork.

Hila: But we can't do teamwork with you...

Anne: Why not?

Hila: You know, because you don't...

Mike: Do you know how to sing?

Anne: No.

Hila: Do you know how to play an instrument?

Anne: No.

Hila (to Mike): She can't do anything!

Mike: But they sent her here.

Hila (to Anne): Excuse us... (takes Mike aside) What are we supposed to do with her?

Mike: I don't know, but we have to do something with her.

Hila: But she can't sing, and she can't play...

Mike: But the principal sent her here.

Hila: This feels like a mistake. We should talk to the principal. Trust me.

(to Anne) It must be a mistake... the teamwork thing. The principal didn't tell us anything about it.

(Anne sits down.)

Hila (to Mike): I'm going to speak with the principal.

Mike: Hila! The principal sent her here to test our teamwork. If we can't work with her, it means we can't work as a team. And then, they won't accept us.

(Hila is visibly frustrated. Mike approaches Anne.)

Mike: I'm Mike.

Anne: Anne.

Mike: Nice to meet you, Anne.

Anne: Nice to meet you, Mike. (Shows "guitar" in sign language.)

Mike: Yeah, that's right! Mike. And this is Hila.

Anne: What's your name?

Hila: Hila. (She tries to spell it out with her hand) Hi-la.

Anne: Hila! (Signs a star-shaped halo with her hand.)

Hila: What's that?

Anne: Stars... You're a star.

Hila (repeats the movement): Star!! That's beautiful... (signs it again) Hila is a star... star! Wait... I have an idea! Do you know how to do sign language, like the little interpreter in the corner of the TV?

Anne: Yes.

Hila: Perfect! So, Mike, you stand over there. Anne, you stand here in front and do the sign language. I'll be in the middle, and when I give Mike the signal... (Anne moves closer to Hila to read her lips.) No, over

there! You need to stay there! (Anne returns to her place.) So, like I said, Mike will wait for my signal... (Anne moves again.) Why are you constantly moving?

Anne: Sorry.

Hila: I'll give Mike the signal (Hila faces Mike, her back to Anne), then I'll start singing, and you'll interpret what I'm singing into sign language.

That'll be our teamwork project. (Turns to Anne) Got it?

Anne: No.

Hila: Mike, help me out here...

Mike: I'll play the guitar, Hila will sing, and you'll do the sign language.

Anne: Oh, got it!

Mike: Agree?

Anne: Yes.

Hila: Of course, you agree. What else could you do?

Anne: I could disagree.

Hila: What?

Anne: But I agree!

Hila: Okay, good. So, we're singing "Crazy" by Cee Lo. Do you know it?

Anne: No.

Hila: No? Mike, she doesn't know the song.

Mike: Then we need a different song.

Hila: How are we supposed to find another song now?

Mike: I have an idea! (to Anne) You definitely know this one. Guess!

(Mike tries to sign "bee," but Hila guesses wrong about ten times.)

Hila: Oh, I know! It's a snake. No... a fly. A firefly! A butterfly! A bird! No...
a chicken!

Anne: Bee!

Hila: "Let It Be"!!!

Mike: Yes!

Hila: I knew it! I'm so good at this game.

Mike (to Hila): Do you know this song?

Anne: No.

Hila: You don't know "Let It Be"?

Anne: I've never heard it.

Hila: Well, you're about to. Mike, play it... (to Anne) Oh, sorry, I didn't
mean it. Sometimes I talk nonsense.

Anne: Nonsense.

Hila: Shall we start?

Anne: Okay!

(Mike plays "Let It Be." Hila sings, but she's facing away from Anne.)

Hila: "When I find myself in times of trouble, Mother Mary comes to
me..."

Anne: I can't see your lips.

(They stop.)

Hila: Oh, sorry... Is this better?

Anne: Yes.

(They start over. This time, Anne translates the lyrics into sign language.)

Hila (singing): "When I find myself in times of trouble, Mother Mary comes to me, speaking words of wisdom, let it be."

(Hila sees Anne's sign for "let it be" and signs it with her.)

Hila: Let it be...

Anne: Let it be...

(Hila connects with Anne, slows down, and mirrors her movements.)

Hila (singing): "And in my hour of darkness, she is standing right in front of me, speaking words of wisdom, let it be."

(Anne blossoms into a sign-language dance. Hila follows her movements.)

Hila (singing): "Let it be, let it be, let it be, let it be. Whisper words of wisdom, let it be."

(They slow down the rhythm. Anne and Hila mirror each other's movements in sign language.)

Hila (singing): "And when the night is cloudy, there is still a light that shines on me. Shine on 'til tomorrow, let it be... Let it be, let it be, let it be, let it be. Whisper words of wisdom, let it be."

(Hila and Mike finish the song, but Anne is still dancing, unaware they've stopped playing. They watch her, and when Anne realizes, she stops and turns away, embarrassed. Hila and Mike start clapping for Anne, but then remember that Anne can't hear their applause. Hila approaches Anne to get her attention.)

Hila: Anne—

Anne: Sorry...

Hila: How do you clap in sign language?

(Anne shyly shows the hand-waving sign. Mike and Hila start doing it.)

Hila: No, it's for you... It was beautiful. You're a star.

Anne: Thanks.

Hila: Thank you. (Imitates Anne's "thanks" sign) And thank you too, "Mike." (Does the air-guitar sign for "Mike.")

Mike: Thank you too, Anne... I've got to go now.

Hila: What? Where are you going?

Mike: I need to pick up my brother from kindergarten.

Hila: So, we'll meet here again at four for another rehearsal?

Mike: Yeah, so... Anne? Another rehearsal at four?

Anne: Four? Yes.

Mike: Bye, it was great...

Hila: Yeah, it was nice... Bye...

Mike: Bye.

Hila: So, I'll see you later.

(Mike leaves.)

Hila: He's cute, Mike.

Anne: You love him?

Hila: What? No way... Are you going home now? Let's walk together.

Anne, how did you sign "love" again? Actually, never mind, it doesn't matter... I was kidding!

(Both exit.)

Scene 10

(The train station. Lev is standing with his bird mobile, selling paper birds. Eleanor enters and waits for a train. She recognizes the birds and realizes he is Anne's father. She smiles and approaches him.)

Eleanor: Hello!

Lev: Hello!

Eleanor: Are you Anne's father?

Lev: Anne, yes. What happened to her?

Eleanor: Nothing! Everything's okay. I'm Eleanor, the school principal.

Lev: The school principal? (He's happy to meet her and shakes her hand.)

Eleanor: Yes! What's your name?

Lev (points at his chest): Lev.

Eleanor: Shirt? Your jacket? Oh... your heart? Love?

Lev: Lev.

Eleanor: Lev! Your name is Lev?

Lev: Yes.

Eleanor: Lev... that's a beautiful name.

Lev: Thank you!

Eleanor: I'm Eleanor.

Lev: So, you're the principal at the integrated school?

Eleanor: No, no. I'm the principal at the School of Arts!

Lev: Arts?!

Eleanor: Yes. I asked Anne to invite you for a meeting so I could explain that we won't be able to accept her.

Lev: Wait! Slow down, please!

Eleanor: Sorry. (She talks more slowly.) I told Anne that we can't accept her at our school, but I arranged a place for her at the integrated school.

They're waiting for her there. (A train arrives.) Sorry, my train is here...

Thanks for the bird you sent me! It was nice meeting you.

(She leaves.)

Scene 11

(Back home. Anne is practicing her sign-language dance moves for "Let It Be." Lev enters, walks up to her, and gives her a big hug.)

Lev: I want you to act like you're deaf.

Anne: But I am deaf.

Lev: You act like you can hear.

Anne: But I can't hear.

Lev: Because they will never let you be like them.

Anne: I don't want to be like them.

Lev: Then why do you act like them?

Anne: I don't act like them. I act how I feel.

Lev: You talk like them.

Anne: Mom taught me how to talk.

Lev: Your mom never taught you how to lie!

Anne: I'm not lying.

Lev: You went to the School of Arts!

(Pause.)

Anne: I wanted to try it out.

Lev: And how was it?

Anne: Good.

Lev: You're lying again. It's over. Tomorrow, you're going with me to the

integrated school.

Anne: I don't want to.

Lev: You're deaf!

Anne: I know I'm deaf!

Lev: You're ashamed of what you are!

Anne: You're the one who's ashamed of me! I want to live! To dance!

Lev: They will hurt you.

Anne: They haven't done anything to me!

Lev: They don't like us.

Anne: Nobody likes someone they don't know. If I want to be liked, I need to let them get to know me.

Lev: You are everything I have in this world.

Anne: You're everything I have in this world too.

(She turns to leave.)

Lev: Where are you going?

Anne: I'm going to meet my new friends.

Lev: I won't allow you to study there.

Anne: And do you allow me to meet with my friends? Or do I live in a prison?

(She exits.)

Scene 12

(The music room. Mike is practicing a guitar solo for "Imagine." Anne enters.)

Mike: Hi.

Anne: Hi.

Mike: It's a great solo, but I was a little off-key... Luckily, you can't hear it. Just kidding. We'll wait for Hila, and then we'll start?

Anne: Okay.

(Mike starts playing again. Anne comes closer, sits by Mike, and puts her hand on the guitar while he's playing.)

Anne: It's nice.

Mike: What?

Anne: The solo.

Mike: How do you know?

Anne: I felt it.

Mike: You felt what I played? Are you sure you're really deaf?

Anne: No, I'm just pretending for fun. Didn't you feel it?

Mike: Of course I did.

Anne: Deaf people can feel, too.

Mike: You know, until I was twelve, I couldn't see at all.

Anne: So how come you started seeing?

Mike: I got a haircut.

(Anne laughs.)

Mike: Can you feel the different chords?

(Anne puts her hand on the guitar as Mike plays the chords for "Imagine.")

Anne: Yes.

Mike: It's the chords for a song. (He sings) "Imagine there's no heaven, it's easy if you try." Want to give it a shot?

Anne: I can't sing.

Mike: Why not?

Anne: I have a funny voice.

Mike: So what? It's just the two of us here. Let's try.

Anne: Promise not to laugh?

Mike: I promise... to laugh if it's funny.

(Mike plays the first phrase, and they slowly try to sing together.)

Mike and Anne (singing): "Imagine there's no heaven, it's easy if you try."

Anne: I can't.

Mike: Sure you can. "It's easy if you try." Let's do it again. You and me together.

(Anne tries to sing. At first, she says the lyrics shyly but gradually gains confidence. Hila enters, and they stop playing.)

Hila: Hi! I'm here! Sorry I'm late. My mom is driving me crazy!

Anne: My dad, too!

Hila: I love your dress.

Anne: Thanks! I love your shirt.

Hila: I hate it.

Anne: Why?

Hila: My mom bought it for me. Anyway, I've been thinking about our song—how did you sign "Let It Be" again?

Mike: We just found out something crazy.

Hila: What?

Mike: Anne can hear music.

Hila: Mike, Anne can't hear anything!

Mike: Anne can feel music.

Hila: Music is something you hear.

Mike: She can feel the vibrations. We just figured it out.

Hila: Really?

Anne: Yes.

Hila: Cool! (To Anne) So, I've been thinking about "Let It Be"—what if we start slow and build it up?

Mike: Hila, I want Anne to sing with us.

Hila: Yeah, I'm working on the choreography with her.

Mike: No, I mean I want to change the song and have Anne sing.

Hila: What? We already performed "Imagine" at our first audition, and it

didn't work out. We said we're doing "Let It Be."

Mike: So, we'll do both. It's a great idea.

Hila: But why?

Mike: So Anne can sing.

Hila: But Anne is deaf! She can't sing!

Mike: She can't sing like you, but she can make sounds that are special!

Hila: I can make any sound!

Anne: Never mind, it doesn't matter.

Mike: No, listen—this way, the song will sound unique. The examiners will love it!

Hila: We said I'd sing, and Anne would do the sign language!

Mike: You'll sing, too. We'll all sing!

Hila: Mike, this is the most important audition I've ever had. I need to get accepted. I can't... I can't sing with her.

Mike: Let's just try.

Hila: I don't want to!

Mike: Hila... I've had enough. It's time you listen to me for a change.

Hila: Did you hear her voice?

Mike: Your voice isn't as perfect as you think it is.

Hila: And you don't play as well as you think.

Mike: Oh, really?

Hila: Yeah. We failed our first audition because of you.

Mike: We failed because you were off-key and shouting all over the place.

Hila: Because you played the wrong chords!

Mike: Because you didn't follow the rhythm.

Hila: Because you can't keep rhythm!

Mike: Because you can't sing!

Hila: You're the worst guitar player I've ever heard!

Mike: You're the worst singer I've ever heard!

Anne: Don't fight because of me! Please!

Hila: But it is because of you! It's all because of you! Can you even sing?

Sing! Why are you even here? You're deaf! Go to your deaf school!

Mike: Leave her alone! That's enough!

(Eleanor enters, furious.)

Eleanor: What's going on in here? Are you two crazy? Can someone explain? (Pauses, sees Anne) I see. (To Mike and Hila) You two can leave now.

Mike: But we need to audition—

Eleanor: No need. I don't see anyone here who belongs at a School of Arts. Please leave. Anne, what are you still doing here?

Anne: Nothing.

Hila: It's not fair.

Eleanor: Excuse me?

Hila: It's not fair that you asked us to team up with a deaf girl.

Eleanor: Please leave.

(Mike and Hila leave.)

Eleanor: Anne, did you tell Mike and Hila that I sent you here to do a team project with them?

Anne: Yes.

Eleanor: Why?

Anne: I wanted to prove to you that I can.

Eleanor: Prove that you can what?

Anne: That I—

Eleanor: Lie? After I tried to help you?

Anne: But—

Eleanor: I asked to meet your father. You never brought him here. I arranged for you to go to the integrated school—a school that deaf students from all over the country want to attend. And you went behind my back, used my name, and lied. Do you think you can do that because you're deaf?

Anne: We were doing a team project—

Eleanor: Anne! You hurt yourself, Mike, Hila, and me. Being deaf doesn't give you the right not to listen to others. Just like I thought—you don't belong in this school. Take your things and leave.

(Anne picks up her bag and turns to leave. She stops, throws her bag

down, and turns back, facing Eleanor. Anne starts dancing silently, expressing her frustration and sadness. Eleanor exits. Anne keeps dancing, covering her ears and opening her mouth to scream, but no sound comes out.)

Scene 13

(At the train station. Lev is standing, holding his mobile of unsold paper birds. Anne enters.)

Anne: I see, I walk, I feel. That's enough. I don't need to sing and dance.

(Lev steps closer, wanting to hug her, but instead, Anne takes the bird mobile from him and turns to try selling the birds.)

Anne: Birds! Birds!

(Lev tries to stop her, but Anne keeps going.)

Anne: Birds! Birds!!!

(Lev pulls the bird mobile from Anne's hand and throws it away. He hugs her tightly as she starts to cry. Together, they walk away.)

Scene 14

(Near the school. Mike is walking across the stage quickly, with Hila chasing after him.)

Hila: Mike! Mike!

Mike: I don't want to hear from you.

Hila: Can you listen to me for just a moment?

Mike: No!

Hila: I know I overreacted.

Mike: If you hadn't gone crazy back there, none of this would have happened.

Hila: You weren't that sensitive either.

Mike: I was as sensitive as I could be. I wanted to give Anne, for once in her life—

Hila: I know what you wanted... I wanted it too, but suddenly I felt this pressure, like she was taking all of your attention. I like Anne a lot too. But it's not my fault that she's deaf.

Mike: It's not her fault either.

Hila: Of course not. But... I just want to get accepted to this school, and so do you. I want us to do this together, just you and me. Mike, listen to me... at least look at me. Can you just look at me? Please...

(Mike finally looks at her. Hila signs "I love you," but Mike doesn't understand. She signs it again.)

Mike: What? ..."I'm the most important"? ..."I only care about myself"?
I've heard enough!

Hila: Listen to me! Please!

(Hila signs "I love you" again.)

Mike: "I... love...?" (Pause) Do you think this is a good time for that?

Hila: It's always a good time for that.

Mike: ...Me too. (He signs it back, and they hug.) What do we do now?
Everything's lost.

Hila: No, it's not. Trust me.

Scene 15

(The next morning. Anne and Lev are in their home.)

Lev: I put pencils, notebooks, and some money in your backpack.

Anne: Are you mad at me?

Lev: It's not over yet. You still need to do what we agreed on.

Anne: I'm embarrassed.

Lev: I'll come with you. And then we'll both go to the integrated school.

Scene 16

(At school, outside the principal's office. Eleanor is there, and Lev and Anne enter.)

Lev: Hello!

Eleanor: Hello, Lev. Hi, Anne.

Lev: Anne told me what she did yesterday... I'd like to apologize on her behalf.

Eleanor: I think Anne can apologize on her own.

Anne: I'm sorry.

Eleanor: I forgive you.

(Anne doesn't respond.)

Lev (to Anne, in sign language): Thank you.

Anne: Thank you.

Lev: We're going to the integrated school.

Eleanor: Anne, you owe an apology to two more people. (Calls from her office) Mike? Hila? Come here, please.

(They enter.)

Eleanor: They came here this morning to ask for another chance to audition.

Anne: And are you giving them another chance?

Eleanor: I'm considering it.

Anne: Hila, Mike, I lied to you yesterday. The principal never told me to do a team project with you. I made it up because I wanted to show her that I could. I'm sorry. Good luck on your audition. (Turns to leave, then stops and turns back) And Hila, even though I can't hear, I know... I feel... that you sing beautifully.

Hila: Thank you.

Mike: Anne... but you can! She really can. She sang with me yesterday, and she danced with Hila, and it was the most beautiful thing I've ever seen...

Eleanor: Mike, Anne needs to study in a place that's suited for her.

(Eleanor exits to her office.)

(Anne signs the phrase "let it be." Hila signs it back. Hila starts singing softly and slowly. Anne interprets her lyrics into sign language, and Hila mirrors Anne's movements.)

Hila (singing): “When I find myself in times of trouble, Mother Mary comes to me...”

(Mike joins in on the guitar.)

Hila (singing): “Speaking words of wisdom, let it be...”

(Anne’s sign language gradually evolves into a dance.)

Hila (singing): “And in my hour of darkness, she is standing right in front of me, speaking words of wisdom, let it be...”

(Eleanor enters behind them, watching silently.)

Hila and Mike (singing): “Let it be, let it be, let it be, let it be. Whisper words of wisdom, let it be.”

Eleanor: The examiners are waiting for you.

(Mike and Hila wave goodbye to Anne, and she crosses her fingers for them.)

Eleanor: Anne, the examiners are waiting for you too.

(Anne is shocked and overwhelmed with joy. She turns to Lev, and he nods in approval. Eleanor, Mike, Hila, and Anne exit to the audition. Lev stays alone on stage as his animated film plays.)

Animation: A flock of birds fly toward the horizon. One little bird lags behind and can’t catch up with the rest. The little bird is left alone, feeling lonely and losing altitude. Heavy clouds gather, and rain and wind disturb her flight. She’s weak. Then, two birds return and surround the

lonely bird. The three of them join the rest of the flock, and all fly together. A warm sunset lights up the clear sky.

(The end.)