



7th Grade Best of the Best, Round 2

One Song

*by Haley Cowans
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I stormed out of the house, making as much noise as possible. Even beyond the door I had slammed shut, I could hear my parents shouting at each other. I zipped up my sweater, shoved my hands into my pockets, and sulked off.

I marched far away from that awful place to the edge of my property and plopped down on to the grass. I had heard once that being silent and still would clam down anger. So I exhaled and closed my eyes. At first, nothing but silence rang in my ears. Then, the voices echoed once again.

I could hear my mom's red-faced shrieks replay themselves in my head. I could hear my dad's thunderous bellows as he paced through the hallways. My baby sister's wails at all of the disturbance. I squeezed my eyes shut tighter. *Not that world*, I told myself. Try the world outside your head.

I listened, and I heard. Crickets sang out to me in their peaceful manner. They sounded like children, so chatty and perky. I had to smile. This was good. I listened harder, trying to hear even more.

The frogs began to croak, like a group of old friends talking. They all had something to say. All at the same time. Yet they all seemed to know what the others were talking about. I heard a small splash as one jumped into the pond. He must have had enough. Just like me.

I heard the small, pitiful mew of a kitten. The stray that pokes around our farm.. Still with closed eyes, I allowed my fingers to follow the noise. They finally reached something warm and soft. I picked up the kitten and held it close. I could feel its little heartbeat banging like a drum. It must have run out to meet me.

I then listened harder than I ever had before. I heard the grass rustle. Whispering reassurances. Things we need to hear.

Then I swear I could hear the stars twinkle. Little angelic chimes that filled the night air. I could see them in my head, although my eyes were still shut. The twinkling stars made more beautiful music than any man-made instrument.



I opened my eyes and gazed up, entranced by the pure beauty of it all. Slowly transformed by the bells that played for me tonight.

I wished my parents could hear the stars. They would never understand the pure joy of the glistening melody that danced across the darkness and the silence. They would never hear because they never listen. Not even to each other.

I decided one thing then and there. Just because my parents weren't willing to venture towards the world outside their heads, I wouldn't let them keep my sister trapped. I would take her out here on every night such as this, and together we would listen. I could hear her now, laughing with delight. She would understand. I would make her.

And so I sat there, on that small patch of our planet, for the rest of the night. I stroked the kitten's head and listened as the crickets joined the frogs in conversation, and the grass whispered, and the stars chimed. And it reminded me of people, all making their own sound and beat to create something beautiful. Maybe we were put there for this purpose only. To combine our unique sounds and make one song, one song that would ring all across the oceans, the mountains, the deserts, the plains, and sky. And so I sit there enjoying this this orchestra of the night.

And I was at peace.