

Spotlight

written by

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FADE IN:

INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

The scene opens with a chorus of cheers blaring from a lively audience. Claps and whistles echo, bounding off the walls of the auditorium.

The roars from the crowd gradually begin to soften as a new act is presented onto the stage.

ANNOUNCER

Thank you, Sarah! Next up, we
would like to welcome...

The exuberant commotion fades out, and nesting within the nook of the backstage is a tall, anxious student. With a guitar strapped to his back, he shifts his stance restlessly. The stage lights reflect in his apprehensive pupils. His hands, with a slight tremble, begin to sweat. This is MICHAEL.

The backstage is swarmed with stage crew members barking at each other and other students chatting. In the center of the ocean of bickering and gossip, Michael remains silent, watching everything ensue around him.

His gaze shifts to the set list. He sees that his name, in bold letters, is next to perform. He attempts to regulate his breathing, battling his anxiety.

He takes a deep breath, and closes his eyes.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL HALLWAY - PAST

Thirteen year old Michael is seen struggling his way through the school hallway. The other students bombard him.

Before he reaches the classroom, he is halted by a bulletin board. Decorated in streamers and glitter is a huge poster that reads: "LET YOUR TALENTS SHINE AT THE BMS WINTER TALENT SHOW!"

He sees a piece of paper pinned below the extravagant poster. The paper reads: "SIGN UP HERE!"

In awe, Michael hesitates, contemplating the potentially risky decision. He shrugs, and frantically rummages through his backpack in search for a pencil. Once he discovers one, he proceeds to sign his name.

He pauses, staring at his name on the list. A nervous smile is then painted on his face.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

It's now the middle of the current act. Each audience member watches with admiring eyes.

Michael's anxiety begins to intensify, knowing it's only a matter of time till he is on the stage.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM - PAST

Michael reminisces his eighth grade talent show performance.

Thirteen year old Michael is seen lurking backstage, awaiting his name to be called. He is plagued with fear as sweat drips from his forehead and his hands tremble uncontrollably.

ANNOUNCER

Thank you, Kevin! Next, we would
like to welcome Michael to the
stage!

As the audience roars, Michael's reality sets in.

The moment he steps onto the stage, he freezes like a deer in the headlights. He stares blankly at the audience, paralyzed with fear.

His breathing intensifies, and he bolts off the stage. His tear ducts swell, as a torrential rain of tears begin to stream down his cheeks.

He races for the stage door, and he swings it open.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. OUTSIDE OF AUDITORIUM - PRESENT

The stage door swings open and Michael is seen breathing heavily, as the memory of his past failure consumes him.

A single tear drips down his cheek.

Conflicted, he pauses for a moment.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. MICHAEL'S LIVING ROOM

Michael is seen strumming his guitar, singing freely.

His mother creeps in, peeping her head through the doorway, admiring her son's talent.

Michael finishes his song with ease. Instantaneously, he catches a glance of his mother, and he jumps from the sofa.

A wave of panic flushes his expression, while his mother smiles warmly.

She traces her way to the sofa and she sits next to him.

MICHAEL'S MOM

That was beautiful, Michael.

The talent show poster sits on the coffee table.

He stares blankly at the paper, avoiding contact with his mother.

She gently places her hand on his shoulder.

MICHAEL'S MOM (CONT'D)

You can do this. Believe.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. OUTSIDE OF AUDITORIUM

Michael unfreezes, and he glances at the stage door. He overhears the audience cheer and clapping. The act has ended.

He takes a breath and he hesitantly grabs the handle to the door.

INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

As it swings open, he stands tall as his mother's words ring in his mind.

MICHAEL'S MOM (V.O.)

Believe.

He marches up to the curtain, waiting his name to be called.

ANNOUNCER

Thank you, Mason! Last, but
certainly not least, we would
like to welcome Michael to the
stage!

The audience roars, and Michael makes his way onto the stage. For a moment, he freezes, looking out at the audience in front of him.

He catches a glimpse of his mother, sitting in the front row.

Her endearing eyes light up.

Michael nods at her, and he traces his way to the stool on the stage. He sits, and positions his guitar.

He takes a breath, and he begins.

Suddenly, the world around him freezes. In his mind, it's just him and his guitar within his own world. He strums with ease as the lyrics flow naturally.

The audience watches with wonder and admiration.

Michael finishes the song, and he sighs with relief.

For a moment, the audience is silent.

Perplexed, his eyebrows contort in fear. However, before the panic can consume him, the audience bursts in roars and hollers. Cheers and claps bounce off the walls of the auditorium.

Michael's eyes light up and a smirk of satisfaction stretches across his face.

FADE OUT.