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Oona M. Abrams

Millburn Township Public Schools

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To the Middle School Talent Show Kids

OONA M. ABRAMS

Millburn Township School District

Hey, middle school talent show kids – yeah, all of you
All of you who showed up and got up and stayed up
Has anyone told you yet that you are one collective miracle?

To the kid who sang “A Million Dreams” alone after a group sang it too
To the soloists whose voices shook and cracked or went off key
(Stop replaying it in your head: You showed up, got up, stayed up!)

To the dude who spun a pen in rhythm to The Weeknd,
To the hula-hooping girl in the emerald green dress and ruby slippers,
To the most talented vocalist who said no to a solo and yes to the ensemble,
To the kid who stuck out the tech glitch till the electric guitar got hooked up,
To the songwriter who donned taffeta and invited two friends to sing and play,
To the comic duet whose skit had so many insider jokes, if you know you know,
To the proud ladies rocking accordion polkas and otamatone Imperial Marches,
To the petite trio of synchronized, purple tank-topped, black-leggined dancers,
To the trumpeter who blasted that *Lion King* song from the world’s oldest folding chair,

All of you middle school talent show kids who showed up and got up and stayed up:
I promise, if you could do this, here, now, tonight, anything is possible for you. Anything.

So fly that hula hoop up to the moon, sell out Madison Square Garden,
Make a sales pitch to the firm’s top client, organize that PTA 5K,
Spin that pen into poems and take that stage at the Second City,
Push all the buttons and pull all the levers it takes to cure cancer,
Dress taffeta-clad mannequins in every window of every storefront,
Feed everyone who is hungry today, or might be hungry tomorrow,

Sing lullabies to your children, grandchildren, great grandchildren,
Because, this, The Middle School Talent Show, makes you *audacious*.

You showed up, you got up, you stayed up, and that makes you

One

Collective

Miracle

OONA MARIE ABRAMS (@oonziela) is the Director of English Language Arts in Millburn Township, New Jersey. Her writing has been published in *English Leadership Quarterly*, *Educational Leadership*, *Educational Viewpoints*, and various educational blogs. She is an active member of NCTE, the Council on English Leadership and New Jersey Council of Teachers of English.