

SING ★ FOR ★ JOY

Creating a Place
Where Music Lives



RICHARDSON
COMMUNITY
CHORALE
SING FOR
JOY



by Cat Zultner

Sing For Joy

Creating a Place Where Music Lives

Cat Zultner

Year 1

Bring cookies!



Who moved my pencil?



Holiday concert tonight!



Tenors, please stop growing mustaches.



Allegro con Joy!



Harold



Rehearsal
Monday 7:00

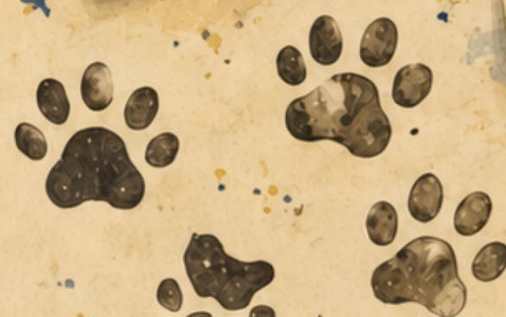


SING FOR JOY



RCC

FALL CONCERT





10th Anniversary
Concert

ADMIT ONE

Thank you,
Aunt Rachel!



Hello!

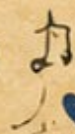
My name is

My name is

(Maybe one day...)



Reserved
for
Maya?



Monday

7:00 PM

I think we'll
be back.



SING
FOR
JOY



Dedication

For the singers and director of the Richardson Community Chorale, who have spent ten years proving that joy grows when it is shared. Thank you for the music.

Thank you for creating a place where we can make it together.

Sing for Joy.

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Acknowledgements

Stories are made from memories.

Songs are made from many voices.

Communities are made by people who keep showing up.

Thank you to everyone who has ever opened a door, saved a seat, shared a song, or helped someone discover that they belong.

This book is offered with gratitude—

and with joy.

As you begin the story:

Some songs last three minutes.

Some songs last an hour.

And some songs become part of a community.

This is a story about singing those songs.

Maya loved concerts.

But tonight felt different.

There were balloons in the lobby.

Pictures on the walls.

And hanging above the stage was a giant gold number:

10.

"What's happening?" Maya asked.

"It's our anniversary concert," Aunt Rachel said.

"The chorale is ten years old."

Maya stopped walking.

"Ten?"

"Yes."

"Like a dog?"

Aunt Rachel laughed.

"No."

"Like a child?"

"Not exactly."

Maya frowned at the giant number.

"How can singing be ten years old?"



Near the stage hung a banner.

The letters curved across bright blue fabric:



SING FOR JOY

Our First Concert
2015

Holiday Harmony
2018

Music in the Park
2017

Singing Together
2021

Music in the Park
2017

Welcome!
Sing For Joy
10 Years of
Music,
Friendship,
and Community!

Maya read it twice.

Then she looked at Aunt Rachel.

"That's your motto?"

"It is."

Maya considered this.

"Not sing for trophies?"

"No."

"Not sing because you have to?"

"No."

"Not sing to be famous?"

Aunt Rachel laughed.

"Definitely not."

Maya looked back at the banner.

"Just..."

"Sing for joy?"



Aunt Rachel nodded.

"Joy when the music is beautiful."

"Joy when rehearsal is difficult."

"Joy when someone new joins."



"Joy when an old friend returns."

"Joy when a song makes us laugh."

"And joy when music helps carry us through hard times."

Maya was quiet.

That sounded like an awful lot of joy.

TEN YEARS OF MEMORIES

★ ♥ ★ SING FOR JOY ♥ ★ ★



OUR FIRST CONCERT!

Year 1

So it began...



MUSIC IN THE PARK

Year 2



HOLIDAY CHEER

Year 3



Year 5

Happy 5th Anniversary!



Through every season...



Year 6

KEEPING MUSIC ALIVE



Year 4



FRIENDS WHO SING TOGETHER...



Famous Mustache Tenor
-- then... --



I made a note
not to ask.



Year 7

APART, BUT TOGETHER



SINGING ACROSS SCREENS

Year 7



...and now!



Harold
joins rehearsal.



Different
songs.
Different
years.
One big
family.



A DECADE OF SONG

Year 10



AND SO MUCH JOY!



The concert hall buzzed.

People hugged.

They pointed at photographs.

"Remember this song?"

"Oh! I still have that dress."

"That was the year it snowed."

"Look how young we all were!"

Maya peered at the pictures.

The singers looked younger.

The hairstyles were...

interesting.

Very interesting.

One of the tenors had a mustache that deserved its own photograph.

Maya made a note not to ask about it.

"Why are people so excited?" she asked.

"It's just singing."

Aunt Rachel smiled.

"Is it?"

She pointed to a photograph.

"That was our first concert."

The stage looked smaller.

The group looked nervous and excited all at once.

"And this?"

"A holiday concert."

"And this?"

"We sang for people who couldn't come to us."

"And this?"

Maya pointed to a photograph that looked very strange.

The singers stood far apart.

Everyone wore colorful masks.

The chairs were spread across the room.

Nobody was hugging.

"What happened here?"

Aunt Rachel smiled softly.

"That was a difficult year."

Maya studied the picture.

"But you kept singing."

"We did."

"Wasn't it hard?"

"Oh yes."

"Then why?"



At that moment, the Conductor joined them.

He looked at the photograph.

Then at Maya.

And smiled.

"Because music matters most when people need it most."

Maya thought about that.

Then she pointed to another photograph.

This one was even stranger.

Tiny boxes filled the page.

People singing in kitchens.

Living rooms.

Bedrooms.

One singer appeared to be sharing the screen with a cat.

"That's Harold," said the Conductor.

"The singer?"

"The cat."

Maya laughed.

"You couldn't sing together?"

"Not in the same room," said Aunt Rachel.

"But we could still be a choir."

The Conductor knelt beside her.

"What do you think makes a choir?"



Maya looked at the photographs.

At the masks.

At the little squares.

At the smiling faces.

And slowly she said,

"People who keep choosing
to make music together."

The Conductor's eyes crinkled.

"I think you've discovered something important."

Maya looked again.

The pictures were all different.

But something was the same.

The smiles.

The way people stood close together.

The way they looked at one another.

As if the music belonged to all of them.

"So..." said Maya slowly,

"the chorale didn't just make songs."

"No."

"It made memories?"

"Yes."

"It made friendships?"

"Absolutely."

"It helped people through hard times?"

Aunt Rachel squeezed her hand.

"More than you know."

Maya looked around at the singers.

Some had sung for years.

Some had joined recently.

Some read music easily.

Some were still learning.

Some sang softly.

Some sang boldly.

Some had silver hair.

Some didn't.

And all of them belonged.

"How did they get chosen?"

Maya asked.

Aunt Rachel smiled.

"They chose themselves."



Maya blinked.

"That's allowed?"

"Of course."

"What if they're not perfect?"

"Nobody is."

"What if they make mistakes?"

"Everybody does."

"What if they've never sung in a choir before?"

Aunt Rachel looked toward the stage.

Then she said the most wonderful thing.

"If you show up and want to sing,

we'll make a place for you."

Maya thought about that.

And suddenly she understood something else.

The miracle wasn't just that the music was beautiful.

The miracle was that everyone was invited.

And somehow...the music was beautiful anyway.



Maya looked down.

At some point,

someone had placed a music folder in her hands.

She wasn't sure who.

She held it carefully anyway.



"You're asking excellent questions."

Maya turned.

The Conductor was standing beside her.

He smiled.

Not a big smile.

A warm one.

The sort of smile that says:

I'm glad you're here.

"How long have you been conducting?" Maya asked.

"A while."

"Is tonight your favorite concert?"

The Conductor thought for a moment.

Then he asked,

"What do you think I will celebrate tonight?"

"The songs?"

"Some of them."

"The concerts?"

"A few."

"The ten years?"

"Certainly."

Maya frowned.

That answer felt incomplete.

The Conductor waited.

He was very good at waiting.

Finally, Maya said,

"The people?"

The Conductor's eyes crinkled.

"Exactly."

He looked around.

At the singers warming up.

At old friends hugging.



At new singers nervously finding their seats.

"Music is important," he said.

"But people are why music matters."

Maya thought about that.

She looked down at the music folder again.

"Do you think..." she began.

The Conductor waited.

"Do you think I could do this?"

The Conductor smiled.

"Do you want to?"

Maya looked at the singers.

At the banner.

At the photographs.

At the giant gold ten.

She thought about Mondays.

About friendships.

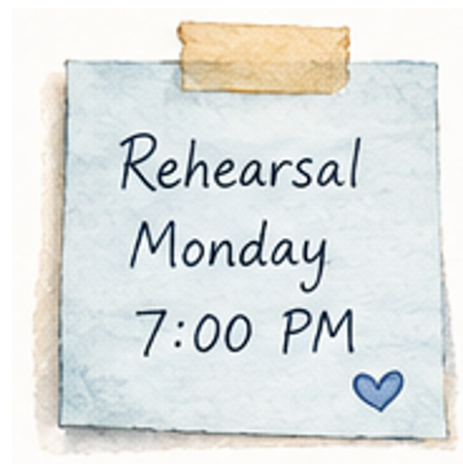
About Harold the cat.

About all the people who kept choosing music.

"I think so," she said.

"Then," said the Conductor,

"I think you have discovered something pretty important."



The singers took their places.
The lights dimmed.
The audience grew quiet.
The Conductor walked onto the stage.
Everyone applauded.
Not because he was the most important person.
But because he had spent ten years
helping everyone sing together.
He smiled.
Looked at the singers.
And for a moment,
Maya noticed something.
The singers were looking back at him
the same way.
With gratitude.
With affection.
With trust.
As if they were all saying:
Thank you for helping us become this.
The music began.
Voices rose.
High voices.
Low voices.



Strong voices.

Gentle voices.

Voices that had sung together for years.

Voices that were singing their first anniversary concert.

Separate voices.

One song.



Maya listened.

And she thought:

Ten years is a lot of Mondays.

A lot of rehearsals.

A lot of missed notes.

A lot of learning.

A lot of laughter.

A lot of choosing,

again and again,

to show up.





Not that they sang perfectly.

Not that they always agreed.

Not that every concert was flawless.

The miracle was this:

Ten years ago,

a group of neighbors and friends gathered in Richardson and said,

"Let's make music together."

And people kept saying,

"Yes."

The final song ended.

The audience leaped to its feet.

The singers beamed.

The Conductor bowed.

Then he turned

and invited the singers to stand.

All of them.

The sopranos.

The altos.

The tenors.

The basses.

The people who had been there from the beginning.

The people who had joined along the way.

The people who would carry the music forward.

The applause washed over them.

Warm.

Joyful.

Grateful.

And the Conductor applauded too.

Loudly.

Enthusiastically.

As if he were the proudest audience member of all.



Maya clapped as hard as she could.
Because suddenly she understood.
A chorale isn't really a group of singers.
It's a promise.
That joy is worth sharing.
That beauty is worth making.
That ordinary people,
singing together,
can create something extraordinary.
And perhaps that's why,
ten years later,
they still gather.
Week after week.
Song after song.

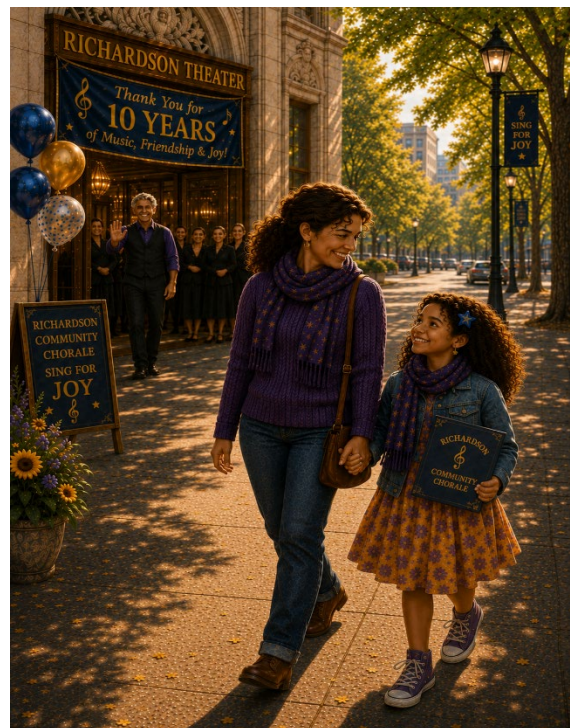
Maya looked down at the folder in her arms.

Then she looked back at the theater.

"I think this might become a family tradition."

And somehow...

that felt a lot like joy.



An Invitation

If this story made you smile.....

If it reminded you of someone who loves to sing.....

If you've ever wondered what it feels like to be part of something bigger than yourself.....

We'd love to meet you.

The Richardson Community Chorale is a welcoming, non-audition community chorus where people of all backgrounds come together to share music, friendship, and joy. We are based in Richardson, Texas.

Whether you've sung all your life or haven't sung a note in years...there is a place for you.

Whether you'd like to sing, volunteer, attend a concert, become a sponsor, or simply learn more about our community...

You are warmly invited.

If you show up on a Monday night and want to sing, we'll make a place for you.

Because a chorale isn't just a group of singers.

It's a promise.

A promise that music is meant to be shared.

A promise that everyone belongs.

Come sing for joy with us.

Richardson Community Chorale

<https://www.rcchorale.org/>

Celebrating 10 Years of Creating a Place Where Music Lives



Tenors—
please stop
growing
mustaches.



Coffee
helps
everything.



REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

MON	7:00 PM	Rehearsal
WED	7:00 PM	Sectionals
SAT	9:30 AM	Run-through

Show up. Sing. Make joy.

10 YEARS

of Music,
Friendship & Joy



SING FOR JOY



Some nights
are magic.



Who
moved
my
pencil?



Holiday Concert! ♥



Reserved
for
Maya?

Bring
snacks.
Share
joy.



MAYA?



Harold



RCC
10th Anniversary
Concert

A night to remember.

ADMIT ONE

ADMIT ONE

RICHARDSON
COMMUNITY
CHORALE

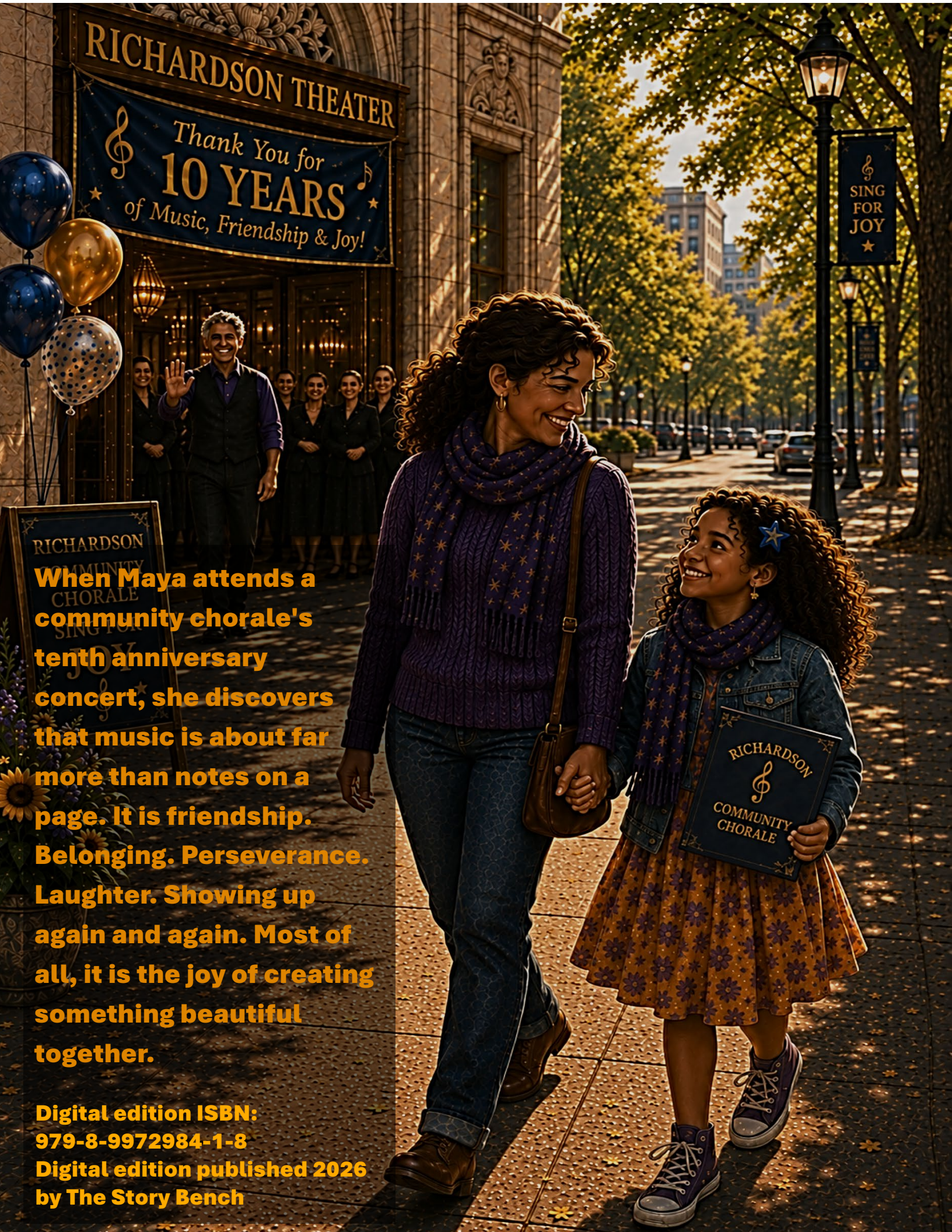
Monday
7:00 PM

I think we'll
be back.



Thank you,
Music.

If you show up
and want to sing,
they'll make a
place for you.



When Maya attends a community chorale's tenth anniversary concert, she discovers that music is about far more than notes on a page. It is friendship. Belonging. Perseverance. Laughter. Showing up again and again. Most of all, it is the joy of creating something beautiful together.

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