

**A Lesson to Learn**  
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I was just entering the room, the kinder garden right next to the Broadway Theatre where they played The Lion King in New York, quite noisy actually. I had planned what I was going to say, and then I remembered that my story wasn't completed without Lana's, but here we are.

-Good morning kids, this is Jessie Smith, and as I promised she's here to talk about the hard obstacles that a ballerina has, please, Jessie- the woman with short, wavy and ginger hair showed me where I had to stand.

-Hello, my name, as you already know, is Jessie Smith, I'm here to tell you the story of my ballerina years and the accident that left me like this- I pointed at my wheel chair.

"It all started when I was seventeen, I was so skinny but with lots of visible, toned muscles in my legs and arms, I was blonde, and quite tall. My class was going through finals, and at the same time I was dancing for the best academy of New York City, The Joffrey Ballet School, actually, the best of the country. To enter this academy we all had to make an audition, but when I entered I was four years old, so my mother decided to buy me the entrance.

In my senior years there was this new skinny girl with black straight hair and blue eyes named Lana Williams, when she entered the academy everyone fell in love with her because of her kindness and her ballet moves, I admit she was a great dancer, and I felt kind of jealous, I used to be the best dancer that the academy had had, until Lana caught the eye of Miss Cooper, my ballet teacher and the principal, she wasn't paying enough attention to me and I gave all my heart dancing, I got really angry, but everything fell apart when I didn't get the solo for a performance, I remember as if it was yesterday, I was walking towards the blackboard and I saw that my name wasn't in the solo, I thought it was a mistake so I went to miss Cooper's office to talk pacifically to her.

-Miss Cooper, what is this? - I asked her while handing her the paper.

She grabbed it and saw it very confused.

-Miss Smith, I don't see what's wrong there. - She looked at me.

-I don't have the solo.

-Yes, I know, Miss Williams got it.

-Why don't I have the solo?!

-Look, Jessie, I know that you put your heart into this, but Miss Lana Williams made the dance look like she put all of her feelings into it.

-Right! And I didn't?!

-No, Jessie, it's not that.

-Then why don't I have the solo?!- I said very slowly.

-Lana did a better performance.

When I heard those words I got really angry. I went to the changing room and Lana was there, I went up to her and talked.

-Hello. - I said in the happiest way I could. - Are you Lana Williams?

-Hey, yes I am. You're Jessie Smith, right?

-Yes. - I looked into the mirror and applied a little bit of red lipstick. - I heard you got the solo.

-Yes, I'm so happy, I put my whole effort in it.

-I'm happy for you, but it's going to be very tiring, I used to get every solo, and I had to wake up at 4am and used to get home at 11pm.

She looked at me.

-Oh, I don't mind. - She said. - I used to get up at 5am and get home at 12 because of my job.  
-Oh, what was your job?  
-I was a waitress, it was a very popular restaurant, everyone used to go and eat around 10-11pm.  
-Why do you work? - I asked.  
-To help my family.  
-In?  
-I just want to help.

In that moment I had my perfect plan, I should try to look interested, I needed to be her friend to know her weaknesses, and so I started the plan and invited her to hang out for a while.

Time passed and we got close, I learned that she had a love for animals, mostly dogs, that the smell of lavender reminded her of her father and childhood, she hates insects and used to have stage fright, she didn't like talking about her family that much.

One day Miss Cooper and her assistant Damien called all of us for a meeting, we sat down at the Auditorium and waited until Miss Cooper decided to talk.

-Good morning, all of you, I know that is very early for you to be here and I apologize, but as you may know every year we have our competition, this year is very special because it is sponsored by the Sydney Ballet School, and it will take place here in New York, so everyone that's here is going to participate,- I look around me trying to find Lana, she wasn't here and that made me a little bit happy.- through the week we are going to assign you the...- the door opened, and Lana walked in wearing a red shirt, white skirt, some converse and a ponytail.- Miss Williams, you're late, take your seat. - I got angry when I saw her. - What I was saying before being interrupted, we are going to assign you the song you are going to dance and the number of your act, it depends of how good you do so you can be the final act. Please, come here when I call your name.

While Miss Cooper was calling the people I walked towards Lana.

-Hey, why were you late? -I asked while she was putting on her ballerina shoes. -And why are you putting this on?  
-I had to work, and I'm going to rehearse.  
-Why?  
-Jessie Smith. -My name was called.

I walked towards Miss Cooper, she told me the song I needed to dance, it was La valse d'Amelie by Yann Tiersen, a beautiful song but not quite the best, either way I was happy with it. I walked back again to Lana, but she wasn't there, I started looking for her around the room and saw her talking to a tall guy with short, black hair, wearing brown pants, a white shirt and a leather jacket, she hugged him and walk back to me.

-What song did they assign you? -she asked excited.  
-Oh, La valse d'Amelie, you? -I asked.

Her name was called.

-We shall see.

When she came back she told me her song, and left. Time passed and the numbers were given, and I didn't have the last act that used to be the most important of all because it's the one that closes the whole thing. I went to talk to Miss Cooper again.

-Miss Cooper. -I yelled. -Why don't I have...

The skinny body of Lana was in Miss Cooper's office, then everything made sense. When Lana got out, she was leaving, so I followed her to talk in a very pacific way, again.

-Oh, so you think you are so perfect because you're the final act?!- I yelled, tired of her.

Lana turned around and walked my way.

-Sorry daddy's princess, but not all of us have our life easy, you know, some of us have to work every day to bring food to the house, not all of us can buy a scholarship. - She yelled at me.

How can she know that? The scholarship was supposed to be a secret.

-Wait, how do you know about the scholarship? - I ask avoiding any eye contact

-What? - She asked surprised- Jessie, everyone knows.

-Everyone?!

-Yes.

-But... Who told you?

-Miss Cooper.

I was really surprised, this is not going to end here. The competition was in two weeks, and test in one week, I needed Lana to get bad grades on her test, so she would lose her scholarship, I took her to a lot of parties that ended at 3am, but when the tests were over, I saw Lana's grades and they were amazing, mine not that much.

The day of the show had arrived. We were rehearsing, and I thought that I could make Lana get out of this if something happened to her. While she was taking care of her makeup, I broke her ballet shoes. I didn't mean like a huge accident, but some bruises weren't a problem.

The guy that Lana was talking to the day they assigned us the songs was next to Lana when she found out that her shoes where broken, she yelled and got out of the auditorium, the guy sat next to me.

-Was it hard to destroy those shoes? -he asked me.

-Sorry, I don't know what you are talking about.

-Jessie, I'm Lana's boyfriend, Frederic Matta, I don't know why are you doing this, but Lana thinks everyone is good, so she doesn't suspect about you.

-What do you mean?

-Do you know Lana a little bit?

I denied.

-As you may know she has a scholarship because she can't afford this academy due to not having that much money to buy her an entrance- I looked down. -her dad had an accident years ago, her mother had breast cancer. Her parents, before they died, couldn't be at home because they needed to work, so she lived her childhood with her grandparents, and now that she's here, you're ruining her dream just because you're insecure. -he got up. - I need to find her. - I said fearful and ashamed.

Now, it was the day of the competition, I was ready with my dance, so was everyone else, and it was my time to present the number I had rehearsed, while dancing I couldn't get the things Frederic told me about Lana out of my head. When I finished I got my phone out and called my mother to ask if I could go to Florida to dance, I couldn't continue in New York with this situation. She told me I could. I went straight to my house after the performance, I didn't stay for the results.

Like a week after the competition I was packing my things and heard a knock on my door. When I opened I was very surprised to see Lana with a lot of flowers on her hand and a big smile on her face.

-Lana? - I said- I thought you were mad at me.

She handed me a flowers.

-Yes, but I was angry before, I'm sorry for what I said to you that day, I didn't mean those words.- She said.

I felt so bad, I was the one supposed to say sorry because of how I treated her, how I sabotaged her studies, because of her shoes too.

-It's ok, darling.

"It's ok" seriously?!

-I mean, I know you didn't mean it, so it's okay. - I said trying to evade my remorse and my desire of asking her for forgiveness.

She smiled.

-Oh, by the way, I have an opportunity to dance in the Sydney Ballet School, isn't it great?!

-Actually, it´s amazing!

-I'm thrilled, well we have to say goodbye because I really have to pack, and I have to go to the airport like in an hour. I wish the best for you Jessie, I'm glad everything´s okay between us.

-Bye Lana.

I closed the door and sat down. I'm a bad person just because I was insecure and jealous of a great and amazing person.

Months passed and I was back in Florida, I was the best dancer, and there was a great presentation in which I got the solo, but the same day I was presenting my dance when I slipped and broke my spine."

-That's how I'm like this.

The kids and their parents clapped. Among them I saw someone I recognized, Lana Williams is here.

Afterwards, she came and talked to me.

-I didn't know that was the way you felt.

-How's everything going?

-Great, but Jessie, was that right? The way you treated me was because you were jealous and insecure?

-Yes, I wasn't happy when you came and took my spotlight, but now that I remember, I realized I was being a selfish person, I'm sorry about everything, Lana.

-It's ok, I guess you already paid your price. -She said pointing at my wheel chair.

-Yes, I did, can we be friends again?

-I think it would be a good idea.