

The Tryout

By Ayer V.

I was staring at the little black line on the screen blinking on and off. The only sound was the computer's fan. I felt so sweaty and tired. I was staring at that one, simple question: What do you want to be when you grow up? I had a lot of ideas, but none of them really stuck. For most people, this was the easiest question ever, but I just didn't know. I was so tired. I decided to take a break. It was 4th grade and I was currently doing online school because of the pandemic. I had been thinking of my future career for more than 30 minutes and then for the ten millionth time, my mom asked "Are you done yet?" All I wanted to do was be done. "Almost," I replied, even though I couldn't see an end anytime soon. There was still an empty screen, only with one little line, blinking on and off. Then this crazy idea popped in my head: I could be a drummer. I had always liked the idea of being in a band, but I just didn't know what instrument to play. But then I had it. I was so happy that I typed those 7 letters faster than I had ever typed before. I felt like I had never been that excited before in my life, and I was thinking of all the new possibilities and being like my favorite bands and traveling across the world on my tours. I thought that since middle schools have band and orchestra programs, I could join it and learn how to play percussion and get a head-start on drumming and starting my band. Little did I know, it wasn't that easy.

1 and a half years later (halfway through 5th grade) :

Me and my mom were driving to my future middle school. It was the tryouts to get into the percussion program, and I was so nervous and stressed out because I thought that this would make or break my career. I went inside, then walked to the stage where the tryouts were. It was dark and it took a bit for my eyes to adjust. It was a hot day, but it was cool in the auditorium, which mixed with the low light made an eerie vibe. I just had to do some simple beats on the snare drum and the vibraphone (which echoed even more in the empty auditorium), so I knew I had this in the bag.

"Do this rhythm. Perfect. Mm-hmm. Now add this. Ok, good," the percussion instructors said. I did everything they told me to do perfectly. I could tell that they thought that I was doing well and they might accept me, but then I told them that I didn't have a bell set or practice pad to practice at home with. At that point, I knew that there was less of a chance to get in just because my family had way less money than the rest of the kids trying out. Waited for like a week and then I finally got my answer: They rejected me. They emailed my mom and it said that they will not accept me because they thought that I wouldn't make a good percussionist because I couldn't provide the things that I needed for it. I was so bummed out, but then my mom cheered me up by saying that the drummers of my favorite bands probably were rejected all the time and also how Michael Jordan was cut from his high school team, which made me feel better.

Even after my mom's motivational speech, I still just *needed* to keep trying, so I figured I could try again next year. If I don't get accepted yet again, I'll just have to start saving up my allowance, penny by penny, to somehow, eventually get a drum set.