Dancing No Matter What

Fortunata sat in the third row, watching the dance performance. It would be four more unbearable weeks before her cast could come off and she would be able to dance again.

Then Fortunata’s sister Isabelle stepped out between the closed curtains. “Ladies and gentlemen, girls and boys,” Isabelle began, “the next piece is not on your program. It’s called ‘Dancing Sitting Down,’ and it stars all of you!”

A sudden buzz rippled through the entire audience. Isabelle continued, “Not everyone can dance like the girls and boys you’ve watched tonight, but you can move with the music.”

Now the audience was paying close attention, and people sat up in their chairs. Isabelle went on to explain that she and Phil were going to show the audience a few head, hand, and arm movements. “You will see,” Isabelle continued, “how dancers use their hands and arms, and how they move their heads can be as important to the dance as how they move their feet.”

The curtain opened and Phil stepped out of the wings, walking to the center of the stage, where a single stool sat. When he sat down, his back was to the audience. That way, as he demonstrated each gesture, he would be facing the same direction as everyone in the auditorium. Isabelle carefully explained every gesture as she taught it. Just about everyone took part, but many were not as graceful as Phil. Isabelle gave each movement a descriptive name, like “looking into the distance,” “waving good-bye,” and “head bent in sorrow.”

Finally, Isabelle said, “Now we’re going to put these movements together to music to tell a story. I will call out the name of each movement, and Phil will demonstrate each one.”

The whole audience danced sitting down, no one more enthusiastically than the little girl with the cast on her foot.