

# No One But You

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It was another normal day in Tossel City: A lot of cold, silence, and snow falling outside. Looking through the window, Olivia was drinking hot chocolate and wishing to play in the snow, instead of spending her time practicing the catwalk for a beauty contest she did not want to participate in. Luckily for Olivia, her father arrived from work at that time, and this meant that she could rest from a long day of her mother telling her what she should and should not do in the contest. Olivia preferred to spend time with her father since she had more fun with him than with her mother. On some weekends, he took her to a singing school without her mother knowing because she did not like Olivia doing something different than practicing for the contest. She really loved being there without her mother's pressure. That night, the Foster family ate pizza -Olivia's favorite food- despite the fact that Audrey, Olivia's mother, did not agree as it damaged the "figure" of the little pumpkin- that's what her father called her- for the classic city mid-winter beauty pageant.

The next day, Audrey took Olivia to tan. At the tanning center, they met Meredith and her mother. Meredith was the unbeatable girl who, since the age of 4, had consecutively won the "Little Miss Winter Tossel City" contest, which was the same contest that Mrs. Foster wanted her daughter to win.

-Audrey Foster? Is that you?

-Hello Gillian, it's me. – said the previously mentioned trying to hide her annoyance at the conversation. – How are you?

-Oh, I'm pretty fine darling! And this lovely girl is your daughter? – asked Meredith's mother.

-Yes, she's Liv and she's going to participate in Little Miss Winter Tossel City. – said Audrey trying to make Mrs. Blake jealous.

-Oh my god! Are you serious? My Meredith has won that contest for 5 years in a row, and we hope to win it again. – said Gillian pretending modesty. - But I see that this year we will have good competition. Good luck girls, see you in a week!

Meanwhile, the small but competitive Meredith looked at Olivia with contempt, who felt uncomfortable, but knew how to hide it by pretending that she ignored her. Likewise, she did not want to win the contest, and it would surely make Meredith happier than Olivia herself.

Thereafter, Mrs. Foster's nerves increased because there were only a few days left for the competition, and she feared that Olivia was not ready. So, the poor "little pumpkin" could not be saved by her father and spent the whole week practicing the catwalk with her mother. She had to stand on stage and practice her greetings, gestures, poses, and what she had to say. She also had to rehearse her dance routine, the one she was going to present at the talent show. Olivia made a great effort throughout the week to make her mother happy. She knew that ever since she was little, her mother had dreamed of participating in beauty pageants, but she never succeeded. So, it did not matter that this effort would cost her free time and happiness. Mr. Foster also knew how excited his wife was about the contest, that is why he tried to support her in any way he could and encourage her. However, he was also aware that this world of beauty contests was not comfortable for his "little pumpkin", and he was waiting for the right moment for his daughter to exploit her potential in the way she wanted and not what was imposed on her.

-Where is my little pumpkin? – said Hugh, Olivia's father, arriving from another workday.

-I'm here daddy! – answered an excited Olivia to see her father.

-I brought a chocolate milkshake, one of your favorites, because you worked so hard with your mother to win the contest, and I know that tomorrow you'll be the next "Little Miss Winter Tassel City".

-Oh, thank you so much dad! – Olivia said, a little worried and thinking if she was really going to win.

The expected day arrived and everything seemed to be going well: Olivia did not stumble at any time and her catwalk came out just as she practiced with her mother. Her lilac dress really dazzled the judges, and they seemed to like the charm of "little Liv" with her sweet almond eyes and beautifully groomed blonde hair, just like her mother's. Nevertheless, Mrs. Foster and Olivia began to get nervous and anxious because Meredith, as always, was captivating the judges and the public, especially with the stunning red dress she wore.

A few moments later, only the talent show was missing. Behind the stage were Olivia and her mother, just as the presentation of the unbeatable Meredith Blake was about to begin.

-How are you Liv? Do you want some water? Don't forget to smile throughout the presentation, that's what the judges like.

-Yes, mom, you have repeated it to me several times all these days ... – said an Olivia tired of this whole situation.

- And your dance steps, do you remember them? Don't forget! And if that happens, try to improvise, but don't let them realize that you forgot them, don't go still! - Audrey insistently reminded her daughter.

They watched Meredith's presentation together, in which she played Beethoven's For Elisa on the piano in a magical, masterful, and almost surreal way. When she finished playing, the audience cheered her on their feet, and it was not for nothing, she had done it very well. At that moment, Olivia forgot what she was doing there and the thought that she was going to disappoint her mother was getting bigger and bigger. After the presentation of two more contestants, it was finally Olivia's turn to present her dance routine.

-Now, let's welcome Olivia Foster! Her friends call her Liv. Remember that this is the first time at the beauty contest for this 9 year-old girl. She likes to eat chocolate and play with her dolls. – said the presenter of the contest, while Olivia entered the stage shyly and trying to give her best smile. - What are you going to do today? What is your talent?

-I-i-i'm going to dance... - she said with a trembling voice trying to hide her nerves.

- Ok, let's see Olivia Foster dance! Let's give her a hand of applause!

As planned, "Party In The U.S.A." began to resonate in the speakers of the place, but the "little pumpkin" was petrified. Just as her mother told her, she had forgotten the dance steps and the complete routine! She just stared in bewilderment at the public as disappointed judges waited for her to do something. Meanwhile, her mother was behind the scenes trying to resolve the situation. They told her that they were going to put the song back on so she could dance. When Olivia looked back at the audience, she saw her father with a grin from ear to ear holding a sign saying "You are the best!". During that eternal silence while "Party In The U.S.A." was playing again, a melodious voice was heard:

-I just want you clooose. - Everyone suddenly fell silent. - Where you can staaaay foreveeer, you can be suuuuure, that it will only get betteeer... - It was Olivia singing acapella!

Her father began clapping to the rhythm of "No One", motivating Olivia to continue singing. Her mother, behind the scenes, looked at her incredulously because she did not know about her daughter's talent! The excited audience clapped at the unexpected presentation with Mr. Hugh. Seeing this, Olivia began to sing with more force and security, while impressing the judges. Even an envious Meredith and her mother applauded with the rest of the people present there!

-And no one, no one, no oooooone, - she sang looking at her father and thanking him with her almond eyes, and inheritance of his own eyes. - can get in the way of what I'm feeling. No one, no one, no oooooone, can get in the way of what I feel for youuu, youuu, youuuu, can get in the way of what I feel for youuuu... - She sang the last lines of the song and everyone went crazy. Olivia just bowed and left the stage because she did not believe what she had just done.

- Oh my god! What was that Liv? Why didn't you tell me you knew how to sing? – Audrey asked her daughter.

- Don't bother her now, she did very well. – Hugh said to her arriving behind the scenes. - Congratulations my little pumpkin, you made it amazing! – He said while hugging Olivia tightly.

-Thanks daddy, I sang that song thinking about you... because I didn't know what else to do, I just forgot the whole dance routine! – said Olivia about to cry.

-No, no, no, Liv, honey, it's fine, you sing excellently and you know it, and we shouldn't have kept it a secret from your mother, much less to do something you didn't want, right, love? – Olivia's father said wanting to calm her.

-What? What are you talking about? Liv, didn't you want to dance? Why did you not tell me? If I had known, we would have practiced that song! – said Olivia's mother.

-Well, mom, I didn't really want to participate in the contest, I only did it for you, because I saw that you were very excited about it...

-Oh Liv, I thought you liked it too, but you should have told me! No one, listen to me, no one has to make you do something you don't want, the important thing is that whatever you do, enjoy doing it, ok honey? – Audrey hugged her daughter, and she never felt happier and more comfortable with her mother.

Moments later, they announced that the winner had been Meredith, and curiously, Olivia took second place. However, that day, the grand prize went to the Foster family.

**THE END**