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Roses Are Red, Hope is New

The world danced around her as she spun and allowed her body to take over. She willed her bare feet to forget the burning of the cement as she twirled. The streets and people going by in a blur, she barely noticed when each person tossed more coins into her raggedy open hat. She could feel each beat of her heart as a makeshift drumbeat to accompany her dance. Her blood raced through her veins with adrenaline like it did each time she danced, and she wished she could stay in that state forever. Not counting her money. Not sleeping on cardboard with her fourteen year-old stomach growling. But doing the one thing that gave her a reason to keep going; the thing that put meaning to her own name, Hope.

She continued dancing until her legs were jelly and her energy had dwindled down to its last drop. She slowly crouched down and gathered her hat to count up the contents: one dollar, a piece of bubblegum... She continued to sort through what was given to her, and buried beneath all of the trash, she found a twenty dollar bill that seemed to glisten in the evening light. She immediately pressed it close to her heart and silently thanked whoever was kind enough to give it to her.

Hope went to sleep that night feeling oddly rejuvenated. When she woke up in the morning, she continued her normal routine without complaint: Nibble on morsels of whatever food there was, dance for the majority of the rest of the day, and go back down the alley to finish off the day's meager amount of food. Each day, she collected the same treasure that caused her to feel blessed and thank God each time; one twenty dollar bill.

After a while, Hope was able to enter local stores and purchased blankets and other necessities that most took for granted. Each of the few times that she shyly set foot into the stores, she received questioning glares directed at the layer of filth covering her otherwise milky skin, and the holes that had appeared in her clothes. She took this as a sign of curiosity, rather than distaste.

One strangely peaceful morning after waking up, Hope headed directly to her dancing spot on the sidewalk.

Judging by the faded light the morning sun was giving off, and the lack of people roaming the street, Hope decided that it wasn't quite the usual time for people in her busy city to wake up.

She ran her fingers through her knotty brown hair that fell far past her shoulders, and using the rubber band around her wrist, threw it up in a messy

pony-tail. She carefully stretched out her muscles, and prepared to dance her way into the morning.

Taking a glance at the yellowing sky, she began playing a simple tune in her mind and creating flowing movements that matched the rhythm. Hope had always taken pride in her ability to spark her dancing without live music.

Her body started flowing with passion. All she wanted to do was let her mind take to the sky and put her body in control as soon as possible.

She wasn't sure how much time had passed when she finally halted her body in desperate need of oxygen in her lungs. She gulped the air into her mouth like it was water, and waited until she caught her breath. She scanned her surroundings to find the usual mid-day bustle, indicating she had been unconsciously dancing all through the morning. Her legs ached, but she had no desire to stop.

She decided to take a quick break from her hard exercise by looking through the contents in her hat. She felt herself getting excited about finding a seemingly brand-new twenty dollar bill like she had been each day. But as she felt to the bottom, her hand brushed over an unfamiliar feeling. She immediately looked down, finding what looked like a business card, and picked it up.

She held it up to examine it in the light of the burning sun, and using the skills her mother had taught her, she read the small print:

Faller's Dance Studio

Now Hiring Choreographer

1651 Lauder Street

Hope's heart jumped out of her chest and her breath caught short. She sat, crouched down, holding the card for a long while before she tried to make sense of it. Was it specifically meant for her? Did someone out there finally notice her dancing abilities? Did this mean she was going to get a job? She had applied for many in the past, but never had she actually ever had one...

All that day, Hope wondered and dreamed what it would be like to be hired as a choreographer. A real job! Her heart sped up each time she thought about it. After heartily pondering for as long as she could stand it she decided to visit the dance studio on the familiar street.

When Hope arrived, her shining brown eyes gazed upon the Faller's Dance Studio sign atop a medium-sized building. Her stomach throbbed, but not from the hunger she had come to know well, but from the nervous tingle her whole body was feeling.

As she opened the glass door, the feeling intensified as she didn't know what awaited her near future. Would she really have a job? Would she get money? Would she... after a while...maybe be able to live in an apartment? A house? These thoughts swarmed her brain, but she knew that whatever was to happen, she was doing what she loved, and giving a whole new meaning to her name in the process.