

BALLET SLIPPER

Written by

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EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

On an overcast day, A pink ballet slipper is thrown high in the air and stays there momentarily against the dark clouds.

FIVE SIX-YEAR-OLD GIRLS look playfully up at the sky; the girl in their midst looks up with an anxious face.

The chubby girl in the middle, YUMI (6), is wearing a tight tutu, which outlines her little stomach. Her chestnut hair was tied up, with some broken hair falling. Her chubby cheeks reveal a green apple-like bruise, and her dark brown eyes fill with tears.

Her brow locks up, and she jumps up with open hands to try to grab the ballet slipper. One foot is bare on the dirt; on the other is a pink slipper.

The ballet slipper falls. As her fingertips touch the front of the slipper, she almost gets pushed to the ground by the other girls.

Unfortunately, the ballet slipper was caught by the other girls, who kept throwing them around Yumi for fun.

YUMI

Give it back to me! Give it back to
me! Give it back to me!

A girl hangs upside down from a railing with a monkey mask on her face. Behind the girl are the other girls teasing Yumi.

The girls throw the ballet slipper high again. Yumi raises her arms to catch the slipper but slowly puts her arms down again. Yumi stares blankly at the sky as the other girls run away.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The class should have been a craft class, but MRS. WALSH is not interested in lecturing and looks so tired that she falls asleep on the table.

TWENTY BOYS AND GIRLS immediately begin their free activities.

The GIRLS sit around, with ANNA in the middle.

Anna (6), her pretty face and body the envy of all the girls, seems to be a natural "leader," always with a small group of followers behind her.

Anna takes a new ballet slipper from her pink bag, much more delicate than Yumi's previous one.

The girl behind Anna hands her a bottle of glue. Anna opens the glue and pours it into the new ballet slipper. A hidden smile leaks from the corner of her mouth, and the girls behind Anna also sneer and look at Yumi, who is folding butterflies with paper in the corner.

After Anna finishes, she turns behind her and faces the girls, gesturing with her hands, and the girls then gesture back with their hands, too.

As Yumi holds a newly crafted paper butterfly, she flutters it around her head, lost in her world of imagination. It's as if she envisions herself transforming into a butterfly, weightless and free from the ridicule she sometimes faces about her figure. As this thought crosses her mind, a smile spreads across her face, revealing her dimples. For a moment, the paper butterfly in her hand had transformed into a real one, fluttering around her head, encapsulating her in a world of make-believe.

Anna gently walks up behind Yumi and pats her. Yumi turns around in confusion and sees Anna and a new ballet slipper she holds. Anna hands the slipper to Yumi, who smiles in thanks and carefully takes it, wipes the mud off her left foot with a tissue, and puts the new one on.

YUMI
Aaaaaaaaaaa!

Yumi shows a painful expression as she tries to take the ballet slipper off her left foot, but the glue holds them tightly together.

Anna quickly runs back to her seat. The other girls see Yumi's painful appearance, and they all point their fingers at Yumi and laugh. The other kids in the class also notice and join them in laughing at Yumi.

Amidst the noise, Mrs. Walsh wakes up, pats the table, and the classroom is momentarily quiet. Yumi is still trying to remove her slipper, her hair soaking with sweat.

Mrs. Walsh looks at Yumi; Yumi senses the gaze and raises her head. Mrs. Walsh sucks her cheeks, and the veins on her forehead rise. Then, she looks at Anna angrily; Anna acts innocent, so Mrs. Walsh can't do anything with her.

Mrs. Walsh tries to help Yumi remove her ballet slipper. She keeps pulling it outward so hard that she tumbles onto the floor.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

TEN GIRLS happily play jump rope while Yumi sits on the ground with her back to them. Yumi turns her head to look at them, tears flowing from the corners of her eyes, and immediately turns her head back again, staring dully at the ballet slipper still on her left foot.

INT. BATHROOM

We see Yumi's ballet slippers under the bathroom stall. Anna thinks it's not interesting enough and pulls a red lighter out of her pocket. She holds it vertically in her right hand, rolls the metal spark wheel onto the red ignition button, and presses the red button to keep the flame burning.

As Anna walks to the restroom, Yumi flushes the toilet. Yumi pushes the door open, and Anna squats down and lights her ballet slipper. As the fire spreads quickly on the slipper, Yumi screams and runs out of the bathroom. The kids wave their arms and laugh loudly at Yumi.

EXT. LAKE

Yumi keeps on running till she reaches a lake. She gazes at the lake and rushes into it, her body slowly submerging by the water. When Yumi is irritated by the lake's cold water, she tries to scream, but nothing comes out. She struggles with her legs in the water, panicking.

As Yumi sinks deeper into the lake, her panic subsides, and she begins to feel weightless. She stops struggling and takes a deep breath, letting herself float in the cold water. The images in her mind slowly fade, replaced by the gentle movements of the water around her.

She looks up and sees a butterfly hovering above her, and she can't help but smile. The blue sky above her starkly contrasts the murky water below, and the sight brings her a sense of peace she hasn't felt in a long time. She closes her eyes and lets out a deep sigh, feeling the tension in her body release.

For a moment, she forgets everything else and enjoys floating in the water. She lets her arms and legs spread wide, feeling weightless and free. The water is still cold, but somehow it doesn't bother her as much anymore.

As she opens her eyes, she notices that the water around her has cleared up, and she can see the rocks and pebbles at the bottom of the lake.

Yumi stays there for a while, floating and watching the butterfly dance above her. She knows she can't stay forever, but for now, she's content to be in the moment and enjoy the serenity of the lake.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. BALLET CLASSROOM

Sunlight cuts through the ballet classroom.

In its sunlight, a group of lovely dancers appears, their skin crystal clear, beautiful, and pure.

The girls gently tiptoe around the wood floors, with smiles on their faces, as light and carefree as the air.

Yumi pauses momentarily, her face becoming worried, feeling someone looking at her. Yumi is scared but carefully turns her head over because she knows it is MRS WILSON.

Mrs. Wilson strolls through the doorway. Her hair, styled in a ballerina bun, starts at the thin neck. The skin on her chest stretches tightly over her sternum, the veins in her skin visible, and her muscles contracting as she moves. She looks like a demon about to devour Yumi, who stumbles backward, terrified until there is no way back.

Mrs. Wilson lifts her head proudly, her eyes looking downward at Yumi with disdain.

MRS WILSON

Yumi, you are too fat to learn
ballet is a stain on ballet. You
should give up. There's Swan Lake
in the ballets, but not "Pig Lake."

The other girls in the classroom laugh when they hear "Pig Lake." Yumi is embarrassed that her face turns red like an overripe apple, and she fights back the tears, but her eyes are still blurring.

The other girls, led by Anna, start pointing at her and calling her "Pig," Anna leans over the barre and looks at Yumi contemptuously. Yumi's breathing became rapid, and the giggles around her grew louder.

EXT. PLAYGROUND

Yumi tries to escape and run away, but when she runs to the playground, she is still chasing by Anna and the other girls.

The ballet slipper on her left foot was ripped off by them and thrown into the sky.

Yumi looks up to the sky, and everything becomes dizzy.

FADE TO BLACK.