

The Day I Swallowed A Lion's Roar

I was eating toast when it happened.

A lion was roaring on TV. He was ginormous. His mane looked like a fluffy golden mop.

"ROOOAAARRRR!"

The roar was so loud it rattled my plate.

Unfortunately, I chose that exact moment to yawn.

Gulp.

The roar flew straight into my mouth.

I sat there, shocked

"Mum," I said slowly. "I think I just swallowed that lion's roar."

Mum didn't even look up from her coffee.

"That's very nice, dear."

I wasn't so sure about that.

At school, Principal Higgins stood at the gate.

"Good morning, Tina!"

"Good mor-

ROOOAARRRR!"

His wig shot off his head and landed on the ancient oak tree.

For a moment, we froze.

Then Principal Higgins gazed up at the tree

I glanced up at the tree.

The wig stared back at us.

Somewhere behind my ribs, the roar gave a satisfied rumble.

My face turned red, I ran.

The rest of the day was disasterous.

When I sneezed in maths, every worksheet flew across the room like panicked birds.

The roar seemed incredibly pleased with itself.

When I laughed at recess, two kids almost fell off the bench.

By the end of lunch, everyone was calling me Lion Girl.

I sat hopelessly under the oak tree.

The wig was still up there.

"So, are you coming down?" I asked it.

The wig did not answer.

Neither did the lion roar inside me.

It just rumbled excitedly behind my ribs.

That evening, the school concert I had been longing for finally arrived.

The hall was crowded with students, teachers and parents.

I sat in the very back row with my mouth firmly shut.

No talking.

No laughing.

No sneezing.

And DEFINITELY NO roaring.

The roar inside me was clearly disappointed.

Everything was going perfectly until I noticed a spotlight wobbling.

Very slowly.

Very quietly.

Right above the year 1 choir.

Nobody seemed to notice.

My stomach twisted.

I could stay silent.

Or I could roar.

The spotlight tipped further.

I jumped to my feet.

"LOOK OUT!"

Except, it didn't come out that way

It came out as —

“ROOOOOOAAAAARRRRR!”

The roar blasted across the hall.

The spotlight swung sideways and crashed safely against the side wall.

The choir stopped singing.

Everyone stared at me and the spotlight.

Principal Higgins started clapping.

Soon the whole hall joined in.

As the applause thundered around me, I felt something stir inside my chest.

A warm feeling floated out of me and drifted away.

For a moment, I thought I heard it sigh sadly.

Then, the lion's roar was completely gone.

I cleared my throat.

“Uh... you're welcome?” I said.

My voice sounded normal.

It sounded perfect.

After the concert, Principal Higgins stood beside me.

“Good work, Tina,” he said.

Then he glanced at the oak tree.

His wig was still there.

“We'll... deal with that tomorrow.”

For the first time of the day, I laughed.

And thankfully, it sounded nothing like a lion.