

Amazing

The day started as any other day. I went out to the river to wash with all the other kids. Then I head to the berry patch with 6 other girls. When my basket was about halfway full I hear my name yelled “Ayita”! I look up and see it’s my mom’s friend Macha. I hear the urgency in her voice. I drop my berries and run toward her. As we run back toward camp she explains “Your dad is sick! Your mother is looking at him to try to find out what kind of sickness it is”. I run even faster. Soon my camp is in sight, I burst in and run straight for my teepee. What I see breaks my heart. My father is lying on the ground with red blotches all over his body. My mother is kneeling next to him. Something tells me he is not going to get better. I run to hug him but my mother holds me back. “Don’t touch him you could get the sickness too”. “What kind of sickness is it” I ask “I have no idea” I start crying again. Suddenly I hear shouts close to camp. I run out of the teepee with the tears still streaming down my face. I see everyone crowded around something. As I get closer I see it is my brothers friend Ashkil! He has the same expression of pain that my father had.

By the end of the day many people are sick. I go to sleep hoping that tomorrow will be better. I wake up in the middle of the night to crying. I looked up, it’s my mother. She was kneeling over my father who was lying very still. I knew he was dead. At first I was too sad to cry but after a few seconds the tears came. It was just then that my mother realized that I was awake. My crying woke my brother. All three of us cried together. I didn’t sleep that night.

That morning Chief Minao called a meeting. He sent 3 people out to look for medicine. The rest of the day was miserable. All of my thoughts were about Maska’s (my father) death and hoping nobody else would die. After a long day the funeral started. One by one the family's laid their offerings next to his body. Then my mother started to give his belongings away. When she

got to his canoe she said, "I think Maska would have liked Ayita to have his canoe". When I heard this I was so excited! I never thought that I would get one of his possessions let alone his canoe. I was excited to try it out but also sad that my father will never ride in it again.

The next morning is busy caring for the sick. By the time my mother called me to eat I was starving. Just as I started eating I heard a shout. "They are coming back" "Who" I yelled "The group that went out to get the medicine"! I start running toward the them. I guess that eating will have to wait.

After the sick got the medicine they started getting better. After about 2 days most people were better. Now that almost everyone was better I am finally getting a chance to go canoeing in my new canoe! As I step into the canoe my excitement grows. I start paddling down the river. It is so much nicer then others canoes I have been in before! I canoe for hours. After awhile my limbs start to get heavy and I start to get really tired. I paddle to the shore. I drag my canoe onto the shore and then everything goes black.

I wake up to really bad cramps all over my body. Then I hear a yell "she's awake"! I try to lift my head to see who yelled but it hurts to much. When my head falls back down I see my hand, it has angry red blotches on it! I have the sickness I think! I managed to look up, my brother and mother are running toward me. They both have worried looks on their faces. My last thought before I slip into darkness was what if I die.

When I wake up all I feel is pain. I call out and my brother comes in. "You're awake!" he says. "What happened" I ask "When you didn't come back by nightfall we went looking for you and found you by the river next to your canoe". I just realize that I am very thirsty "Can I have some uuuhhhhnn" A big wave of cramps just came over me. it lasts for about 10 seconds. Then after another 10 seconds it comes again "Uuuuhhhhnnn". This this time for about 20 seconds. I only get a 5 second break. "Uuuuhhhhnnn" "Uuuuhhhhnnn" This time it does not stop. "Uuhhhhnn" I hear a shout "She is getting worse"! "Uuhhh- then everything goes black.

When I wake up I realize that I am starting to feel better. I call to my mom to tell her that. She tells me "That's great". I wonder why she is talking quieter than normal. After a long night my mom brings me breakfast. She is talking even quieter than last night. As the days go on everyone seems to be talking quieter and quieter. Also I have been feeling much better. Soon I will be all the way better. One day I wake up and my mom very quietly says "Tomorrow you will be able to go back to regular stuff." I am sooo excited. I go to bed happy tonight.

When I wake up everything is quiet so I decide that it is still night and fall back to sleep. I wake up again a little while later When I open my eyes and light is streaming into the teepee. It's late in the morning! My brother is standing over me. His mouth is moving but no sound is coming out. Then I realize that I couldn't hear anything else ether. Then I realized why I couldn't hear anything. My brother realized it too. Soon everyone knows the big news: I Am Deaf.

I never knew how much I used my ears until I could not use them. Some of the older boys started teasing me. I don't know what they are saying but they dance around me and do other mean things. Of course they never do it when any adults are around but when ever I am alone with them they tease me. It feels like all I am thought of now is the deaf girl.

I still struggle to do normal stuff. One thing that is good though is my eyesight is much better than other people's now. One day I am helping cook dinner and I notice that Aslia's tummy is big. I realize that she is going to have her baby and soon!

One day I am picking berries with my mother, Asila, and a younger girl named Salali. Suddenly Aslia makes a little movement and holds her stomach. My mom motions she is going to have her baby! Then she says something to Asila. Aslia stands up and walks a couple steps and then falls. She clutches her stomach even harder with a look of pain on her face. Salali runs of in the direction of camp. My mom motions for me to help her carry Asila. We make a chair with our arms for her to sit on. When she gets on the first time I drop her. Luckily we were close

the ground but Asila looks really bad. She says something and I try to read her lips. I think she said something about her baby with a worried look on her face. My mom glares at me. On our second try I try to be more careful. This time we get her up. It is slow going but we start heading back to camp. About half way through Asila cringes. We put her down. I realize that Asila is having her baby now! We run around trying to make her more comfortable. My mother motions for me to give Asila some space. After a while my mother comes and taps on my shoulder. I follow her back and there is Asila holding a baby boy looking so happy. "What are you going to name him?" I ask. Asila writes in the sand YUMA. Just then Minao burst into the clearing. When he sees Asila and Yuma a smile comes over his face.

3 Years Later

The boys still tease me but life is better now I have made hand signals for words so now I can talk with people more. One day I was walking to camp when the boys that tease me jump out from behind trees laughing. They circle around me and stick their tongues out at me. I walk away thinking that someday I will have to show them that I am just as good as them.

One day after dinner everyone starts panicking. One girl is kind enough to signal Yuma is gone! Then Chief Minao says something. I think he is choosing people to go look for his son. He chooses Asila and 3 other people. I help gather food for Asila and the others. That night when I go to bed all I can think about is Yuma. He is only 3 years old and alone with no food or water. I wish I could do something to help him. Then I thought what if I go out and look for him. I may not be able to hear but I can see super good. I know that I had to do something to help Yuma. Also if I find him then maybe the boys will stop teasing me and show everyone else that a deaf girl can still do important things. I grab some food and quietly walk out of camp. First I go to the little meadow where the little kids like to play while their parents work. When I get there I see a path through the long grass. I follow it and it lets out in the woods. I realized how tired I am. Looking for Yuma will have to wait.

After a small breakfast I start out again. I follow a trail of small clues like bits of cloth on branches and little patches of smushed down grass, that I never would have noticed if my eyes were normal. When I was walking I came across a bramble patch that had 3 little bits of cloth on it and wet blood on the leaves! He must have scratched himself! Hopefully it was not bad. Now I have an easier trail of little dots of blood. I am going a lot faster now. Then I see a flash of color. I look back it's Yuma! I run to him. His mouth is open in a wail. I pick him up and try to calm him. I look down and see my shirt is covered in blood. It is coming from Yuma's arm! I grab my bag and run to the stream I saw earlier. When I get there I wash Yuma's arm off. I see that the cut is not bleeding any more but it is deep. I rip of the bottom of my shirt and wrap his arm in case it starts bleeding again. Then I give him some food from my blanket. I decide to rest. I wrap him in my blanket.

My feet are tired and I am hungry. I gave the last of my food to Yuma. Then I see someone through the trees. All of my tiredness is forgotten. I run toward him. I see it is my Mohe! He sees me and as we run toward each other I am so happy. As I hug him I remember, I am still holding Yuma. "Look" I say. As we walk back I feel happy. I found Yuma and now I am back with my brother.

When I get back to camp everyone is excited. Asila runs up and takes Yuma looking grateful. As I tell my story I can tell that I am no longer thought of as a deaf girl, but instead I am thought of as the girl that saved a child. When I am done telling my story my mom points at me and then writes one word in the sand. It says:

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