“Thud!” I laid spread eagled on the floor. All eyes were on me.flushing hotly, I struggled to stand up. With embarrassment staining my face, I wished that this misery would end soon.

Earlier on, I was at the back stage. It was the day of “Rosyth Got Talent” competition. My English teacher, Mrs Ng, had selected me to represent our class. She was also the school’s discipline mistress and always put on a brusque voice when speaking. It was unimaginable of me to utter a squeak of protest when I was chosen. Scanning around the area, I saw my fellow school mates closing their eyes, trying to memorise the scripts that they had prepared. A buzz of nervous energy was in the air. I could feel pressure building upon me. My face was tight with tension as I clenched and unclenched my fists. I knew that it was going to be a nightmare for me.

Deep down, I had a phobia of being on stage and did not dare to speak in front of a group of audience. I had once spoken publicly in front of a huge audience and it turned out to be horrible. From then on, I promised not to do that again.

“Hey Tim!” a voice came from behind, jolting me out of my thoughts.

It was Jerry, my best friend.

“Do your best and remember to take in deep breaths! I know you can do it!” Jerry’s encouraging words made me gain a little confidence.

Then, I started shuffling through my script and read them out to myself. At the same time, my heart was thumping wildly. Just when I was worried that I would be called up, Mrs Ng came in and told me to get ready to go on stage. Upon hearing that, I smiled weakly at her. I could feel butterflies in my stomach. I wished this ordeal would end soon.

“Let’s invite our next speaker Tim Lim!” the emcee announced.

Taking a deep breath, I trudged up the stage and found myself facing hundreds of people. Finally, I was in the middle of the stage. The applause had now died down and there was pin-
drop silence in the air. I could feel hundred pairs of eyes piercing into my soul. My hands were clammy and my lips quivered. I stood there helplessly as fear took control of my entire being.

All of a sudden, I felt the hall began to whirl. Just then, my eye caught sight of a friendly face in the crowd. It was Jerry. He was smiling at me and giving me a thumbs-up sign.

Mustering all my courage, I took a deep breath and began, “Good morning Teachers and Friends…”

Then, I paused abruptly. To my horror, I realized that my mind was in a blank. I could not remember my script. I shuddered in fear, not knowing what to do. I started retreating backwards. Suddenly I tripped on the wire of the microphone and fell face first onto the ground with a loud thud.

“Ahh…” I grimaced in pain. At the same time, the microphone dropped and hit the ground, producing a loud annoying sound. The audiences quickly covered their ears and looked pissed off. Flushing hotly, I stood up. My face was as red as a beetroot. I told myself that I had to overcome my fear. I had to. I picked up the microphone from the floor and started speaking.

Finally, after what seemed like an eternity, my speech came to an end. As I made my way down the stage, I heaved a sigh of relief. I could hardly believe that I had managed to complete my speech. Jerry quickly rushed up to me and gave me a hi-five and chirped, “See, I told you, you can do it!” A sense of pride beamed in me.

An hour later, the results were announced. Expectantly, I did not win but it did not matter to me at all. I was elated that I had managed to overcome the challenge of stage fright and conquered my fears to do what I thought was impossible.