

Vocal Remedy

By:

Da'Kharta Rising

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~One~



“All right, settle down. Settle down. First I would like to thank everyone for trying out for the competition. If you see your name on the sheet of paper on the bulletin board, it means you made the cut. If not, better luck next year. Good luck to everyone.”

Mr. Choice's eyes surveyed the room but his eyes seemed to linger on a few individuals in the center of the chorus room. Janelle tossed her brunette hair back and gave an Oscar winning smile. My dark gray eyes met his, and I nodded in acknowledgment.

Everyone waited until Mr. Choice left the room. A mad dash ensued towards the bulletin board. In my opinion, there was no need to rush. I would save myself the aggravation of physical contact and unpleasant body odors.

Jenkins tapped the back of my shoulder. “You're not the least bit interested in whether you made the cut?”

“I'm just being patient, Jenks. Waiting until the mob has dissipated.”

“I feel you. I know I didn't make it any way. My singing voice sucks. I only joined this class because I was trying to dodge gym.”

Soon, we heard a noise. It was a mixture of a choked sob and sizzling fury. Janelle's green stiletto heeled boots reverberated in the room. As she grabbed her books, I walked towards the bulletin board.

There I was, Vaser Adamson, near the top of the list: number three to be exact.

“Man, that's what up!” Jenks responded, giving me a congratulatory slap on the back.

“Thanks, man. I'll catch you later.”

Janelle stood beside me. Tears were freely flowing. The mixture of green and silver mascara was now messy globs that stained her cheeks. I felt bad for her. She was one of the most talented singers in the class.

“I don't understand. How could he *not* choose me? My rendition of 'You're Gonna Love Me' was spot on!”

I mumbled, “He's not part of your team.”

Before she had time to process what I had said or meant, I walked away.

~Two~



I knew the pitch and delivery of the songs already, yet I had to find a way to be alone with Mr. Choice. That would be the only way things would fall into play. The plan was formulated a long time ago. This was my last resort. I had kept things to myself for so long, but when all had been revealed, Justice had not been my friend.

This had to be rectified but doing things too soon would be suspicious. Time would be a most precious ally.

“Vaser what is wrong with you?” Mr. Choice grumbled. “You performed this song perfectly a week ago. Now you act like you don't know the words!”

I shook my head in bewilderment.

“I'm sorry Mr. Choice. I'll practice on it some more at home. It'll get better, I promise.”

The rest of the selected group sensed Mr. Choice's displeasure. At times, he seemed outright angry.

“Mr. Choice, give him a break!” Sally surmised. “Vaser is just nervous about the competition.”

“If he is that nervous in front of his peers, then we don't have a shot in hell in winning the competition! We have a really good chance of taking home first place. It will be well deserved money for the music department, and our school will be on the map. There is no room for any mistakes, so none of you are in any position to tell me when to give someone a break!”

There was dead silence. Mr. Choice pointed at the door, signaling dismissal.

“All except for you, Vaser.”

Mr. Choice waited until everyone was down the hall before shutting both doors. He scratched at his five o'clock shadow and paced the floor back and forth.

“Well, Vaser?”

I allowed just enough quiet to gauge concern before proceeding.

“My parents have been arguing a lot, even contemplating divorce. I've been so focused on that; my heart just hasn't been into singing. I'm sorry. The last thing I want to do is to let the group down. Or you.”

He walked over and folded his hand over mine.

“I shouldn't have lashed out at you, Vaser. I had no idea there were troubles at home-”

“No Mr. Choice, I don't blame you. You are right to expect the best out of us. You picked me because you think I am one of the best. Let me prove myself to you.”

Mr. Choice nodded. “Since home is proving to be a distraction, would you be open to practicing one-on-one?”

“You mean here, after school?”

“Yes, after school, Vaser but not here. I also teach Music Theory at the local community college. We can use the rehearsal hall there and not be disturbed.”

I smiled. “That sounds like a terrific idea. When can we get started?”

“Don't you want to run it by your parents first?”

“Mr. Choice, my parents are so caught up in their own drama, they don't even notice me anymore. If it's for school they won't say anything.”

Mr. Choice placed the rest of his music sheets in his leather briefcase and closed it shut.

“I have classes there on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30-5:15. How about we meet up at six?”

“Perfect,” I responded and shook Mr. Choice's hand. “Thank you so much for being understanding. I'll be back in competition shape in no time.”

~Three~



I slowly but surely improved in the coming weeks. Mr. Choice was successfully convinced that the extra lessons were helping and maintained the suspicion that things were horrible at home. However, I needed certain elements of my plan to accelerate faster. I had to find some way to raise the ante.

I picked up the phone.

“What's good, Vaser?”

“Hey Jenks, remember when you said you owed me one for that situation I helped with a while back.”

“Yeah man, what about it?”

“I'm cashing it in. Meet me at our usual spot.”

“Vaser is everything all right?”

“Man, everything is good. Just meet me at the spot. I'll tell you everything.”

--later that day--

“Class, has anyone seen Vaser?”

“No,” Janelle said. “He and I take English together, and he wasn't there.”

Mr. Choice bit his bottom lip. It wasn't like Vaser to miss classes. Mr. Choice conducted class as he normally would while trying to hide his anxiety and worry. It was a relief when the bell rung.

He was removing the rest of the black Sharpie ink from the dry marker board when someone tapped him on his shoulder.

“Jenks, you startled me! I thought everyone had gone.”

“I know what happened to Vaser but please don't say anything. I don't want any trouble.”

Mr. Choice felt conflicted. On one hand he didn't want to make the promise, yet he needed to know Jenks' information.

“No one will know you told me.”

Jenks then proceeded to tell Mr. Choice what had happened to Vaser.

“Is he okay?”

“Vaser's ego is a bit bruised up but he'll live. He still wants to practice that new song added for the competition. He told me you would know what that means.”

Mr. Choice nodded. “Tell him I will see him soon.”

Once Jenks made it outside, he pressed number two on his speed dial.

“Yeah?”

“It's done.”

~Four~



This is one of those times I'm glad Mother Nature didn't lie. For the past two weeks, the meteorologist kept hinting we were in for a major storm. However, each time the storms would go around us or in an entirely different direction.

The rain was pouring and winds had begun to pick up speed. The bus driver looked at me in alarm.

“Are you sure you want to travel in *this*? I may not be able to come back for you if they call a State of Emergency.”

“I made a promise to someone and I don't want to let him down.”

The bus driver shook her head. She knew she wasn't going to be able to talk me out of my travels.

“Very well; save your fare. This must be a very important person if you are willing to risk your life.”

--back at the community college--

Mr. Choice knew he should have canceled the meeting. He didn't think the town would actually get the storm. Plus, he had been worried about Vaser. He *had* to see him. But would Vaser show up? Did Vaser want to see him just as much?

Mr. Choice looked at his Seiko watch. It was 6:45. Vaser had never run this late. Maybe he was foolish for expecting Vaser to come. Mr. Choice started to pack his things but then glanced out the window. One could not see the markings of the road for all of the water. The area was beginning to flood. It was too late. It was better for him to stay put.

He heard the creak of the door. His jaw dropped in disbelief.

“You made it!”

“I didn't want to disappoint you, Mr. Choice.”

~Five~



Vaser's shoes squeaked as he went down the steps. There was a hood covering his head. Vaser took his blue umbrella and laid it across one of the peach plastic chairs. Mr. Choice grabbed each side of Vaser's hood and slowly lowered it.

Vaser heard Mr. Choice sharply inhale. The deep purple bruises around Vaser's left eye and the scratches around his mouth were brilliantly stark against his pale skin.

“Who did this to you?”

No answer.

“Vaser, *who* did this to you?”

“Look, I don't want to talk about it. I just want us to do the lesson.”

Mr. Choice started to say more but then stopped. He pulled out the music sheets. When he turned back around, Vaser was shaking.

“I deserved it anyway...”

Mr. Choice walked over and kneeled in front of Vaser.

“No you didn't, Vaser. You are very smart and talented.”

Mr. Choice's fingers ran the length of my bruised eye. His right fingertips smelled of shea butter and Marlboro Menthols. I permitted my lips to touch the inside of his wrist. Mr. Choice sighed upon the slight contact. His left fingertips grazed the small cuts surrounding the side of my upper lip. My lips parted and his left forefinger slid inside. When it did, my tongue traced the fingernail.

I draped my arms around Mr. Choice's neck. The smell of Cool Water cologne and aftershave infiltrated my nostrils. The smoothness of his skin tingled against my own. It had been a while since he had been bare faced, even longer since he had worn the scent.

“I'm glad to have someone who believes in me,” I whispered against his ear. “There is something I want to give you.”

I reached into my book bag and pulled out the black box.

“Vaser, I don't think I can take this-”

“Mr. Choice, you've been so patient with me. Please accept this as a token of my appreciation. I will accept no refusals.”

“Very well Vaser, if you feel that strongly about it.”

Mr. Choice opened it and his eyes glowed happily. I knew he had a thing for crosses, and that his favorite colors were black and red. The cross was adorned with antique markings and a huge red ruby sparkled in its center.

“Wow, I don't know what to say. This is magnificent Vaser!”

I took the cross out of the box and fastened it around his neck. Mr. Choice's lips grazed my neck before moving upwards to partake of my lips. I yielded to his advances.

“Vaser I've missed you so!”

“I've missed you also.”

Mr. Choice directed my hand lower. I knew before my hand reached its destination he was rock hard for me—just like old times.

“Unzip me, Vaser.”

“Slow down,” I whispered. “It's been so long. I would love it if you would do me first.”

I unbuttoned and unzipped my True Religion jeans. Mr. Choice smiled at my decision to arrive sans underwear as well as sans hair.

“No restrictions. A smooth canvas,” crooned Mr. Choice. “I'm going to savor this. It's been *way* too long.”

Hmm, I thought to myself, *maybe I had been special*. I thought after all this time, there had been others. Knowing that still did not deter me.

Mr. Choice's tongue traveled up and down my hairless pelvis. My fingers wrapped around the end of the cross and pressed the center of the ruby. The head of my shaft pulsed in anticipation.

“Partake of me,” I groaned. One hand grasped the top of his hair while the other hand tangled its fingers around the thick rope chain of the cross.

At first Mr. Choice just gingerly sucked the head.

“Vaser...” he moaned.

“Don't be shy. You know how I like it.”

My tool became lost in his mouth. With each motion, I groped the rope chain tighter, causing the cross

to ride higher until it was just below his Adam's apple. Mr. Choice was lost in this forbidden pleasure, and he mistook the gleam in my eyes for being the same.

“Enjoy, for this is your *Last Supper*.”

As Mr. Choice's lips once again met the base, I pulled the rope chain with maximum force and used my other hand and my inner thighs to keep him in place. Tiny streams of red trickled down the cross and dribbled on the cold black floor.

I carefully ejected my deflated pole from his mouth and removed the cross. I placed it back in the black box and prepared myself for departure.

It had stopped storming but the water was still relatively high. It was still too risky for anything with wheels to be on the road. I wasn't worried. It was just water, and besides, I knew how to swim.

The End

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