



LUZE
AND THE
STAR

VICKI C. HAYES



MEET THE



Zuze

Age: 12

Proudest Moment: singing a solo in her school choir's concert

Bedroom Decor: posters of pop stars

Future Goal: to be lead singer in the most famous rock band ever.

Best Quality: quick to forgive

CHARACTERS



-Reya-

Age: 12

Proudest Moment: getting straight As in school last year

Playlist: filled with emotional ballads

Wants to Become: a poet and a lawyer

Best Quality: logical

1 CLASS TRIP

It was 2222. Zuze was happy to be in her seventh-grade music class. Music was her favorite subject. This year's class was extra fun. Her friend Reya thought so too. They chatted while waiting for class to start.

Their teacher was Ms. Cleff. Both girls loved her. They thought she gave the best assignments.

Ms. Cleff started class. Zuze was excited. *What will we do today?* she wondered.

“We are going to start a new project,” Ms. Cleff began. “Each of you will write a



paper. It will be about a singer or music group. The choice is yours. But whoever you pick must be from the past.”



Zuze turned to Reya. “A paper?” she whispered. “We don’t do those in here.”

Reya shrugged. “I like to write. Plus, Ms. Cleff hasn’t finished. She might add something you’ll like.”

Zuze couldn’t wait. She raised her hand.

Ms. Cleff pointed at her. “Yes, Zuze?”

“Is there anything else we can do?” Zuze asked.

The teacher looked curious. “What do you mean?”



“Music is all about rhythm. The beat draws you in. A paper won’t show that.”

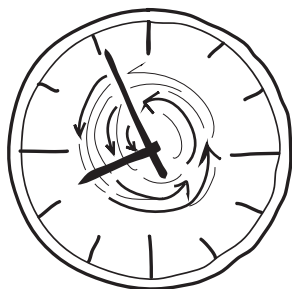
Ms. Cleff smiled a little. “Well, the paper is important. I want you to do some music research. But I do have more in mind.”

Zuze’s cheeks turned warm. “Oh. Sorry to interrupt.”

“It’s okay.” Ms. Cleff turned to the class. “Zuze is correct. Music is more than words. The lyrics can be important. But music is an experience. So we won’t just be writing.”

Zuze perked up. What did their teacher have planned?

“We’re going to take a trip.” Ms. Cleff’s eyes sparkled. “It will be through time.”



We’re going
back in time!



Zuze was thrilled. This would be her first trip through time. Her thoughts raced.

She raised her hand again.



Ms. Cleff called on her. “Yes?”

“Are we going to see the singers in person?”

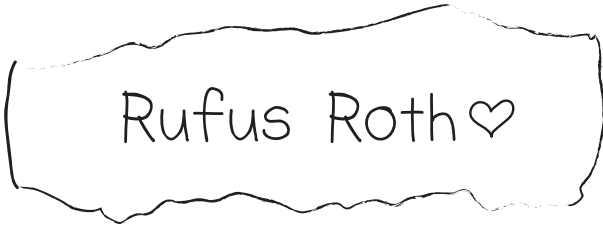
The teacher nodded. “We are. Time traveling allows that.”

Zuze whispered to Reya. “I love old music.”

“Me too,” Reya whispered back. “And we get to go back in time. That’s a first for me.”



“Same here.” Zuze began to daydream. She thought of her favorite singer. *Maybe we can visit Rufus Roth.*



Ms. Cleff continued. “We’ll see five singers or groups perform. There will be one concert for each. Who are the performers? That will be up to you.”

Zuze leaned over to Reya. “How will we get it down to just five?”

Reya shrugged.

Ms. Cleff turned on the hologram projector. “Please take out your tablets. Type in your favorite singer or group from



the past. Then hit enter. Your entries will appear on the hologram.”

“This is so cool,” Zuze said. “Ms. Cleff is amazing.”

Reya agreed. “She’s the best!”

Students quickly sent in their choices. Images of colored balls showed up on the hologram. Each one was a student’s entry. The balls bounced around. They moved too fast to read.

Reya looked at her friend. “I know the name you sent in. Rufus Roth, right?”

Zuze nodded. “You got it. Rufus is the greatest singer ever. He was a true star.”

Ms. Cleff had a remote. She pressed a button on it. A ball jumped forward. Then a name appeared beside it.

“Bronx Moon,” Ms. Cleff read aloud.

Some kids cheered.



Ms. Cleff pressed the button again.
“Riker 5.”

There were more cheers.

The teacher continued with the picks.
“Ayza.”

Reya clapped her hands. A few others
shouted gleefully.

Zuze smiled. She was happy for her
friend.



At least
Reya is
happy.

“Number four is Talon,” Ms. Cleff said.

After that, Zuze started feeling sad.
Maybe Rufus Roth wouldn't get picked.

Zuze really wanted to see him. She
crossed her fingers and arms. Then she
tried to cross her toes.



Reya looked at her. “What are you doing?”

“Helping Rufus Roth get picked. . . I think.” Zuze was working on crossing her eyes.

Ms. Cleff read the last name. “Rufus Roth.”

Zuze uncrossed everything. “Yes! It worked!”



2 RULES

Ms. Cleff smiled. “How many of you have time traveled before?”

Only a few students raised their hands.

The teacher looked around. “I see. Many of you have never done this. But I bet you know the rules. There are four. Who can tell me what they are?”

Zuze’s hand shot up first. Ms. Cleff called on her.

“We only travel into the past. No one goes into the future. . .” Zuze paused. “Yet.”

Time
travel:



Ms. Cleff nodded. “Yes, past only. We may never be able to visit the future. What’s another rule?”

“The people in the past can’t see us,” a boy said. “They can’t hear us either.”

“Right. We could stand close to them or even yell. They wouldn’t see or hear us. What’s a third rule?” Ms. Cleff called on a girl.

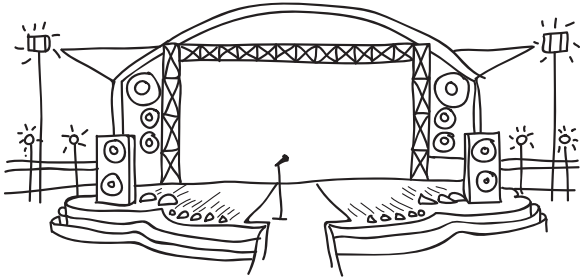
“We can’t make changes.”

“Very good,” Ms. Cleff said. “Sometimes people want to change the present. A few have tried to do that by changing past events. It doesn’t work. But what *should* we do? Someone tell me the last rule.”

“Watch and listen,” Reya said.

Ms. Cleff nodded. “You’re right. We’re there to observe. That is all.”





Zuze leaned closer to Reya. “This will be the best class trip ever.”

Reya grinned. “I’m so excited.”

Ms. Cleff continued. “Please take notes at each concert. Your favorite singer or group will be the focus of your writing. But I want you to mention the others we visit too. You’ll write your papers in class.”

“I can’t believe it. I’m going to see Rufus Roth,” Zuze whispered. “He’s the best singer ever.”

Reya shrugged. “He’s good. But Ayza is better.”



“Ayza is fine,” Zuze said. “But I like Rufus’s music more. He sings my favorite song of all time.”

“What song is that?” Reya asked.

“‘Susie Girl,’ of course!”

Reya rolled her eyes. “I wonder why. . .”
She giggled.

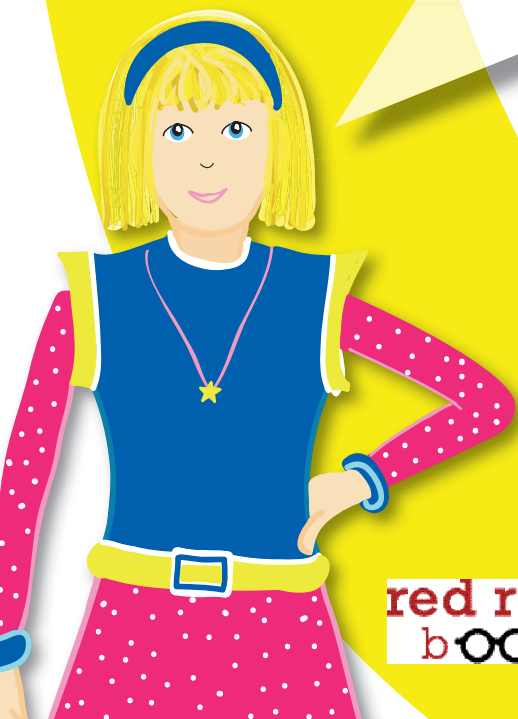
“It’s not just for the reason you’re thinking. Yes, I love that ‘Susie’ sounds like Zuze. But it’s a fun song too. The words are so happy.” Zuze started to daydream again. “Susie must have been a special girl. I bet she meant a lot to Rufus.”

“Maybe,” Reya said.



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Sure, I'm from the 23rd century. But my favorite music is not!



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