**IRMA**

**The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience? (650 words)**

They say there’s a rainbow after the rain. But why isn’t there one after my rain? I failed not once but twice in a row.

For the very first time in my ballet career, I failed to get into the final round of a national tournament that I always managed to achieve since 2016. I didn’t get into the finals of Dance Prix Indonesia Competition in 2018 when all my friends got in. I cried, not only because I was disappointed with my performance, but also because my pride got bruised. However, I quickly picked myself up and participated in the World Ballet Grand Prix Competition 2019 in Singapore. And guess what, I failed again. I broke into tears when I couldn’t find my name in the finalists list. This time, I felt that the world had crumbled upon me. I asked myself ”why” countless times. Even worse, I was the only one who failed to enter the final among my friends. Not only have I failed myself, this time I also failed my coach who had put me as the first seed from our team. Where is my rainbow? Why did I still fail when I tried so hard? For the first time in my life that night, I experienced what it meant to not be able to sleep.

Waking up the next morning, it felt impossible to leave my bed. However, while staying up all night, I had the time to reflect. I thought of my competitors who I had beaten in the past. Where were they? They were in the finalists list today. I guess they pushed themselves to try again and again. That day, I still had to perform in the closing ceremony despite having nothing to aim for at that point. I could be cranky and run away from my responsibility. However, I chose to show up, finishing my last responsibility as a contestant. Not only performing in the closing ceremony, but I also tried to have a bigger heart by cheering my friends for their final performance. As someone with pride as high as the sky, swallowing it was the most difficult thing I’d had to do. Surprisingly, I was able to do all of that despite my broken heart. I realized that by dragging my feet, I was being full of myself. I didn’t deserve the victory, I had to earn it.

The next journey was just as exhausting as a battle. Fighting the insecurity on my ability to come back stronger. Without hesitation, I promptly entered another national competition in the following month, I knew that it was a point of no return. I reminded myself of why I dance in the first place – for my passion, not for the medals. I fell in love with ballet when I was 10 years old, and I stayed in love despite my failures. I practiced almost every day for a month, took various extra practice classes on my day offs. Reviewed my performance after practice, listed all the corrections given by my teacher, and fixed every detail and technique that I was lacking. Resilience and perseverance were the key to win this fight. Building up my confidence and spirit was challenging, but that didn’t stop me from fighting. What I truly learned wasn’t just resilience, it was humility and patience.

 Eventually, I started to see my rainbow. All the sweat and struggles paid off in Dance Prix Indonesia Competition 2019. I did it! I got into the finals! I have never been more grateful to enter the finals, when maybe others who succeeded thought that it was just the bare minimum. “Coming back stronger” has no instant result, you just keep moving forward, even in your failure. I guess the adage of rainbows after a rain is true, I was just wrong about how long the rain lasted.