

LEVELED BOOK • M

I'm the Small One



**Multi
level
J•M•P**

Written by George Anthony Kulz
Illustrated by Begoña Corbalán

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Focus Question

What does the main character learn about herself in this story?

Words to Know	
audience	gaping
audition	limbs
deliver	perks
dramatic	rehearsals
emerged	

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 Level M Leveled Book
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Correlation	
LEVEL M	
Fountas & Pinnell	L
Reading Recovery	19
DRA	24



I'm smaller than everyone else my age. In the halls at school, the bigger kids sometimes bump into me or step on my toes. "Sorry, Sophie—I didn't see you," they say.



At the playground, little kids
always want to play with me.
Some even try to boss me around.

“Don’t climb up that big slide, little
girl,” one kindergartner warned
me last week. “You might fall and
hurt yourself.”

“I think I’ll be okay,” I said.

She watched me slide down, her mouth **gaping** open.





My best friend, Casey, is one of the tallest kids in second grade. Her legs are so long that when she walks, I have to jog to keep up with her.

Sometimes grown-ups ask her, “Who’s your little friend?” And one day while I was over at Casey’s house, her grandma thought Casey was babysitting me!



I used to try to make myself taller. I hung from the tree in our backyard to stretch out my **limbs**. I even ate my vegetables—all of them—but I never seemed to grow.





“Don’t worry,” Mom said. “Being small has its **perks**.”

Did it? I’d never noticed any.

One day, Mrs. Alvarez told the class that we'd be putting on a spring play.

I practiced all the lines before the **audition**, but I never got a chance to **deliver** them. As soon as I walked onstage, Mrs. Alvarez cried out, "Sophie! You'll be perfect as the elf! You're just the right size for the costume."





When the auditions were finished, Mom was waiting outside for me.

“Mrs. Alvarez made me an elf,” I grumbled. “I don’t want to be in the play anymore.”

“Oh, honey,” she said. “I know you didn’t get the part you wanted, but I also know you love acting. I’ll bet you’ll be the best elf in the play.”

That won’t be hard to do, I thought, since I’m the only elf in the play.

Mia got the lead role—a girl walking through a fairy forest in search of her lost dog. In the last scene, she finds a box under a giant mushroom. When she opens it, guess what jumps out?

Mrs. Alvarez’s dog, Prince, played the dog role. She brought him to all the **rehearsals**. He liked all the kids, but he seemed to like me best.



The night of the show, my first line came early: “Let’s ask the Fairy Queen!”

Dramatic stuff.

At the end, when Mia opened the box, Prince jumped out as planned. He jumped into the giant mushroom, though, which fell over. Then he leaped off the stage and disappeared underneath it.





Mrs. Alvarez called him, but he whimpered and refused to come out.

The lights came on in the theater, and the **audience** started to fidget in their seats. The entire class gathered at the edge of the stage.

“How are we going to get him out of there?” Mrs. Alvarez asked.

“I’m small enough to squeeze under there,” I said. “I’ll get him.”

I crawled through the dust and the cobwebs beneath the stage until I reached Prince. As I talked to him softly, he licked my face.





When we **emerged** together, the audience clapped and cheered. In fact, we got more applause than the stars at the end of the show. My parents were proud, and so was I.

After that, I stopped worrying so much about my size. In fact, I decided that Mom was right: being small has its perks.

Glossary

audience (<i>n.</i>)	a group of people gathered to see and hear a performance (p. 13)
audition (<i>n.</i>)	a performance done as a tryout for a new role or position (p. 9)
deliver (<i>v.</i>)	to say something to a group of people, often in a formal or dramatic manner (p. 9)
dramatic (<i>adj.</i>)	sudden or exciting; full of action or emotion (p. 12)
emerged (<i>v.</i>)	came into view; came out (p. 15)
gaping (<i>adj.</i>)	open wide (p. 5)
limbs (<i>n.</i>)	arms, legs, or wings (p. 7)
perks (<i>n.</i>)	special benefits that come from a job or particular situation (p. 8)
rehearsals (<i>n.</i>)	repeated acts of practicing for a performance (p. 11)

I'm the Small One

A Reading A-Z Level M Leveled Book

Word Count: 580

Connections

Writing and Art

Draw a picture of yourself.

Label the picture with at least five things you like about yourself.

Math

Measure the height of some classmates.

Record their heights and put them in order from shortest to tallest.



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