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*Dance with Your  
Heart*

*Tales and poems That the Heart Tells*

*Shirley Cheng*

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To the dearest woman in the world, my beloved mother, Juliet Cheng, who is the wind beneath my wings, lifting me high till I touch the stars.



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## Preface

In a book, many tales are told, with stories that speak out, words that paint pictures. The pictures are priceless, never could be sold. Travel in worlds never discovered before and think thoughts never imagined, ever. Do not be shy; let your feelings run free. Have a laugh, have a chuckle; shed a tear or two. You will never know what simple words can do to you.

The following pages hold never before told tales and poems written by a young heart. Let your imagination run wild; do not tie it down. Relax your mind, body, and spirit. But above all, never let your heart stop speaking—you will miss out in life if you do. Instead, dance with your heart and let it guide you. The heart is the window to the world. See not with your eyes but with your heart. Open your soul and discover the true happiness life has to offer everyone.

Fables, myths, and fairy tales are enjoyed by everyone, young and old alike. Therefore, do not leave out any one. Take a seat in your favorite chair or snuggle cozily in bed. Turn to any story or poem you like. Now, begin your journey into fantastical worlds. Remember to never stop dreaming. Let the stars be your guide. Never let fear bind you. Be free.

# Spectrum Unity

## Chapter One

Violet and yellow wildflowers swayed in the gentle breezes amongst tall, green grass. Yonder, on the lush, rolling hills stood giant, majestic trees, their branches hung with rich pink fruits. Small specks of colors darted about the wide meadow silently, seeking little pleasures that nature had to offer. Swiftly, one butterfly, sporting blue specks, fluttered over to a red tulip and alit upon it, folding its delicate wings. Suddenly, it opened its wings and flew away as laughter became audible from off in the distance. A small voice was heard, but words were unintelligible at first. Giggles from another source followed. "I don't think she can find us now!" whispered a slender, but short, figure. Although the words were low, her enchanting voice floated between the trees and ruffled the leaves. Her eyes twinkled as she hid behind a tall bush.

"Yelana, you were trailing some yellow behind you! Surely Pamela will find you!" her companion hissed between her lips, her orange hair flying in the wind.

"Silly Orcella! Don't you see? I left some yellow in places that were far from where we are. She will follow a false trail. It's not my yellow that she will find—your orange hair is

getting quite wild." Orcella quickly gathered her hair and twisted it together with some flowers to form a coil on her head.

"What are you two doing here in the middle of the day when you were supposed to be adding colors to the world?" a voice scolded, appearing abruptly, startling the two figures.

"The world has enough colors. We just want to enjoy the day," explained Orcella. Yelana giggled beside her.

"Yes, there are certainly enough colors, Rose," Yelana said, looking straight into two fiery eyes.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourselves. You can surely add more yellows. It is our duty, as the goddesses of colors, to add colors to the world. Father will not like it when he finds out!" fumed Rose, folding her arms.

"If he finds out," Yelana pointed out.

"I think Rose is right. Let's get to work. We wouldn't want to make father unhappy. Plus, I think I ought to add more orange flowers. There are so few of them," said Orcella. "We'd better find Pamela and tell her the game is over."

"Over for now," pouted Yelana, disappointed, but her eyes still danced with mischievousness. "Rose, you're always the boss just because you're the oldest." She received a glare from the red goddess.

The three color goddesses gracefully

moved westward to their palace, trailing colors of yellow, orange, and red behind them.

## Chapter Two

"Daughters, I have an important announcement to make." The supreme being stood before the line of colors that afternoon. His eyes moved from his eldest daughter, Rose, to Orcella, then Yelana, whose eyes were focusing elsewhere, obviously dreaming of a devious prank. "Where is Pamela? I must have all seven of you here."

"She is always tardy," commented Rose, shaking her head.

"I'm sure she's painting the violets," said Orcella, her voice filled with conviction.

"Again? Those violets are as violet as they can get! She is so obsessed with that ugly color." Gorialla frowned, her green eyes flashing with distaste.

"Please, Gorialla, I'll not tolerate your comments. All of you have a special color and you should respect one another of your uniqueness," ordered their father. Gorialla simply held up her chin. The god quickly was distracted by a humming voice from his right. "Ah, there is Pamela." He turned to the violet goddess, "Daughter, why are you late?"

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean to be late," Pamela answered timidly. "I won't be late again. I was coloring my violets."

"That's fine." The god sighed with contentment when all of his seven daughters were in front of him. How he treasured each

and every one of them: Rose, Orcella, Yelana, Goriolla, Blomera, Inzora, and Pamela, the youngest! All waited patiently for him to make his announcement, all except Inzora, whose small foot was tapping under her indigo gown. He went over to his throne and seated himself while smoothing out his long blue robe. As Syrice, the god of the sky, he often was too busy to spend time leisurely with his daughters. He wanted this silent moment to last, but he knew that it could not be the case. He had to get to business.

“Father, is something wrong?” Orcella asked with concern. She saw that her father held a soupcon of disquiet upon his brows. Syrice laid his eyes upon his wisest daughter with pride. He cleared his throat and began.

## **About the Author**

Shirley Cheng, born in New York in 1983, is a miracle survivor with tremendous, unbelievable talents, an exceptional tenacious spirit, and a colorful personality. Shirley was diagnosed with severe juvenile rheumatoid arthritis at only eleven months old. She spent her days in constant pain for years, confined to a wheelchair, and was hospitalized for many years between China and America until 1994, at age eleven. She was unable to receive any form of education until her health was stabilized. Shirley started attending school at age eleven in a special education class in elementary school. On the very first day of school, she did not know any English or any other subjects. But miraculously, she was transferred to a regular sixth grade class in middle school after staying in the special education class for merely 180 days, for she had achieved grade level in all subjects.

She has been a voracious reader, reading an average of three books daily, and has read over a total of 2,000 books. Since sixth grade, Shirley has received a score of 100 on every New York State essay test, and stayed at the top of the class at all times. She was awarded for achieving the highest grade of 97 in Earth Science in her eighth grade class. She was the Student of the Year and Student of the

Month, as well as a three-time winner of the National Reflections Program in visual arts. She writes both prose and poems. One of her stories, *Mary Miller, the Elusive Lady*, was published by the local newspaper, the *Poughkeepsie Journal*, on October 31, 1997, and a poem, *The Colors of the Rainbow*, was published in the anthology, *Celebrate! New York's Young Poets Speak Out* in 1999. She received a standing ovation when she gave a speech as a candidate for Student Body Vice President in ninth grade. She was a contributor to the high school newspaper, providing artwork in tenth grade.

When her eyesight began to deteriorate at the beginning of tenth grade, she had to use two pieces of magnifying glasses on large print to do her work throughout the year, even with the artwork she provided for the school newspaper. In classes, she learned only by listening to the teachers, even with chemistry and math, because she was unable to see the chalkboards, but still maintained excellent grades. Unfortunately, she completely lost her vision in April of tenth grade. She then received home-tutoring, and successfully did all her schoolwork strictly by using cassette tapes and tape recorders. She did all the chemistry writing and balancing of long formulas and equations in her head. Her high school average is a 97 (3.9 GPA with no AP classes). But Shirley could not accumulate enough credits to receive a high school diploma from her school. In October of 2002, she received her high school equivalency



diploma. Since she is totally blind, she took the entire GED test, including mathematical calculations, graphs, and an essay in her head without seeing anything. She received a special recognition award for scoring higher than 3200 on the GED test. She was a student speaker at the GED graduation ceremony, and was the only one who received a standing ovation for her powerful speech.

Shirley deserves credit for having survived her various ordeals, and that her inexhaustible fortitude, sheer strength, tenacious spirit, and outstanding efforts and achievements throughout her entire school years should be emphasized. Shirley was brought up in a very simple, single-parent, Chinese-speaking family with no influence on education. She has to be on her own in pursuing education. She has extraordinary goals with the aspiration of attending college at Harvard University, where she plans to earn doctorates in microbiology, zoology, astronomy, physiology, and pathology after a successful eye surgery.

Shirley wrote *Dance with Your Heart: Tales and Poems That the Heart Tells* using a screen reader, Jaws, on the computer. Most of the writings in the book are expansions of the short stories and poems she had written between the ages of twelve and twenty-one. She is also the author of *Daring Quests of Mystics*, which was published when she was twenty, and *The Revelation of a Star's Endless*

*Shine: A Young Woman's Autobiography of a 20-Year Tale of Trials and Tribulations*, which she had self-published when she was twenty-one.

She has an immense passion for life and will fight for it no matter what. Despite her severe disabilities, Shirley has striven to overcome overwhelming obstacles. Shirley is a magical gift, a star with endless shine.

Visit Shirley on the web at <http://www.shirleycheng.com>.