



THE SHOW MUST GO ON!

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Chapter One

SHOWTIME!

My name is Cypress Jones. I'm 10 years old. Three months ago, I got a part in the Broadway musical *Valente!* It's about animals that live in a South American rainforest. I play a Morpho butterfly. For the opening number, I do a cool butterfly dance.

My friend Alex Torres plays a spider monkey. My friend Hana Yu plays a tree frog.



Beatriz Cruz is the star of the show. She plays the jaguar Jacira. Her beautiful voice fills the theater when she sings.

After Friday night's show, she spoke to me for the first time.

"Great dance today, Cypress!" she said, smiling.

Wow! Beatriz Cruz knew my name! She liked my dance! Awesome!

On Saturday, when I saw Beatriz, I said all excited, "Hi, Beatriz!"

Beatriz didn't reply. She pushed me aside rudely and rushed by.

I was crushed!



Chapter Two

A SICK STAR?

As we dressed for the early show, I told Hana and Alex what happened. We were puzzled.

Later on stage, when Beatriz sang, her voice cracked and honked on every song.

I was shocked!



At the evening's performance Beatriz's singing was just as awful. The actors and dancers were whispering about her backstage. Then, when Beatriz approached, everyone got quiet.

"I have a bad cold!" Beatriz snapped.

"I think she's lying," I told Alex and Hana in our dressing room.

"Something's not right."

"You sound like a detective, Cypress," Hana said.

"That's it!" I said. "I'll be Cypress Jones, private detective. You two can be backstage spies. We have a mystery to solve!"



Chapter Three

A PLAN

Sunday night we set out to work on the case. A dancer asked Beatriz if she was going to Danny's after the show. We overheard Beatriz's answer. She had no idea what or where Danny's was!

The cast went to Danny's Café almost every night. How could she not remember? She blamed her cold medicine.

I knew the *real* reason. It also explained why Beatriz didn't recognize me and why she had a terrible voice. She *looked* just like Beatriz, but she was not Beatriz!

Alex, Hana, and I planned how to prove *this* Beatriz was an imposter.

Alex showed us his *Valente!* playbill, which the original cast had autographed. Beatriz had signed her name below her photo.

“Aha!” I said. “We must get the imposter to sign something. We’ll compare the signatures. If the handwriting is different, that’s our proof.”

“Then we’ll tell Gabriela what we discover,” said Alex. Gabriela Perez is the director of the show.

“Tomorrow night,” I said, “we’ll put our plan into action.”



Chapter Four

THE MYSTERIOUS "M"

Monday night we worked the case as planned.

“May I have your autograph?” Alex asked Beatriz at the stage door.

Beatriz happily signed above her photo in the new playbill.

We compared the two signatures. They were different.

“Look!” I said. “The imposter started to write a name beginning with the letter *M*. Then she crossed it out and wrote *Beatriz Cruz*.”

“Also, see how the real Beatriz crossed her *t* with a long line? The new signature has a short line on the *t*. The real Beatriz even has a loop on the bottom of the *B*. This one doesn’t.”

“This is all the proof we need that this Beatriz is an imposter!” I said.

Again Alex said, “We’ve got to show Gabriela.”



Chapter Five

BACK TO SQUARE ONE

Gabriela didn't believe a word. She shoed us out of her office.

"The *real* Beatriz might be in danger. We'll find more proof about this impersonator!" I declared.

KABOOM! A crash came from the prop room next door. Then out walked Beatriz. She frowned at us.

"I think she overheard *us* this time!" Alex whispered.

"That's not good," I replied.



Chapter Six

THE CLUE IN THE DRESSING ROOM

On Tuesday, I snuck into Beatriz's dressing room to snoop around. Alex and Hana kept watch outside.

As I opened a book, a photo of two girls in ballet costumes fell out. On the back of the photo was written *Beatriz and Maria*.

The girls looked exactly alike. They had to be...

"Twins!" I cried. Beatriz has a twin sister named Maria!

"I've solved the mystery!" I told Alex and Hana in the hallway. I showed them the photo. "The imposter is Beatriz's twin sister Maria! Let's tell Gabriela tomorrow."



Chapter Seven

TRAPPED!

The next afternoon I got to the theater before Alex and Hana. I walked past the old costume closet where hardly anybody goes. Suddenly someone came up behind me and shoved me inside!

Slam! They locked the door!

“Don’t bother to yell. Nobody will hear you!” It was Maria.

“I heard you telling your friends you figured out I’m Beatriz’s twin,” Maria said. “I won’t let you tell Gabriela and ruin everything! I’ve waited too long for this. Beatriz and I love show biz, but she gets all the breaks. I get nothing! Soon all the fame and money will be mine! When you miss tonight’s show, Gabriela will surely fire you. Then you’ll be out of my way!” Maria snarled and left.

I banged on the door.

Moments later, it opened.

“Cypress! What’s going on?” Harry the security guard asked.



Chapter Eight

THE SHOW MUST GO ON!

I told Harry everything.

“I’m worried,” I said. “Where’s the real Beatriz?”

“Go get ready for tonight’s show,” Harry said. “I’ll handle this.”
Then he did.

Maria was shocked when I danced onstage, and Beatriz followed behind!

The audience gasped. The real Beatriz announced, “This is my twin sister, Maria. She locked me in our attic. She’s trying to steal my career!”



Maria wept. She begged Beatriz to forgive her. Beatriz hugged Maria and promised her that she could be her understudy.

Everyone gathered around Beatriz. Gabriela wanted to cancel the night's performance.

"No!" Beatriz protested. "The show must go on!" She performed and sang beautifully. Everyone applauded loudly.

Later Beatriz thanked Harry, Alex, Hana, and me for helping to rescue her!

"You make a great *detective*, Cypress!" Hana said.

*Special thanks to Cypress Smith for inspiring this story.