

Hiccups

Hic. Hic. Hic. Clark couldn't stop his hiccups. His band was backstage, waiting to play the school talent show. It was their first performance together. They didn't even have a name for their band yet!

"You ate lunch too fast," Nora said. She tapped her drumsticks nervously.

"I know. *Hic,*" Clark replied. "*Hic.* I need to get rid of these hiccups now!"

"Quick," said Billy, the piano player. "Eat some sugar. That's what my grandma says to do."

Clark sprinkled sugar on his tongue and swallowed. He waited a second. *Hic.* The hiccups came right back.

Keisha, the guitarist, hurried up to him. She was carrying a glass of water. "Bend over and drink upside down from the back of the glass, right this minute!" she said. "It always works for me."

Clark tried to drink that way, but water went up his nose. He snorted it all over his shoes—then *hic . . . hic.* He could hear students entering the auditorium. The show was about to start. Nora stood by the red curtains. "Hey, Clark. Take a look—it's packed," she said. Clark peeked through the curtains. Every kid in school was staring up at the stage. Fear and excitement shot through his body.

The curtains opened. Clark stared out at the crowd, wide-eyed. He waited anxiously for the next hiccup. Nothing happened. Were they really gone?

Keisha grabbed the microphone. "We hope you like our band, *Clark and the Hiccups!*"