

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Second Best

by Kelly Hashway

Simone let the front screen door slam behind her as she trudged into the house. Her backpack slid off her shoulders and onto the floor with a soft thud.

"What's wrong, little sis?" Thomas asked, carrying a bowl of popcorn to the couch.

"Everything," Simone said, slumping down beside him. She tossed a piece of popcorn into the air and tried to catch it with her mouth, but it bounced off her nose and landed at her feet. "I can't do anything right."

Thomas put the bowl on the coffee table and turned to Simone. "Now I know that's not true. You just got second place in the school history fair, and Mom and Dad didn't even help you with your project. I'd say that was doing something right."

"Yeah, second place. That's me. Second best to Sheri in everything." Simone crossed her arms.

"What happened?" Thomas asked.

Simone took a deep breath and said, "I tried out for the school play, and Sheri got the lead."

Thomas nodded. "She has been taking acting lessons for the past two summers."

Simone lowered her arms. "I know, and I'm happy for her, but I practiced every night for that part. I wanted it so much."



“What part did you get?” Thomas asked.

“The second best part, of course. When is it going to be my turn to be the best at something?”

Thomas ruffled Simone's hair. “You're the best little sister I have.”

“I'm your only sister,” Simone said.

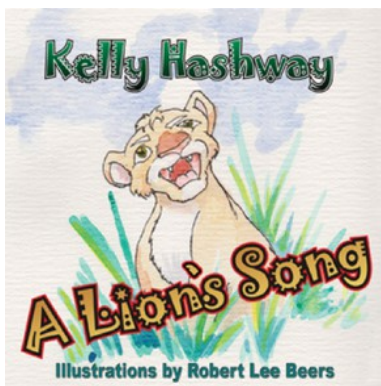
The doorbell rang, and Thomas got up to answer it. “Hi, Sheri. Congratulations on getting the lead in the play.”

“Thanks,” Sheri said, but she didn't look happy. She walked into the living room and sat down next to Simone. “I have to tell you something. I saw your audition. You're a natural actress, Simone. I was worried you were going to get the lead, and now I feel guilty for hoping you didn't. I wish I was as good a friend as you are.”

“Looks like you're the best at something after all,” Thomas said to Simone.

Simone smiled. “I'm glad we got the two main parts, Sheri. That means we get to rehearse our lines together. It's going to be so much fun.”

## About the Author



Kelly Hashway's picture book, *A Lion's Song*, is now available!

Amara is the only lion who can't roar. Every time she tries, it comes out like a song. Amara feels out of place in her pride, but when a crocodile threatens her family, Amara's song just might save them.

*Hashway, Kelly. A Lion's Song ISBN: 978-1616336196*

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1. Why is Simone upset when she comes home from school?
  - a. She did not get a part in the school play.
  - b. She got the second best part, while Shari got the best part.
  - c. She forgot to try out for the school play.
  - d. She learned that the school play was canceled.

2. By the end of the story, what does Simone learn she is the best at?

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3. Circle the words that describe Simone's brother, Thomas, in the story.  
(Circle four answers in the box.)

kind	grumpy	bored	encouraging
mean	loving	sleepy	helpful

4. According to the story, why is it likely that Sheri got the lead role in the play?

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Fill in the missing letters to create words from the story.

Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. t \_ \_ u \_ \_ g e d

**clue:** walked with heavy footsteps

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. r \_ \_ h \_ \_ \_ r s \_ \_

**clue:** to practice

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. g \_ \_ \_ l \_ \_ y

**clue:** ashamed of your actions

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_ \_ \_ f f \_ \_ \_ d

**clue:** to disturb the smoothness of something, like hair

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. a \_ \_ d \_ \_ t \_ \_ \_ n

**clue:** to try out for a role in a play

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_ \_ o \_ \_ \_ o \_ \_ n

**clue:** a fluffy white snack

6. \_\_\_\_\_

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In the story, "Second Best," Simone learns that she is good at being a true friend.

Write about your best friend on the lines below.

What makes him or her a good friend? What makes you a good friend to him or her?

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## ANSWER KEY

# Second Best

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1. Why is Simone upset when she comes home from school? **b.**

a. She did not get a part in the school play.

**b. She got the second best part, while Shari got the best part.**

c. She forgot to try out for the school play.

d. She learned that the school play was canceled.

2. By the end of the story, what does Simone learn she is the best at?

**Simone learns that she is the best at being a good friend.**

3. Circle the words that describe Simone's brother, Thomas, in the story.  
(Circle four answers in the box.)

kind	grumpy	bored	encouraging
mean	loving	sleepy	helpful

4. According to the story, why is it likely that Sheri got the lead role in the play?

**Sheri probably got the lead role because she took acting lessons for the past two summers.**

## ANSWER KEY

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Fill in the missing letters to create words from the story.

Then write the full word on the line. Be sure you spell each word correctly.

1. t r u d g e d  
**clue:** walked with heavy footsteps  
1. trudged
2. r e h e a r s e  
**clue:** to practice  
2. rehearse
3. g u i l t y  
**clue:** ashamed of your actions  
3. guilty
4. r u f f l e d  
**clue:** to disturb the smoothness of something, like hair  
4. ruffled
5. a u d i t i o n  
**clue:** to try out for a role in a play  
5. audition
6. p o p c o r n  
**clue:** a fluffy white snack  
6. popcorn