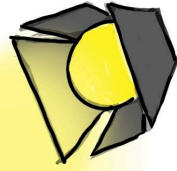
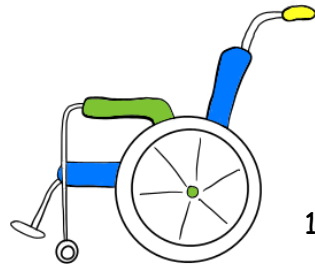


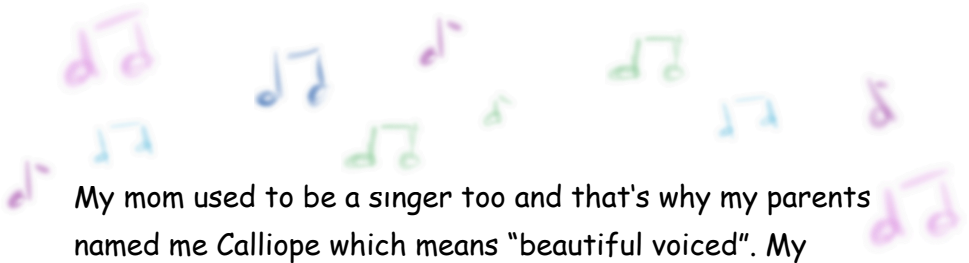
Calliope



Today I finally had singing lessons again. I enjoy singing the most out of all my hobbies and I always look forward to it. Theatre is lots of fun too, of course. But it is also a bit more challenging for me because it is a lot less accessible with my wheelchair. When I am singing all that matters is my voice. When I am doing theatre, all people see is my wheelchair. It can also be fairly difficult to perform on some stages but the theatre group in my school has made sure I can participate by adding a small elevator just for my wheelchair.

I haven't always been in a wheelchair, but I don't really remember it any other way. My grandparents told me that there was an accident when I was little. We were flying far up in the sky when something with the technology went wrong. The plane came crashing down and I was the only one who survived. My parents died the same day. Ever since then I have been living with my grandparents. Even though I don't remember much my heart still hurts knowing that I will never get the chance to really get to know them. They are still part of me in many ways though.





My mom used to be a singer too and that's why my parents named me Calliope which means "beautiful voiced". My grandparents also make sure to keep many pictures of them around the house. I have a bunch hanging on the walls in my room. My room actually used to be my mom's room when she was a child which helps me feel extra close to her. Grandpa never stops telling me stories about her. Mom was their only child, so I'm their only grandchild and they love me more than anything.

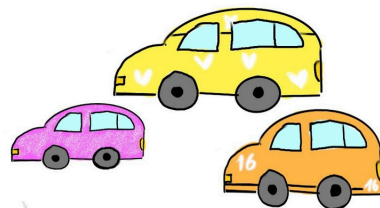
My dad loved writing short stories. Grandpa gave them to me on my sixth birthday. Now the stories, written in my dad's handwriting, are lying in a box under my bed. Reading them makes me feel closer to him. Whenever I have trouble falling asleep I take out one story and read it. Sometimes I don't understand everything he wrote, but someday I will. There is one special story he wrote when my mom was pregnant with me. It is a letter addressed to me in which he tells me how much he already loves me. He also planned out all the things we were going to do together when I am grown up. It still hurts sometimes to know that I'll never be able to grow up with my parents around like most other kids, but I do have my amazing grandparents to support me.

Often I forget that they are not my birth parents and that I am not their biological child. That's only until other kids start asking why my parents are so old. They are right, it is unusual and sometimes it sucks. Because of their age they aren't able to do a lot of stuff with me. For example, they don't have the energy to take me on holidays anymore. Sometimes I also worry about them passing away because of their age, but my grandparents reassure me that they won't leave me.

Apart from singing and acting I have another rather unusual hobby. I love to build remote controlled cars with my grandpa. So far we have a collection of ten different cars which we all built ourselves. My favourite one is probably the pink, sparkly one with rainbows on it. Grandpa let me choose the design all by myself. We build all of our projects in the garage. We call it the "grandma free zone" because it is our spot and nobody else is allowed to be there, not even Grandma.

Grandma free zone

Our proudest accomplishment is the plane we once built half a year ago. My grandma threw a huge party and we invited neighbours and classmates from school to celebrate its first test flight.



Having many different hobbies can be a great thing. I rarely ever get bored, but everyone seems to have one dream what they want to be and I have so many things that interest me. Maybe I want to be a singer, or an actress, or maybe even an engineer. I could design planes that are safer than the ones we have now. A plane that could have saved my parents' life. I think I got my love for planes from my parents. They were both obsessed too. Though I don't necessarily want to fly a plane myself. I'd much rather stay on the ground and build them.

I love that my grandparents support all of my different hobbies. They let me try out things and have dreams without holding me back or judging me for the things I enjoy. Grandma once said that she can see her daughter in me and she would do anything to make sure I'm happy.

All in all, I would say my life is pretty amazing. Yes, I experience hard moments, but don't we all occasionally? I also know that I'm always going to have it a bit harder than others because I first have to convince people that I am capable and my wheelchair is no reason why I wouldn't be able to follow my dreams. But I'm strong and I'm going to continue proving everyone wrong who doesn't believe in me yet.

