



STARDUST

BY SHIRA MOSKOWITZ



"I'M HOME!" I CALL out. I must have sounded more cheerful after school than I have in years, because as I walk into the den, little heads glance up to stare at me.

"Hi, Avigayil!" chirps Chaya Gitty, who's seven. She's working diligently on a twelve piece puzzle of a scarlet macaw. Chaya Gitty slides the parrot's head into place as my four-year-old brother barrels toward me.

"Gayil, Gayil, come look, we built a Magna-Tile tower!" Yitzchak Yaakov tugs at my uniform skirt while three-year-old Moishy grins proudly in the background.

"So nice!" I say.

After taking a look at

his tower (which is leaning precariously towards the right), I dump my briefcase on the couch and head into the kitchen to look for a snack.

I find a pack of sesame pretzels and take a few. Just then, as I take a bite, a cyclone appears in the kitchen.

It's my seventh-grade sister, Aviva, whose wavy brown hair, which is thrown into a messy pony, is somehow wind-swept, even though she's been in her room for over an hour. She's just that kind of girl.

"Avigayil!" gasps Aviva dramatically. "I desperately need your help!"

"What?" I crunch a sesame pretzel.

"I cannot remember what 'affluent' means!" wails Aviva. "Mrs. Polchik is gonna kill me!"

I roll my eyes; Aviva can be a bit overdramatic. "It means rich."

"Thank you!" Aviva gushes and then she whirls out of the kitchen.

I take a few more pretzels and then run upstairs, feeling it call to me.

Flinging open the attic door, I bound up the stairs, taking two at a time. After shutting the door carefully, I reach under my bed and slide out a black, oblong case.

Placing it gently on my bed, I carefully remove the gleaming, chestnut violin. I stroke the beautiful instrument

CHAPTER 2

Avigayil Klar, a shy, introverted girl, is at her first day of high school. It starts off hard, but she meets a girl named Chassi, who seems to like her.

UNABLE TO RESIST THE PULL, I THRUST MY HAND DEEP INSIDE MY NIGHT TABLE DRAWER AND YANK OUT A THICK NOTEBOOK WITH AN ORDINARY GRAY COVER

and then, after placing it perfectly under my chin, I take out my bow.

With relish, I slowly slide it across the strings. A high, beautiful sound emits and I shiver with delight.

I repeat the motion again, absently, as a new tune begins to form in my mind. I just can't get the opening sound... suddenly it strikes me.

Unable to resist the pull, I thrust my hand deep inside my night table drawer and yank out a thick notebook with an ordinary gray cover.

I flip the cover open and race through the pages of my compositions till I get to a new page. Grabbing a pencil, I begin to scribble down notes feverishly.

When I finish, I place

the notebook on my stand and take a deep breath.

Positioning the violin, I draw the bow across the strings. Beautiful music emerges and slowly, as I get into the piece, I move the bow faster until it is blurry with motion and I am flying, flying across the skies with my violin and the music... notes rising from the rapidly vibrating strings... nothing else matters...my bow is skimming, skipping across the strings... and the music is enveloping me until nothing is left...nothing...only the rainbow notes...

I come to the last measure and, savoring the feeling, I slide the bow across the strings with finality...slowing down...getting softer... and just at the end, I

yank the bow...and thus my piece ends.

I sit on my bed, breathless with the excitement. My mother will love this new piece...what should I name it?

I was never good with names...I frown. I'll think of a name later.

Just then, Aviva barges into my room. "Avigayil! You have to see what Moishy's doing!"

I follow her, where I see my little brother covered from head-to-toe in marshmallow fluff. My mother is shrieking in horror, while my siblings roar with laughter.

I join in, though for the first time, I wonder—what would this scene look like if I had a friend over?

TO BE CONTINUED...