## Charlotte

& Noel

Noel holds the barre in her hand. Noel turns out her hips, pulls up her knees, and sucks in her stomach. She turns her head gracefully, and she waits for the piano to play. Softly and sweetly the music begins. Noel slowly shifts her hand from resting position to first position, to second position.

Charlotte holds the pencil in her hand. The pencil hurries and scurries and scribbles across the paper. Charlotte pauses to think, and then begins to write again. She writes one whole page. Charlotte turns the page, puts her pencil to the paper, and begins writing her second page.

Noel moves gracefully from one position to the next. She moves slowly, and her body matches the speed of the piano. Noel stands in first position. She demi pliés. She straightens her legs. She grand pliés. She straightens her legs. She tendues to second position, and she repeats. Suddenly, the music quickens.

Charlotte's head moves quickly from the left side of the page to the right side of the page.. Charlotte tries to capture each and every thought that is racing through her head. She writes each idea on the paper, creating a story of her thoughts. She starts with one letter, then a word, then a sentence, then a paragraph, then a page, and she repeats. Charlotte's final product is finished when she no longer has any new thoughts, and she lays the pencil to rest. Soon enough, though, the story will continue.

Noel tendues forward, then returns to fifth position. She tendues to the side, then return to fifth position. The combination quickens. The piano plays sharp, staccato notes. Noel dances strongly. Noel dances quickly. Even though Noel is tired, she can not show it in her dancing. Noel finishes her warm up, leaves the barré, and prepares to dance as one of the Little Swans in Swan Lake's Pas de Quatre.

Charlotte tries to write her second page, but the process goes slower. Charlotte had ideas in her head, but she couldn't think of the right words to portray them. She scribbles. She erases. She scribbles. She erases. It was a difficult struggle to find the right words. With careful consideration, Charlotte chose each word with a specific purpose. She was sharing her private thoughts with the public world. After hours, Charlotte dots her last sentence with a period and puts down the pencil. Done. It was time to leave behind Charlotte's first draft, her first thoughts, and adopt an improved final draft.

Noel dances a very famous piece. It is beautiful, but it is very difficult. Noel's muscles ache and cramp as she moves from one position to the next trying to keep up with the music. Noel looks over her right shoulder as she dances left across the stage. Her right arm crosses her body and holds the hand of the dancer next to her. The music is fast. Noel tries very hard to perform the piece perfectly. She holds the hands of two other dancers next to her and tries very hard to move together with the other dancers. Though the dance is hard, Noel's feet, hands, and head move perfectly with other dancers'. The dance is intense, but it is supposed to look effortless.

Charlotte finds it difficult to write her piece. She wants it to be fancy but also casual. Her hand cramps from holding the pencil, and her mind is racing. Each time she finishes writing a page her motivation grows. The clock continues to count the seconds, minutes, and hours that she has until her writing must be finished. It is Monday evening, and the deadline is hours away. Charlotte begins to notice how exhausting writing is. She is writing about ballet. She puts in lots of effort, but when it is read, it should sound effortless.

The physical difficulties of ballet are often hidden behind the graceful movements of the dancers. Noel wants this ballet piece to be powerful. She wants it to be agile. She wants it to make a statement. Ballet allows Noel to express the way she feels. From the individual positions to the tone of the music, Noel can control the performance. And she does. And she is satisfied. Noel curtseys to her audience, her teacher, and exits to the wings of the stage. There is a moment of silence when she leaves the stage and the music stops playing. It feels like forever. Noel feels proud, strong, and content, but what will her teacher think?

Noel waits

The power and influence of language is often forgotten and taken for granted. Charlotte wants her writing to be powerful. She want it to be influential. The most amazing part of language is that it does not restrict. From the specific words Charlotte chooses to the tone she portrays, she has the possibility to craft ideas however she wants. And she does. And she is satisfied. And now Charlotte collects her papers for submission. Stacked one on top of the other she places the papers in her teacher's mailbox. It is done. There is nothing more Noel can do. She feels confident, satisfied, and complete, but what will her teacher think?

Charlotte waits.