

High Flyin' Flag

by

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Our sixth-grade class was preparing for an assembly. We were singing “You’re a grand old flag, you’re a high-flyin’ flag...” It was a joyous day.

Mr. Gonzales was snaking through the crowd of exuberant children. When he got to me, he laid his hand on my right shoulder and whispered in my right ear “Just mouth the words. Just mouth the words.”

I was stunned.

I was deflated.

I was eleven.

I never sang again.

This 75-word essay won third prize in the Ojai Art Center's 75th anniversary essay contest in March 2014.