

Raven's True Self

By Kai Orca

Opening song: Neesa

We go on stage in the "darkness," forming a U shape behind Raven's nest. People should line up on the side they will need to be for Reflection (sopranos on Raven's left, tenors/altos on Raven's right). We sing Neesa 3 times in unison with no movements.

Snake (Sam): I want to tell you the story of my friend, Raven. We all thought that Raven was a girl, but we were wrong. We animals all tried to tell Raven who he was, and it caused him a lot of pain.

Raven's friends are a little shy, so they need your help to feel safe enough to come out and share their story. So can you all imagine that you are animals sitting quietly in the forest? Choose what animal that you want to be. It should be an animal that you love, maybe one that feels the way you feel inside.

It is nighttime in the forest and we want to sing the Moon up. Can you help by singing with us? You learned this song in your music class and there are just 2 words to sing: Neesa and we will sing that 3 times—can we say that together: Neesa, Neesa, Neesa. And then the 2nd word is Gaiweio—can we say that together? This song comes from the Seneca peoples and it is a song about the Moon—Neesa means the Moon and Gaiweio means it is good. Please join us in celebrating the Moon!

Sing Neesa again: Once through in unison with movements, then 3 times through as a round with movements. Group 1 continue singing Gaiweio until the last group finishes—then we will sing one more Gaiweio Gaiweio together to end. During the song the Moon (Melanie) rises, then sets as we finish.

The lights come on and the story begins

Narrator (Erin): As soon as the world was filled with light Raven could see everything for the first time. The trees were just starting to unfold their Spring leaves. Birds of all kinds were building nests. The sky was blue and the fields were filled with red, blue, pink, lavender, orange and yellow flowers.

Raven noticed his own black feathers and began to admire himself. He opened and closed his straight strong black beak. He spread his wings and noticed the way the light shone on each feather. He turned this way and that and admired his powerful black claws and his silky black tail.

Just then Moose came along and said

Moose (Elliot): "Raven, you are a beautiful girl bird."

Raven (Kai): "Caawww! I am not a girl!"

Moose: "You are too. You look like a girl Raven."

Narrator: Raven looked at his body and his feathers drooped.

Raven: "Could Moose be right? I certainly don't feel like a girl inside."

Narrator: Every animal that Raven met called him a girl, and that confused him. Then he got angry.

Raven: "I can't be a girl! I don't feel like a girl!"

Song #2: Reflection

Narrator: All of us thought Raven was a girl, and it depressed him. Raven began to grow sick. He climbed into his nest high in a cedar tree. His beak hung out over the side of the nest and began to grow dry, cracked and gray. His feathers hung flat, and he did not move. The animals all whispered to each other,

Animals: "What's wrong with Raven?"

Narrator: Raven did not eat. Raven did not drink. The animals were worried that Raven might die. So they sent Doctor Squirrel up the tree. Doctor Squirrel looked at Raven, felt his feathers, and listened to his heart. His heartbeat was very faint.

Drum beats softly (Sam)

Snake: Wow, Raven seems pretty sick. Let's sing him a song together to help him feel better. I think you also learned this one in your music class, Breathe In, Breathe Out. We will sing part 1 (Breathe in, Breathe out) 3 times, part 2 ("When I breathe in, I'll breathe in peace; when I breathe out, I'll breathe out love") 3 times, 3 times for part 3 (also "When I breathe in, I'll breathe in peace; when I breathe out, I'll breathe out love"), then we'll have 3 times where we'll be singing all 3 parts simultaneously so just choose your favorite of the 3 parts, then we'll come back to just Breathe In, Breathe Out 2 times to close.

Song #3: Breathe In, Breathe Out (*the animals gather around Raven and sing to them*)

Narrator: Doctor Squirrel opened Raven's beak and poured a few drops of water inside. Raven stirred and opened his eyes.

Doctor Squirrel (Nate): "Raven, why are you so sad?"

Raven: "I am sad, Doctor, because I am a boy Raven, but everybody calls me a girl."

Doctor Squirrel: "Raven, you and the other animals are talking about two very different things. You are talking about how you feel inside. They are talking about how you look on the outside. What the animals don't yet understand is that who you are is much more than the way you look on the outside."

Narrator: Doctor Squirrel looked down at the other animals, who were all sitting around the base of Raven's tree, waiting to hear about the health of their friend: Raccoon, Beaver, Leopard, Moose, Ram, Owl,

Deer, Hare, Cougar, Deer, Bear, Snake, Tree, Cat and many more sat there.

Doctor Squirrel: “What’s more important, how you are inside or how you look on the outside?”

Narrator: Each animal examined their own body, and each realized that in one way or another their outside did not truly reflect how they felt inside.

(As each animal is called, they will move to the front of the stage and then return to the group—you should end up where you will need to be for You Have More Friends Than You Know)

Everyone thought Snake was scaly and dangerous, but he was really silky and loving.

Bear was very gentle inside, but everyone was afraid of their big claws and strong teeth.

Everyone thought Raccoon was mischievous and naughty, but they are endlessly playful and fun.

Everyone thought Deer was super shy, but actually they were quite friendly!

Everyone thought Beaver was destructive, but he actually creates homes for hundreds of creatures.

Everyone thought that Hare was worried and anxious, but they actually just have a lot of energy.

Leopard is known for their spots and being solitary, but they have a lot going on inside and really enjoy community!

Everyone thought that Tree was just in the background, but she is actually a friend to us all.

Everyone thought that Moose was angry and dangerous, and they actually are lol

And everyone thinks that I, Owl, am serious and all knowing, but actually I'm still learning.

Ram (Ben): "We must change our way of seeing things! Who we are inside is who we are, not how we look on the outside."

Narrator: Let's all say that together

Animals: "Who we are inside is who we are!"

Moose: "Raven, who you are inside is what matters to us, not how you look on the outside."

Animals: "Raven, come down! We're sorry. We love you as you are."

Song #4: You Have More Friends Than You Know

Narrator: Raven hopped and slid and half fell to the ground in one bedraggled heap. But then he stood up. The light fell on Raven. The animals felt and saw Raven's true self for the first time. He was powerful and beautiful. Raven spread his wings, danced before all the other animals, and then soared up into the blue sky, the creative, inquisitive, and sometimes tricky Raven that we know today.

Final song: Brave

Bow after final piano chord