

E23 - Champions' Resolve

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[01:31] ---

Himesaka Girls' Academy Koto Club...

[01:35] ---

"#23 Champions' Resolve"

A super prestigious school that went to nationals for 10 consecutive years...

[01:40] ---

"Unshakable, absolute champions" that stand unchallenged in Kanagawa...

[01:45] ---

That was just who we were.

[01:48] ---

It was our pride... until that day.

[01:54] ---

The award goes to...

[01:56] ---

...Kanagawa Prefectural...
Hakuto High School.

[02:00] ---

What? What happened...?

[02:03] ---

It can't be true...

[02:05] ---

We lost...?

[02:09] ---

"Himesaka Girls' Academy"

[02:10] ---

"Himesaka Girls' Academy"
Club President.

[02:12] ---

What is it, Wakaba?

[02:13] ---

To be honest, I don't think we were inferior to Hakuto.

[02:17] ---

I think their piece turned out to be more popular with the judges, that's all.

[02:21] ---

Yeah...

[02:22] ---

It feels like a fluke.

[02:24] ---

I disagree.

[02:26] ---

Yae.

[02:28] ---

Our loss wasn't a fluke.

[02:30] ---

"There's no way we'll lose because we're Himesaka."

[02:34] ---

I think we lost because that thought caused us to let our guard down.

[02:38] ---

Yeah, I agree.

[02:40] ---

We third years want to get back at Hakuto, too.

[02:44] ---

But we'll retire after the performance in Tokyo next week.

[02:47] ---

So we'll entrust it to the first and second years.

[02:49] ---

The new club president will be Yae.

[02:51] ---

Okay!

[02:53] ---

Going to nationals 11 years in a row won't be easy, but you can do it!

[02:58] ---

Yeah!

[03:03] ---

I didn't hear Hakuto's performance.

[03:08] ---

Right after Tokise finished playing, I went to see *him* to complain.

[03:12] ---

I looked down on both Tokise and Hakuto.

[03:19] ---

Fumi... I...

[03:24] ---

I feel very... ashamed... of myself.

[03:37] ---

Don't look so miserable!

[03:39] ---

It's okay. You're lucky
that you noticed it *now*.

[03:43] ---

We can now face the qualifier
thoroughly prepared.

[03:46] ---

We won't lose next time for sure!

[03:48] ---

Fumi...

[03:49] ---

Now, brace up!

[03:51] ---

We'll practice furiously again
starting tomorrow!

[03:54] ---

Yep!

[03:57] ---

Girls! We received the sheet music
for the qualifier piece. Come get it.

[04:03] ---

"Three Paraphrases"...

[04:06] ---

I've never played it, but if I
remember correctly, this piece is...

[04:10] ---

A-A lot of string-pressing...!

[04:12] ---

On top of that, they're sixteenth notes...

[04:14] ---

Doesn't the picking in
the second half look crazy?

[04:16] ---

And we need to change the tuning a lot!

[04:18] ---

We have to be in sync with this many people?!

[04:20] ---

Shoot...

[04:22] ---

I feel super fired up.

[04:24] ---

Does everyone have it? Okay then,

I'd like to make a suggestion.

[04:28] ---

All these years, every member
played in the qualifier.

[04:32] ---

But you can't win like that anymore.

[04:35] ---

The era of Himesaka always
being number one is over.

[04:38] ---

So, like we always do for nationals,

[04:41] ---

I'll choose who will perform by audition.

[04:44] ---

I'll hold the audition one month
prior to the qualifier.

[04:46] ---

Considering the balance of first koto
and second koto, I'll choose 24 members.

[04:50] ---

It'll be based on your abilities.
Your year doesn't matter.

[04:54] ---

I'll choose a team to go to nationals.

[04:57] ---

What do you think?

[04:58] ---

Okay!

[05:00] ---

Okay then. That's decided.

[05:02] ---

Now, let's start practice. Get ready!

[05:08] ---

Hozumi! Why the gloomy face?

[05:12] ---

Rui.

[05:13] ---

Well, this piece seems really tough, so...

[05:17] ---

It's got a ton of string-pressing,
which I'm not good at.

[05:19] ---

On top of that, 12 members
will be cut by audition.

[05:22] ---

Why are you whining already?!
We still have time.

[05:25] ---

If we practice like there's
no tomorrow, we'll be fine!

[05:28] ---

This is the last chance for us second years.
We'll play together on stage!

[05:33] ---

Yep!

[05:35] ---

I think we should increase the practice time.

[05:37] ---

What're you saying, Kazusa?
We already have enough practice time.

[05:42] ---

Really? You can't play it well yet, Wakaba.

[05:45] ---

What? I've already memorized
the score perfectly.

[05:48] ---

But the way you play is rough.

[05:50] ---

Don't act so high-and-mighty!

[05:52] ---

I wanna go to nationals for sure!

[05:54] ---

In order to do so, I wanna do
everything we can do now!

[05:57] ---

Hey, you two, calm down.

[06:00] ---

We all want to go to nationals.
Let's work this out. Okay?

[06:04] ---

Hozumi...

[06:08] ---

Seriously, Kazusa really ticks me off!

[06:11] ---

I don't know if she's the daughter
of a grand master or what,

[06:14] ---

but she's always condescending.
Who does she think she is?

[06:18] ---

Also, she keeps praising this
Satowa girl from another school.

[06:23] ---

I bet she looks down on us.

[06:25] ---

I don't think so.

[06:28] ---

To me, she just looks very desperate.

[06:31] ---

She seriously wants to go to nationals,

[06:32] ---

so I'm sure she just spoke a little too harshly.

[06:35] ---

I'm seriously aiming for nationals, too.

[06:38] ---

Of course! I know that.

[06:41] ---

But you two are both first years,
good koto players, and aiming for nationals.

[06:47] ---

So I thought the two of you
fighting would be a shame.

[06:50] ---

Thank you very much for your concern.

[06:57] ---

That's sloppy! One more time, from the start!

[07:00] ---

Get the tempo right!
Make each sound clear and distinct!

[07:02] ---

Hozumi! You're not pressing
the strings hard at all!

[07:05] ---

That's just a half tone!

[07:06] ---

Not enough! Harder!

[07:09] ---

--Good practice.

[07:10] ---

--Good practice.

--Good practice.

[07:12] ---

Bye-bye.

[07:13] ---

Hozumi. Are you gonna keep
practicing by any chance?

[07:17] ---

Yeah. My skills aren't good
compared to the others.

[07:21] ---

I can't press strings hard at all, either, so...

[07:24] ---

There are a lot of string marks on your left hand. Your fingers look swollen, too.

[07:28] ---

What? Your hand is like that, too.

[07:30] ---

Yours is beyond mine.

[07:32] ---

It's embarrassing that only my fingers look kinda impressive.

[07:36] ---

I have to improve my skills, too. I'll work hard!

[07:40] ---

Um...! Can I practice with you?!

[07:45] ---

Of course!

[07:50] ---

"Himesaka Girls' Academy"

[07:51] ---

Thus, a month before the qualifier,

[07:53] ---

we had the audition to decide the qualifier team.

[07:56] ---

Next! First koto, Hozumi Tachibana. Second koto, Rui Natsume!

[08:01] ---

Okay!

[08:03] ---

This is the hardest I've ever practiced.

[08:06] ---

So I'm sure I'll be okay.

[08:13] ---

Well then... I'll announce the team for the qualifier.

[08:17] ---

I'll start with the second years.

[08:19] ---

Makimoto, Yokozawa, Aida, Sakaguchi, Itofuji, Hara, Nishino, Sato,

[08:25] ---

--Watanabe, Oobayashi, Inoue, Ikeda, Abe, Taniguchi, Iwasaki, and Natsume.

[08:28] ---

--Wow... Maybe all the second years will be--
--Watanabe, Oobayashi, Inoue, Ikeda,

Abe, Taniguchi, Iwasaki, and Natsume.

[08:32] ---

That's all. Now, first years.

[08:36] ---

E-Excuse me! All the second years were called but Hozumi!

[08:40] ---

Unfortunately, Hozumi isn't on the team this time.

[08:45] ---

Her hands moved well. She practiced a lot, too.

[08:48] ---

But her string-pressing was still unstable.

[08:52] ---

That's the reason.

[08:54] ---

But... But to think that only Hozumi is left out...

[08:57] ---

This is the last qualifier for us second years.

[08:59] ---

That's okay, Rui. It can't be helped.

[09:03] ---

She said it'd be based on our abilities regardless of our year from the start.

[09:07] ---

I did everything I could. I have no regrets.

[09:12] ---

Hozumi...

[09:14] ---

Hozumi...

[09:17] ---

See you tomorrow.

[09:19] ---

Aren't you going home, Hozumi?

[09:21] ---

No, I'll stay a little longer.

[09:25] ---

I see. Then I'll see you tomorrow.

[09:27] ---

Yeah.

[09:37] ---

I'm the only second year who wasn't chosen... How pathetic...

[10:00] ---

Hey, Wakaba! That hurts! Let go of me!

[10:04] ---

Are you stupid?

[10:05] ---

If you go talk to her right now, it'll only make her feel more miserable, right?

[10:10] ---

She wasn't chosen because she wasn't good.

[10:12] ---

She couldn't improve enough by the time of the audition. That's the reality.

[10:17] ---

How dare you say--

[10:18] ---

So...

[10:20] ---

...we'll go to nationals for sure.

[10:23] ---

If we do, there'll be another audition before nationals.

[10:27] ---

All we can do for her now is go to nationals. Am I wrong?

[10:33] ---

I thought you hated Hozumi.

[10:38] ---

I said she wasn't good, but I didn't say I hated her.

[10:41] ---

The only person I hate is you.

[10:43] ---

Wakaba! I hate you, too!

[10:46] ---

But just this once, I agree with you!

[10:49] ---

We're gonna get the ticket to nationals!

[10:54] ---

We're definitely not gonna let things end here.

[10:57] ---

We're gonna create the path that leads us to our next step...

[11:02] ---

...for sure...

[11:05] ---

Program number three.
Himesaka Girls' Academy.

[11:11] ---

"Three Paraphrases."

[11:23] ---

Himesaka Girls' Academy.

[11:26] ---

"Three Paraphrases."

[12:18] ---

Are you kidding me?!

[12:21] ---

Even though there's a lot of
string-pressing and tuning-changing,

[12:23] ---

they're doing it completely in sync

[12:26] ---

while they're playing
sixteenth notes seamlessly!

[12:29] ---

How can they move their hands like that?

[12:31] ---

How come no one knocks down
the bridges with this speed?

[12:37] ---

You girls are amazing!

[12:40] ---

Keep it up... Keep it up...!

[12:46] ---

Support member?

[12:48] ---

Yes.

[12:49] ---

When going to nationals,
non-performing members assist, right?

[12:54] ---

So I was hoping to assist in the same way.

[12:57] ---

That'd be great... But aren't you
pushing yourself, Hozumi?

[13:02] ---

I know I'm the one who didn't choose you,
but if it's hard for you--

[13:05] ---

It's hard... very hard...

[13:08] ---

But...

[13:14] ---

Hozumi! Good morning!

[13:17] ---

Rui.

[13:18] ---

Did you hear? We'll be practicing
a lot more from today.

[13:22] ---

I heard that Kazusa and Wakaba
went to ask the advisor directly

[13:26] ---

even though they don't get along.

[13:27] ---

What...? I see, those two did...

[13:31] ---

Hozumi. Make sure you keep practicing...

[13:35] ---

...'cause we'll play together at nationals.

[13:40] ---

I thought I'd regret it if I just kept
feeling down until the qualifier.

[13:45] ---

I'm lucky to have friends
who say things like that,

[13:49] ---

so I'd like to do all I can to spend
this time together with everyone.

[13:57] ---

They haven't messed up at all so far.

[14:00] ---

Incredible...!

[14:04] ---

That third movement is coming up soon.

[14:26] ---

Picking sixteenth notes. Half tones and
whole tones. Irregular string-pressing...

[14:30] ---

With this many people? Are they monsters?!

[14:33] ---

What's this? I didn't realize
kotos could be this incredible...!

[14:39] ---

We no longer let our guards down thinking,
"Because we're Himesaka."

[14:43] ---

We will win!

[14:46] ---

Incredible...

[14:48] ---

Oh... This is...

[14:51] ---

Yeah, without doubt...

[14:56] ---

These are the sounds that belong
to those who practice a lot.

[15:06] ---

Whoa... Very impressive...

[15:20] ---

Their specialization as a team
has always been staying together,

[15:24] ---

but to this extent...?

[15:25] ---

I never liked their performances before,

[15:30] ---

but their performance today was good.

[15:36] ---

Stupid! Stupid Chika!

Why're you casually praising our rival?!

[15:40] ---

If you praise them, we lose!

[15:41] ---

Shut up! What's good is good!

[15:44] ---

But our performance is better!

[15:48] ---

Takinami, you bastard!

What're you laughing about?!

[15:50] ---

Well, I just like this side of you, that's all.

[15:56] ---

Ah! Mr. Takinami!

[15:59] ---

Oh, you're Hakuto's...

[16:01] ---

Taishin Yamamoto!

[16:03] ---

Mr. Yamamoto. Are you guys moving
to the tuning room now?

[16:07] ---

Yes. My heart is already pounding so hard.

[16:10] ---

By the way, you instruct
the Hakuto students, right?

[16:15] ---

Yes, more or less.

[16:17] ---

Are you a music teacher?

[16:19] ---

No, I usually teach math,
but I love music, too!

[16:25] ---

I see... It's amazing that you can
give such a great instruction

[16:29] ---

when you're not a music teacher.

[16:31] ---

What?

[16:32] ---

I heard Hakuto's performance from
the traditional music festival on DVD.

[16:36] ---

I was blown away by it being so high level.

[16:39] ---

The piece, as well as the performance,
was perfectly calculated

[16:42] ---

so that the music would smoothly
come into listeners' hearts.

[16:45] ---

Oh, by the way, who's Miyabi Tojo,
the composer for Hakuto?

[16:51] ---

This person creates such high-level pieces,

[16:53] ---

and yet, no matter how hard I checked--

[16:59] ---

Did I say something wrong?

[17:02] ---

Oh, no...! It's not... It's not like that!

[17:05] ---

N-No one's said that to me before
about the performance and pieces,

[17:09] ---

so I'm just so happy!

[17:12] ---

What?

[17:13] ---

Hey, Mr. Yamamoto! We have to
hurry up or we'll run out time!

[17:16] ---

Oh... Sorry!

[17:17] ---

Now, let's go!

[17:19] ---

Sorry, Mr. Takinami! If you don't mind,

let's talk sometime soon!

[17:25] ---

Yes, definitely.

[17:28] ---

Math, huh...? That explains it.

[17:32] ---

No wonder I couldn't find him.

[17:37] ---

Kurata.

[17:39] ---

We need to go to the tuning room now.

[17:41] ---

Okay.

[17:43] ---

How pathetic, you bunch of scaredy-cats.

[17:46] ---

Hey, that's Chika and the others.

[17:48] ---

I wonder if they're getting ready now.

Do you wanna talk to them?

[17:51] ---

No, that's okay. I don't wanna disturb their concentration.

[17:56] ---

Excuse me. Is that seat taken?

[17:59] ---

No. Go ahead.

[18:01] ---

Thank you very much.

[18:07] ---

"Program"

[18:08] ---

"Tenkyu"

[18:09] ---

"Tenkyu"

"The heavens... cry"?

[18:12] ---

I wonder what this piece is like...

[18:14] ---

Ugh! Calm down, my heart!

[18:17] ---

As expected, everyone's nervous.

[18:19] ---

I'd better get a grip so I don't catch it, too.

[18:21] ---

Hey!

[18:23] ---

What's with that scary look?!

[18:26] ---

Taking the stage is a reward for all the hard work you've put in until now, right?

[18:29] ---

We should enjoy it as much as we can, right?!

[18:32] ---

Kurusu...

[18:35] ---

Your hand is shaking.

[18:36] ---

Sh-Shut up!

[18:43] ---

Okay, guys! Let's check the tuning quickly and practice!

[18:47] ---

--But Miss Akira isn't here--

[18:48] ---

--I'm sorry I'm late!

--But Miss Akira isn't here--

[18:50] ---

Miss Akira!

[18:52] ---

It's rare that you cut it this close.

[18:55] ---

The roads were busier than I expected.

[18:58] ---

--Well then, let's--

--M-Miss Akira!

[19:00] ---

Um... I made this for you, too, so if you'd like...

[19:07] ---

You made it?

[19:08] ---

I-I-I-It's okay to throw it away!

[19:11] ---

Thank you very much.

I'm happy to have it... Very happy.

[19:18] ---

Come to think of it...

[19:19] ---

...where's yours?

[19:20] ---

What? I didn't make one.

[19:22] ---

You didn't?!

[19:23] ---

Jeez... Then...

[19:25] ---

Hey! What're you--

[19:30] ---

How's this? Now it's--

[19:35] ---

Wow! You two are like a couple!

[19:37] ---

A cou--?!

[19:38] ---

Chika. Your handwriting is terrible as usual.

[19:41] ---

Yeah. What terrible handwriting.

[19:42] ---

What'd you say?!

[19:43] ---

I'm jealous...

[19:44] ---

Stop fooling around and
get on with the preparation.

[19:47] ---

I know! Dammit!

[19:49] ---

That was... a happy look on her face... right?

[19:55] ---

Seriously, Mr. Tsukaji.

I really can't take much more of this.

[20:00] ---

It's true that Himesaka's
performance was amazing,

[20:03] ---

but all the schools after them
kinda sound the same to me.

[20:06] ---

You're so hopeless...!

[20:09] ---

But well, what she said
isn't necessarily wrong.

[20:12] ---

So far, Himesaka is clearly
the top contender,

[20:15] ---

and there's little difference among the rest.

[20:17] ---

Will Himesaka go to nationals

as they've done in other years?

[20:22] ---

"Program"

Or...

[20:23] ---

"Hakuto High School"

[20:25] ---

It's about time!

[20:27] ---

Get ready to go on stage, everyone!

[20:34] ---

Kanzaki. You get ready, too!

[20:36] ---

How're you doing?

[20:39] ---

Good.

[20:40] ---

Hey, it's rare that you say "good."

[20:43] ---

Really?

[20:43] ---

Yeah! You always say stuff like, "normal."

[20:48] ---

Listen, Mio... The fact is,
Mr. Yamamoto is...

[20:52] ---

What's wrong?

[20:56] ---

Photosynthesis.

[20:58] ---

You're like the sun,
so I'm getting power from you.

[21:05] ---

Taishin power!

[21:08] ---

Now you'll be fine!

[21:10] ---

You can give your best
performance ever today!

[21:14] ---

Weirdo.

[21:17] ---

Hey! Mio! Carry your
instrument yourself, okay?!

[21:22] ---

You carry it, Club President.

[21:24] ---

Don't be ridiculous!

[21:27] ---

I've never seen him smile like that before.

[21:31] ---

What? Advisor for the koto club?

[21:35] ---

It's been ten years since then...

[21:38] ---

And today is the last day!

[21:42] ---

Now... let me hear your performance...

[21:46] ---

I'll see if your ability to beat Himesaka at the traditional music festival...

[21:51] ---

...is the real deal...

[23:38] ---

Next time, "Beyond the Right Answer."

[23:42] ---

"#24 Beyond the Right Answer"

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