Sunshine in a Song

The singer and songwriter Michael Franti was on a concert tour when he got really, really sick. What was wrong with him? The doctors weren't sure, and every day Michael got worse. Finally, after seven days, he went to a hospital. Doctors there told him, "You have a ruptured appendix. You need immediate surgery."

Michael had surgery to take out his appendix, but his body was full of infection. He had to take a lot of antibiotics, and he had to stay in the hospital for a long time.

Every morning Michael woke up in his hospital bed, got up, and walked slowly to the window. When the sun was shining, Michael felt better. He sat near the window for hours and felt the sunshine on his face. "I'll be OK," he thought. "My body is healing. I'm getting better."

But sometimes when Michael woke up, the sky was cloudy. Then Michael felt discouraged. "Will I ever be healthy?" he wondered. "Will I ever get better?" On those days, he went back to bed and pulled the covers over his head. Then he put on his headphones and listened to his favorite songs. The music made him feel better.

While he listened to music, Michael thought about sunny places--mostly about beaches. He thought about the hot sun, the smell of suntan lotion, and the sound of waves. He imagined that he was playing his guitar, and all his friends were with him. He and his friends kicked off their shoes and walked barefoot in the sand.

Michael was in a hospital bed, but in his mind, he was on a beach. The beach that he imagined gave him an idea for a song. Before he left the hospital, he wrote the words and the music. He called the song "The Sound of Sunshine."

When he was sick, Michael realized that sunshine is important for healing. But the sun doesn't shine every day, and it usually doesn't shine in hospital rooms. So Michael put sunshine where anyone, anywhere can find it -- he put it in a song.