SCARING ABBY STRAIGHT

(The play opens on ABBY and her mom shopping in a thrift store.)

ABBY: Mom?
MOTHER: Honey, when I'm thrift shopping you know I don't like being distracted…oh what do you need?
ABBY: Remember I told you I was invited to a hat party. Well, there's a contest for the ugliest hat. So I was kind of wondering if…
MOTHER: Well what, Abby? Spit it out.
ABBY: I was just wondering if you could give me four dollars so I could by this hat.
MOTHER: Why would I give you four dollars to buy an ugly hat?
ABBY: Mom, it's four dollars.
MOTHER: You can just go home and make your own ugly hat! Sheesh. Four dollars. You clearly don't understand thrift shopping.
ABBY: This is so stupid. It's just a four-dollar hat. It's not like anyone will miss it or anything. In fact, I bet no one would notice if it just disappeared…

(ABBY, with great stealth, starts to steal the hat. Before she is successful, DEPUTY CLETUS makes his entrance and stops her.)

DEPUTY CLETUS: Freeze! Put your hands up!
ABBY: What! No! You're making a mistake!
DEPUTY CLETUS: I saw you trying to steal that hat! Now, don't take another step! Who's daughter is this!?

ABBY: Please don't tell my mom!
MOTHER: What are you doing to my daughter?!
DEPUTY CLETUS: Ma'am, is this little girl here your daughter?
MOTHER: Of course she is! Why? What's wrong?
ABBY: Nothing happened, Mom. You can go now.
DEPUTY CLETUS: Now quiet! I caught your daughter trying to take this here hat.
MOTHER: Take? What do you mean take?
DEPUTY CLETUS: She tried to steal it and walk right out the door like a criminal!
MOTHER: Abby! Is this true!
ABBY: Yeah…but…it's only four dollars! It's not a big deal!

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DEPUTY CLETUS: Not a big deal?! *(Spits to the side in anger.)* Girl! You got yourself a lot to learn.
MOTHER: Why didn't you just ask me for the money, Abby?
ABBY: I did! You told me no!
MOTHER: My daughter! A thief! A no good bandit!
DEPUTY CLETUS: Actually, I believe the correct term is pirate.
MOTHER: No, pirates plunder on the open sea. My daughter was land locked.
DEPUTY CLETUS: But if a pirate goes on land, does that make it a bandit? Or does it remain a pirate?
MOTHER: Regardless, what does this mean…um…officer—
DEPUTY CLETUS: Deputy! Deputy Cletus. Head officer at The Women's Prison of Washington County.
ABBY: Wait…you're not even a real police officer?
DEPUTY CLETUS: We'll leave the specifics to Deputy Cletus.
MOTHER: Are you arresting my daughter, Deputy Cletus?
DEPUTY CLETUS: Well! The way I see it, your daughter has two options. I can either throw her criminal ass in prison… Or! She can attend my "scared straight program" that I hold every Sunday morning.
MOTHER: Scared straight? That sounds spooky!
ABBY: It sounds stupid. And the hat was only four dollars! And ugly!
DEPUTY CLETUS: Did you know in some countries, if you shoplift they chop all your fingers off.
ABBY: I don't think that's true.
MOTHER: Is that what you do at Scared Straight? Hack off appendages?
DEPUTY CLETUS: No ma'am! Here at our Scared Straight Program, we have the most effective ways to scare the criminal right out of your daughter.
MOTHER: Well…if it's the only way…
ABBY: I'm not going. It was only four dollars. Like. Sixteen quarters.
DEPUTY CLETUS: Oh you'll go. Or else I'll show up at your house with a warrant for your arrest. Criminal.

(Transition: ABBY and her mother are driving to the Women's Prison.)

ABBY: *(To the audience)* I don't even get it. The hat cost four dollars. It's not like I hurt anyone. It's not like the store is gonna miss four dollars.
MOTHER: Now, make sure you do everything Deputy Cletus says! Okay, Abby?
ABBY: *(To the audience)* I mean, I still don't even think what I did was that bad! Why do I have to go to this stupid scared straight program? I'm not a criminal.
MOTHER: You know what happens to criminals, right? You'll never find a husband! No one wants to marry a thief!

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