ADOPTED

SCENE ONE

(*Lights are down. On stage we hear a scuffle!* LAURA *is at the center of a small gang of girls picking on her. Pulling her hair.*)

LAURA: Stop it! You're hurting me! Let go!

(*BLAIRE enters, seeing the fight, tries to break it up.*)

BLAIRE: Hey! Why don't you go pick on someone your own size!

(*Lights up.*)

BLAIRE: (*Yelling directed off-stage*) That's what I thought! (*To LAURA)* Are you all right?
LAURA: No, I'm terrible.
BLAIRE: What happened?
LAURA: Nothing—I didn't do anything and they just started—
BLAIRE: Calling you names?
LAURA: (*Scoff*) Worse, they pulled my hair and—
BLAIRE: Hit you. Scratched you and pulled your hair, yeah, Stacey does that to all the new girls who show up here.
LAURA: What? Why?
BLAIRE: You must be new here.
LAURA: Why would somebody attack another person?
BLAIRE: To scare them. It let's them know not to mess with her—I dunno—it's Stacey. She's not a nice person.
LAURA: You're telling me.
BLAIRE: Stacey had a (*searching*) rough past. And she gets jealous of a lot of the girls here.
LAURA: Why?
BLAIRE: Because she knows she's not going to get adopted. She wants other people to feel as crummy here as she does.
LAURA: Well she's not going to get away with this. (*starts to exit*)

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BLAIRE: What are you doing?
LAURA: I'm going to tell Miss Mackenzie what happened.
BLAIRE: I wouldn't.
LAURA: (*Pause*) Why not?
BLAIRE: Because Stacey and her friends will just lie and say they didn't do anything.
LAURA: I think Miss MacKenzie will believe me when she sees how scuffed up I am.
BLAIRE: Maybe. But telling on Stacey will only make her mad. And you don't want her mad the next time she sicks her gang on you.
LAURA: Well, if you come with me and tell she'll get in trouble for certain. Then she'll have to stop.
BLAIRE: You really are new here, aren't you?
LAURA: (*Pause*) Is it that obvious?
BLAIRE: I have been in and out of orphanages since I was ten, believe me, you don't want to tell on anyone. The last thing you want to do is make enemies.
LAURA: So I'm just supposed to sit here and get attacked?
BLAIRE: I never said that. You have to show them you're tough.
LAURA: How do I do that?
BLAIRE: It's not gonna be easy. Especially for you.
LAURA: You could teach me right?
BLAIRE: I don't know.
LAURA: Why not?
BLAIRE: I dunno. (*Hesitant*) I've never taught someone to be tough before.
LAURA: I'll take any help you can give me.
BLAIRE: No—I really shouldn't.
LAURA: Come on, you gotta help me.
BLAIRE: Stacey has been known to do some pretty extreme things to people who try to—
LAURA: Please. (*Beat*) I've never been in an orphanage before and—
BLAIRE: Hey! Everybody feels that way. Especially when they first get here.
LAURA: Did people pick on you?
BLAIRE: They used to. All the time.
LAURA: So you know what it's like?
BLAIRE: Yeah.
LAURA: Don't you wish you had someone to help you out when you
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