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Nice Girl**

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NICE GIRL

A DRAMEDY IN ONE ACT BY
Amanda Murray Cutalo



Nice Girl

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Characters

11W Plus Ensemble

YOUNG MIA

MIA

MIA'S MOTHER

ANGIE

JEN

MS. PARKER

COACH STANFORD

LAUREN

JILLIAN

MAGGIE

LOLA

Ensemble of students for various scenes in the cafeteria and classroom scenes.

The script refers to Mia being a middle school student. She could easily be a high school student as well.

The Set

The classroom and cafeteria scenes can use the same three tables with 2-3 chairs. A larger desk can work for Ms. Parker's desk and cashier desk in the cafeteria. We used a two-sided whiteboard with cafeteria specials on one side and homework on the other to indicate where each scene took place. The dodgeball scene in the gym as well as the scenes in Mia's home can be staged in front of the curtain to avoid an entire set change. During the dodgeball scene, Maggie and Mia can have their conversation on the side steps of the stage or in the front of the stage so they are removed from the dodgeball game.

Costumes

We chose to have the girls dress in similar but not identical uniforms, as if they are following a dress code. They wore polo shirts of different colors and plaid or solid colored uniform skirts. Underneath the skirts, they wore gym shorts so they could quickly change from the classroom to the dodgeball scene.

Premiere Production

Nice Girl was premiered by Stuart Country Day School of the Sacred Heart (Princeton, NJ) on March 7, 2013 with the following cast:

YOUNG MIA/ LOLA: Skylar Seabert

MIA'S MOTHER/ LAUREN: Viviana Vera

MIA: Olivia Atlee

ANGIE: Paulina Enck

JEN: Ava Navarro

MS. PARKER: Robyn Carter

COACH STANFORD: Lisa Brown

JILLIAN: Rachel Bierman

MAGGIE: Allie Burgess

Director: Amanda Murray Cutalo

Stage Managers: Alexandra Hopkins and Grace Freundlich

Technical Director: Walt Cupit

SCENE ONE: KITCHEN

MIA's MOTHER *is wiping off the kitchen table with a rag. YOUNG MIA is heard yelling offstage.*

YOUNG MIA: Mom!

YOUNG MIA runs in, covered in mud.

MIA'S MOTHER: What's wrong, sweetheart?

YOUNG MIA: Jennie pushed me in the mud!

MIA'S MOTHER: I'm sure it was just an accident.

YOUNG MIA: No! She did it on purpose!

MIA'S MOTHER: Jennie's your friend. Why would she do something like that?

YOUNG MIA: Because she's mean! I was waiting in line to ride down the slide and she butt right in front of me.

MIA'S MOTHER: Mia, don't say "butt."

YOUNG MIA: But Mom! It wasn't her turn!

MIA'S MOTHER: I'm sure she didn't mean it.

YOUNG MIA: Yes, she did! *(with a satisfied smile)* That's why I pushed her in the mud, too.

MIA'S MOTHER: What?? Mia...

YOUNG MIA: And that's not all. Then, I called her a doo-doo head and stuck my gum in her hair.

MIA'S MOTHER: Mia, that wasn't right! If someone picks on you, you should just ignore them.

YOUNG MIA: But...

MIA'S MOTHER: Sometimes you can catch more flies with honey than vinegar.

YOUNG MIA: *(not understanding the saying)* Ew! Why would I wanna catch flies?

MIA'S MOTHER: No, Mia, it means that sometimes it's better to be nice to someone that's picking on you. Don't you want to be a nice girl?

YOUNG MIA: (*grudgingly*) No. (*YOUNG MIA and her MOTHER engage in a staring contest. MIA finally gives up and sighs.*) Fine.

MIA'S MOTHER: That's my girl. Now go change those clothes. (*reacts to the strong smell*) What is that smell?

YOUNG MIA: Mud, dog poo, and utter defeat. (*YOUNG MIA sighs dramatically and walks offstage as MIA's MOTHER stifles a small laugh*)

SCENE TWO: CAFETERIA

MIA is now 13 years old and a seventh grader at an all-girls school. She is standing in the middle of the cafeteria. The cafeteria is filled with students and they are all waiting in a long line to receive their food. MIA's classmate, ANGIE, has just cut in front of MIA in line. Colored lights are used for this "fantasy scene" to differentiate between MIA's real and fantasy lives. Each time the scenes shift from fantasy to reality, the lights become brighter. The scene begins with a "fantasy" chime sound.

MIA: Who do you think you are?

ANGIE: Excuse me?

MIA: No, I do not excuse you.

ANGIE: What? (*students have stopped their own conversations to observe MIA's and ANGIE's growing altercation*)

MIA: Look, Angie, whether you realize it or not, there's a line here. And you just cut right in front of me. We're all just as hungry as you are! So when someone like you comes in here thinking she can butt in line because she's just that special, I have a real problem with that! (*At this point, the whole cafeteria has become immersed in MIA's speech. They shout random words of praise like "You tell her, Mia!" and "You're my hero, Mia!"*)

ANGIE: I'm sorry, Mia. Thank you for putting me in my place.

MIA: (*puts her hand on ANGIE's shoulder*) You're welcome, Angie. Happy to help.

ANGIE: Hey, by the way, I'm going to the mall after school. I'd be honored to have you come along, in case my selfish behavior needs to be corrected again.

MIA: I would love to.

ANGIE: Cool, well I'm going to go to the back of the line now. Thanks again for reminding me to treat others as I would want to be treated. After all, that is the golden rule. *(starts walking to the back of the line)*

MIA: No problem.

School bell rings and lights get brighter to show the transition from fantasy to reality. ANGIE turns around and runs back to the place right in front of MIA.

ANGIE: Hey, can I please jump in? I'm kind of in a hurry.

MIA: Actually...*(backs down)* Sure, Angie, it's fine.

ANGIE has already started talking to the person in front of her. MIA looks frustrated and takes a deep breath.

SCENE THREE: CAFETERIA

MIA and JEN, one of MIA's friends, sit at one of the tables in the cafeteria eating their lunches. MS. PARKER, one of MIA's teachers, is on cafeteria duty and is taking attendance at the different tables.

MIA: I mean, she was just so arrogant. *(imitating ANGIE in a mocking tone)* "Hey, can I please jump in? I'm kind of in a hurry."

JEN: Oh my God, are we still talking about this? I tuned you out five minutes ago.

MIA: Hey!

JEN: Mia, so she cut in front of you in line. Who cares?

MIA: It's so annoying!

JEN: Hey, drama queen, stop whining. I'm taking the English test next period. You have to help me!

MIA: *(notices MS. PARKER close by)* You'll be fine if you went over the study guide.

JEN: *(at full volume)* There was a study guide?

MIA: Seriously?

JEN: What was the essay question?

MIA: I don't remember...(lowers her voice at this) and Ms. Parker is right behind you.

MS. PARKER comes up to their table at this point.

JEN: (*changing her tone a fake, overly enthusiastic voice*) Hey, Ms. Parker!

MS. PARKER: (*suspiciously*) Hi, ladies.

JEN: (*clearly trying to kiss up*) Ms. Parker, last night's reading assignment was absolutely spellbinding.

MIA: (*under her breath*) Spellbinding?

JEN: (*responds back under her breath*) Yeah. You're not the only one who uses a thesaurus.

MS. PARKER: I'm glad you liked the reading, Jen. (*decides to challenge JEN*) Which part was your favorite?

JEN: (*begins to panic because she has not read the assignment*) My favorite part? I-I...the same as Mia's!

MIA: (*confused*) What?

JEN: (*trying to get MIA to play along*) Yeah, Mia, tell Ms. Parker what your favorite part was and that will also be mine.

MIA: (*to MS. PARKER*) I guess my favorite part was the ending when Tessie died.

JEN: (*gives shocked audible cry*) What?? (*immediately tries to cover her surprise*) Just reenacting my reaction from last night...when I first read it.

MS. PARKER: (*not buying any of this*) I see. Well, it might be a good idea for you to glance over the story again. Just in case you might have missed anything else.

MS. PARKER walks away.

JEN: Thanks a lot!

MIA: I'm sorry! You put me on the spot. I just said the first thing that popped into my head.

JEN: So the first thing that popped into your head was that you liked the part when someone died? That's sick, Mia.

MIA: Actually I thought it was pretty ironic because in the beginning of the story...

JEN: (*not at all interested*) Oh just stop! Lunch is almost over and I'm so failing this test.

MIA: I told you. You'll be fine if you use the study guide.

JEN: Please! Just help me on the essay.

MIA: Jen, I really don't remember...

JEN: Oh please! Of course you do! You have a photogenic memory.

MIA: I...(*realizes JEN's error*) That makes no sense.

JEN: (*beat, realizing MIA is serious*) Fine. I'll see if Lauren or Jillian can help me.

MIA: Wait. You might wanna look over the part in the book with Jonas and the apple. Might be important.

JEN: (*smiles*) Thanks. You are such a great friend.

SCENE FOUR: Gym

The girls are choosing teams to play dodgeball in gym class. The scene should begin with fantasy lights and the "chime" sound.

COACH STANFORD: OK, girls, Lauren and Jillian will be the captains this time.

LAUREN: I call first pick!

JILLIAN: No way! Why do you...

LAUREN: (*cuts JILLIAN off*) I pick Mia! (*grabs MIA by the wrist*)

JILLIAN: Um, nice try, but I'm picking Mia. (*grabs MIA by the other wrist*)

LAUREN: But our team can't win without Mia! No other player can match her strength, agility, and poise on the dodgeball field.

JILLIAN: I agree. She inspires me to be the best possible athlete I can be.

COACH STANFORD: Yes, she truly is an inspiration to us all. Not only is she an exceptional dodgeball player, but an all around wonderful person.

JILLIAN: She's right, Mia! You're so nice.

LAUREN: And so pretty.

ANGIE: And you have great hair!

LOLA: I stalk you on Facebook!

Awkward silence as they all turn to LOLA.

COACH STANFORD: That's really creepy, dear. But back to you, Mia, who would you like to pick for your team?

The whole gym class reacts with enthusiasm and applauds MIA. Different members of the ensemble say encouraging phrases like "Way to go, Mia!" "Mia, you're awesome!" and "Can I have your autograph, Mia?" MIA accepts their applause graciously, mouthing "thank you" a few times. Then, the lights become brighter as a ball hits MIA, knocking her over. COACH STANFORD blows her whistle. This action snaps MIA back to reality. The rest of the girls are playing dodgeball.

COACH STANFORD: Mia? You OK, Mia?

MIA: *(getting up from the ground, embarrassed since this is obviously not the first time she's fallen)* Yes.

COACH STANFORD: Okay, shake it off.

LAUREN: Oh, come on! I just got you out of prison!

MIA: Sorry! *(walks over to other side of the stage to join MAGGIE in "prison")*

LAUREN: *(dramatically)* Well, don't expect me to rescue you again. You're clearly the weakest link on this dodgeball team.

MAGGIE: Hey, Mamma Mia.

MIA: Hi Maggie.

MAGGIE: Look, don't take this the wrong way, but you are like the worst dodgeball player ever. A three-legged dog would be better at this game than you. No offense, sweetie.

MIA: None taken?

MAGGIE: And why don't you ever throw the ball at anyone?

MIA: I dunno. Why aren't you playing?

MAGGIE: I have a doctor's note that says I'm allergic to the color yellow. *(change this to the same color as the dodgeballs used in the scene)*

MIA: What?

MAGGIE: Hey so Jen told me you met someone at the dance last week.

MIA: Yeah, it's not a big deal.

MAGGIE: That's great!

MIA: I actually kinda know him already. Our moms are in the *Twilight* Moms book club together. *(Note: If the Twilight Moms reference becomes dated, feel free to substitute a different book/series that is currently popular with teenagers, but would be embarrassing to Mia if her mom liked it.)*

MAGGIE: That's...sad.

MIA: I know.

MAGGIE: What's his name?

MIA: Brian.

MAGGIE: Wait, not Brian Weston?

MIA: Yeah, why?

MAGGIE: *(in a slightly condescending tone)* Wow.

MIA: Why do you sound so surprised?

MAGGIE: He's like, completely out of your...you know what, never mind. Have a good time!

MIA: What is that supposed to mean?

MAGGIE: Look don't take it personally. It's just that Brian has, in the past, paid attention to girls like...Angie.

MIA: Oh no, really? Now, I'm nervous.

MAGGIE: You'll be fine.

MIA: No, I'm afraid I'm gonna say something stupid...I just wish sometimes that I could say exactly what was on my mind. I think about doing that sometimes, spending my day in a constant state of awesomeness, in this little world where everybody respects me for who I am. You know what I mean? *(she is lost in her own thoughts by now)*

MAGGIE: No. This is Brian Weston. You want to keep your crazy far away from him, especially when you just met! You want to show Brian your best possible self!

MIA: How do I do that?

MAGGIE: Talk as little as possible.

MIA: What?

MAGGIE: And studies have shown that a guy finds a girl much more attractive when she's laughing, so make sure that you do that a lot.

MIA: Oh, I hate when people use that phrase "studies have shown." People always think that, if they begin a sentence with "studies have shown," then the statement they're about to make is automatically correct, no matter how asinine it sounds.

MAGGIE: See, this is what I'm talking about. You can't talk like that to Brian. And dial back on the vocabulary words. You're not interviewing to get into Harvard.

MIA: So what, I can't disagree with him? What if he's wrong?

MAGGIE: Mia, guys do not like to be criticized. They do not like girls who are high-maintenance. Just be...

MIA: Easy?

MAGGIE: I was going to say "nice."

MIA: *(reluctantly)* Yeah, fine. *(Another ball from the other side hits MIA and knocks her over)* Oh, come on! I'm on your team! *(more to herself than actually directed at the girl who threw the ball)*

SCENE FIVE: CLASSROOM

MS. PARKER is standing in the middle of her classroom. The girls are sitting at tables (these can be the same tables and chairs from the cafeteria scene).

MS. PARKER: OK ladies, we're going to begin today's class by brainstorming topics for your upcoming speeches. You'll have five minutes to brainstorm individually and then I'd like you to get into your groups to share ideas. Use your time wisely.

The students begin to work individually. MIA tries to work in-between the constant interruptions; her frustration is visible by the end.

First, LAUREN taps MIA on the shoulder with a note in her hand, gesturing to MIA to pass the note to

JILLIAN. MIA looks up at MS. PARKER and quickly passes the note.

LAUREN: (*whispers to MIA*) Thank you.

JILLIAN writes a quick response, and passes the note back to MIA who passes it back to JILLIAN.

JILLIAN: (*whispers to MIA*) Thank you. (*MIA ignores JILLIAN and resumes taking notes*)

MAGGIE: (*whispers to MIA*) Did Brian call last night?

MIA: (*does not look up from taking notes*) Yes.

MAGGIE: How did it go?

MIA: (*with lackluster enthusiasm*) Fine.

MAGGIE: Fine?

MIA: I guess.

JILLIAN: Mia! (*passes another note to MIA for JILLIAN. MIA passes the note.*)

JILLIAN: (*whispers*) Thank you.

MIA: (*speaks in a tense, very audible whisper*) You're welcome.

ANGIE, who is directly behind MIA, begins to play with and braid MIA's hair.

ANGIE: (*whispers*) You have great hair!

MIA: (*confused and frustrated*) Um, thank you?

ANGIE: Do you use any kind of product on it?

MIA: Yes.

ANGIE: Can I borrow it?

MIA: Fine.

ANGIE: My boyfriend loves it when I wear my hair curly! (*Feel free to change "curly" to match the way MIA wears her hair during the show.*)

MIA: (*with feigned enthusiasm*) Great! Glad I could help.

MS. PARKER: OK, time to move into your groups. I'll need each group to hand in a list of three possible topics by tomorrow.

The class begins to break up into smaller groups.

MIA: So does anybody have any good ideas?

JEN: For what?

MIA: The speech.

MAGGIE has been furtively texting this whole time. She continues to text while she is talking to MIA and for the rest of the conversation.

MAGGIE: I'm pretty flexible on what we write about. You should pick the topic.

MIA: Why me?

MAGGIE: You're the smart one.

MIA: (*shrugs*) I don't know. Why don't we write about all-girls schools? I think it would be really interesting if we talk about...

JEN: Sounds good!

MAGGIE: Yeah, I like it.

MIA: Okay, so we need to start brainstorming possible arguments. Why don't we each come up with some ideas tonight?

At this point, MS. PARKER has made her way over to MIA's group and is able to hear the next part of their conversation.

JEN: Oh...Maggie and I have to watch the Dance Moms marathon tonight. (*Director's note: Feel free to use a different television show that is equally vacuous.*)

MAGGIE: (*stops texting and looks up on this line*) Yeah, we're really busy.

MIA: Oh...(hesitates) well, I guess I could come up with some ideas...

JEN: You're awesome, Mia!

MAGGIE: Yeah, seriously, you're a rock star.

Bell rings.

MIA: See you tomorrow.

JEN and MAGGIE quickly leave as MIA begins to pack up her books. The rest of the class has filed out leaving only MIA and MS. PARKER alone onstage. The lights

change to “fantasy lighting” and a “fantasy chime” sound plays. MIA looks up from her books and calls JEN and MAGGIE back.

MIA: Hey girls! Come back here for a second.

MAGGIE and JEN appear as if they were anxiously awaiting her call. Their demeanor toward MIA in this fantasy should be respectful, bordering on fawning.

JEN: Yes, Mia?

MAGGIE: Did you need something?

MIA: Guys, contrary to what you might think, I have a life. I don't have time to study and do homework for three! You're both gonna have to start doing your share of the work. Or else, you can find someone else to work with.

JEN: Oh, Mia, you're so right!

MAGGIE: We are so sorry for taking advantage of you like that. We promise to be better friends from now on.

MIA: And another thing, Maggie: Brian would be lucky to have me as his girlfriend. I did all those stupid things I was supposed to do. I laughed like a moron at everything he said. And I pretended to like his favorite movie, which by the way, now I have to spend my weekend watching both *Star Wars* trilogies. Even the *Phantom Menace*! So thanks for that great advice! Apparently, in order to get a guy to like you have to be a complete...

MS. PARKER: Idiot! I'm such an idiot! (*MAGGIE and JEN exit offstage on MS. PARKER's line. The lights become bright as MIA snaps back to reality. MS. PARKER has spilled water all over a bunch of test papers. MIA begins to watch her as she attempts to clean up the mess.*) Well, it looks like they all get A's. I'm kidding. Teachers make jokes sometimes. Otherwise, we'd probably go crazy.

MIA: (*with a small laugh*) I don't blame you. This place can definitely make a person crazy.

MS. PARKER: Are you okay?

MIA: (*shrugs*) Yeah, why?

MS. PARKER: Look, this may surprise you, but I can hear.

MIA: What?

MS. PARKER: And believe me. Some stuff I wish I hadn't heard.
Sometimes I feel like saying "Whoa, TMS!"

MIA: (*confused*) I think you mean TMI.

MS. PARKER: But you know what I really hate to hear?

MIA: What?

MS. PARKER: When nice girls let their friends take advantage of them.

MIA: What do you mean?

MS. PARKER: It's okay if people don't like you sometimes, Mia.

MIA: I know that.

MS. PARKER: So why do you let Maggie and Jen push you around like that?

MIA: No, I don't! They just need my help sometimes. I'm trying to be a good friend.

MS. PARKER: Look, I'm not telling you to be a complete...

LOLA enters

LOLA: Uh, Ms. Parker?

MS. PARKER: Yes, Lola?

LOLA: There's a sloppy joe fight in the cafeteria

MS. PARKER: (*excited at this news*) It's sloppy joe day?! (*she snaps back to reality*) I'll be right there.

MS. PARKER: (*looks back at MIA*) Where was I?

MIA: You were telling me to be mean to my friends.

MS. PARKER: Not mean. Assertive. There is a difference.

MIA: You clearly have never been in middle school. Thanks anyway, though. (*exits leaving MS. PARKER alone onstage*)

SCENE SIX: MIA'S BEDROOM

MIA is on her cell phone and typing on her laptop at the same time.

JEN'S VOICE: Hello? (*long pause*)

MIA: Hey Jen, it's Mia, I...

JEN'S VOICE: JK!!!! (*MIA reacts with frustration*) I'm not here right now; leave me a message!

MIA: Hey, it's me again. Did you get the e-mail I sent you last night? It's the final draft of my paragraph. If you could just read it and send me your part, that'd be great.

Ends the call and dials another number right away.

MAGGIE'S VOICE: Voicemail. Speak.

MIA: Hey Mag, it's me! I'm sending you my part of the essay now. Also, I read your draft but I think you might have sent me the wrong file because it's only half done. So, just give me a call when you get this.

Ends the call and begins typing on her laptop. Two hours pass by indicated by the stage lights dimming. After typing, MIA looks at the time on her cell phone, sighs, and dials another phone number.

MAGGIE'S VOICE: Voicemail. Speak.

MIA: Hey, it's me again. Since I haven't heard from you yet, I made some edits to your draft and I added in the missing information. Also, your paragraph was missing all the citations so I did that too. I'm sending you the revised draft of your paragraph now, so just look over it and make sure everything's ready to go for tomorrow.

Ends the call and dials another number.

JEN'S VOICE: Hello? (*long pause, MIA reacts with impatience*) JK!!!! I'm not here right now; leave me a message!

In frustration, MIA throws the phone down. She begins to attempt to decipher JEN's notes. She stops to put her face in her hands and takes a deep breath. Then, she begins to type on the laptop again. Another two hours pass. Stage lights grow dimmer. At this point, MIA, exhausted, dials the phone.

JEN'S VOICE: Hello? (*long pause, at this point, MIA begins to imitate JEN as she listens to her message for the third time*) JK!!!! I'm not here right now, leave me a message!

MIA: (*with visible exhaustion*) Jen, I just sent you and Maggie the final draft of our essay. Please look over it before class tomorrow

so you're comfortable presenting it. Call me if you have any questions.

Ends the call and closes her laptop. Her cell phone rings and she answers it quickly.

MIA: Jen? Oh, hi Angie (*become tired again*)... Pantene Pro-V Anti-Frizz cream... Yes, that's all I use... I don't know CVS? I guess... Sure, I'll bring it in tomorrow. Yeah, I'm sure your boyfriend will think you're super hot.

Ends call, takes a deep breath, and lights fade as MIA sits back down in her chair, both tired and frustrated.

SCENE SEVEN: CLASSROOM

LAUREN and JILLIAN are standing in front of the class giving their presentation. MIA has her head down on the desk.

LAUREN: Therefore, if restaurants today made more legitimate attempts to regulate portion control, print nutrition facts in more visible locations on their menus, and encourage healthier food choices, the American public would be one step closer to confronting the growing obesity problem in this country.

The class applauds. The applause startles MIA who wakes up. She looks disheveled and exhausted.

MS. PARKER: OK, thank you, Lauren and Jillian. You presented some very interesting arguments... (*LAUREN and JILLIAN return to their seats.*) So the next group we'll be hearing from is (*looks at her list*) Jen, Maggie, and Mia.

JEN: We're so ready, Ms. Parker!

MS. PARKER: Well, I appreciate the enthusiasm. (*notices MIA has not moved yet*) Mia, will you be joining your group? (*MIA is staring off into space*) Mia?

MIA: (*jumps when she hears her name*) Oh, yeah... I'm ready. (*whispers to MAGGIE*) What am I ready for?

MAGGIE: (*whispers back*) The presentation. What's wrong with you?

MIA: (*still whispering*) I didn't sleep much last night.

MAGGIE: Or shower much this morning apparently. (*MIA runs her hand through her disheveled hair. MAGGIE responds sarcastically.*) Oh yeah,

much better. Come on, let's go. (*pulls MIA up to the front of the classroom*)

JEN: (*begins reading from her paper*) In her article entitled "Single-sex schools vs. Coed school," Kate Ninnes claims that she "missed out on a lot of life education by not having boys around." However, we argue that boys do not need to be around in order for girls to learn how to thrive in life. On the contrary, an all-girls school can more easily provide a nurturing academic, athletic, and social environment in comparison to co-ed schools. (*JEN and MAGGIE look over at MIA, expecting her to continue. MIA does not meet their gaze and instead stares intensely out into the class.*)

JEN: (*after a few moments, nudges MIA and whispers*) Mia?

MAGGIE: Mia, it's you.

MIA dramatically tears up her notes and throws them on the ground. The class, especially JEN and MAGGIE are stunned.

JEN: (*whispers to her*) You have it memorized?

MIA: You know, all-girls schools are great. And they really do provide a "nurturing academic, athletic, and social environment" to their students. (*JEN and MAGGIE stare at each other in confusion*) As long as you're not a "nice girl." Don't get me wrong. Everyone here is nice. After all, we're girls; we're supposed to be nice. It's not "nice" to say something mean to another girl. Like Angie, when you cut in line last week, you said "please" first. So it was okay that the rest of us waited in line like we were supposed to, while you walked right through and took the last piece of chocolate cake. And by the way, I think it's so nice that you braid my hair every day while I'm taking notes. I feel like I'm at a slumber party and I should be singing into a hairbrush or freezing someone's bra. And you know who else is nice? Lauren and Jillian. Can I just say, I think it's so nice that you say "thank you" every single time you interrupt me to pass your extremely time-sensitive notes back and forth. Seriously, Jillian, I'm so glad Lauren was able to help you decide on the dress with a sweetheart neckline and an A-line design as opposed to a halter neckline with an empire waist. And by the way, when Lauren told you that the A-line design would be much more flattering for your "curvy" figure, that was her nice way of calling you fat.

MAGGIE: Mamma Mia, what are you doing?

MIA: Oh Maggie, please stop trying to make that nickname happen. Do I look like a Broadway musical? And was this not the kind of

speech you and Jen had in mind? I guess there was some kind of miscommunication between us last night. *(turns back to face the class)* I think it's time to take a little survey of the class. *(JEN starts to flip through her papers in search of this section of the assignment)*

MAGGIE: *(stops JEN)* It's not in there.

MIA: How many of you have ever secretly hated it when a teacher lets you pick your own groups? *(students look around, mostly confused, some begin to put their hands up)* She thinks she's being nice...No offense, Ms. Parker...but she's really not helping you out is she? Because all that means is you're stuck working with your friends, *(looks directly at JEN and MAGGIE)* no matter how dumb or lazy they are.

JEN: Mia?!

MIA: And you don't wanna be mean. You can't tell them, "No, thank you, I don't want to work with you because you're slackers and, frankly, you're pulling me down with you." So you're stuck. And the next thing you know, you're waking up at 3 in the morning on top of an MLA book with spiral indentations on your forehead, and you're thinking, WHERE ARE MY FRIENDS?!

MAGGIE: *(tries to calm her down)* Mia...

MIA: Oh, that's right, they couldn't care less about me! *(To MAGGIE and JEN)* But you've helped me learn something really important: Being "nice"...stinks. It stinks to be "nice" to people just so you can take advantage of them. And it stinks to be "nice" back just because you're afraid of what they'll think of you if you're not. So, I'm done. From now on, I'm going to be the meanest girl in this school. *(says this last part slowly and dramatically)* "If I have to lie, steal, cheat or kill. As God is my witness, I'll never be nice again."

Awkward silence.

JEN: *(after a few moments of silence, begins to read from the paper in front of her)* In conclusion, single-sex schools provide girls with a nurturing academic, athletic, and social environment.

The class, still confused, look around awkwardly. Some attempt to applaud as the lights fade out.

SCENE EIGHT: CLASSROOM

MIA is sitting at her desk with a horrified expression on her face. The other students have left the class and she is alone with MS. PARKER.

MS. PARKER: (*after an awkward silence*) So, remember when I said you didn't have to be "nice" all the time? I didn't exactly mean...

MIA: I know.

MS. PARKER: Okay, good.

Another awkward silence.

MS. PARKER: Look, you're completely justified in feeling angry. It's just...there are better ways...

MIA: So what am I supposed to do?? I stood up for myself and now my friends hate me. Oh, and the whole class thinks I'm a freak!

MS. PARKER: It's not that bad.

MIA: What was so wrong with being the "nice girl?" At least then people weren't afraid to make eye contact with me.

MS. PARKER: Look Mia, I'm not saying that I agree with how you handled yourself today. But there's nothing wrong with standing up for yourself. You just have to find a...nicer...(*MIA throws up her hands in frustration*)... less public way to do it. And maybe avoid quoting the speech from *Gone With the Wind*.

MIA: Oh, I blocked that part out.

MS. PARKER: You'll be fine. You'd be surprised how easily people forget stuff like this.

MIA: Great, so what am I supposed to do in the meantime? I'll be one of those strange loners who draws cats on her shoes and paints her nails with Wite-Out.

MS. PARKER: You'll have friends.

MIA: (*not convinced*) Yeah.

LOLA: (*entering*) Uh, Ms. Parker?

MS. PARKER: Yes, Lola?

LOLA: There's a bat flying through the hallway.

MS. PARKER: What??

LOLA: There's a bat...(*repeats in the same deadpan tone*)

MS. PARKER: No, Lola, I heard you the first time. I'll be right there. (*to MIA*) I have to go take care of this. We'll talk later, okay?



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