

THE BEST ESCAPE

TEN MINUTE PLAY

By Carolyn West

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SYNOPSIS: Ever find yourself in a sticky situation with no way out? Fear leads to desperation as Abby and Gina find themselves in more trouble than they can handle...and only a great idea can save them.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

ABBY
GINA

SETTING

A high school hallway.

AT RISE:

The stage is empty. Suddenly one of the classroom doors opens. ABBY and GINA burst out. They are both near panic.

ABBY: Oh my gosh!

GINA: Oh my gosh!

ABBY: That was close.

GINA: That was closer than close. We got caught.

ABBY: You're right. We should go. We should get out of here right away.

GINA: We can't go. We can't leave her in there.

ABBY: Why not?

GINA: Abby, it's Friday. She could be in there all weekend. You think we're in trouble now, wait 'til you get to school on Monday. No one looks kindly on a person who locks a teacher in a closet for two days

ABBY: Some of the kids would.

GINA: It's not the kids I'm worried about.

ABBY: I guess we'd better let her out.

GINA: We can't let her out.

ABBY: But we can't leave her in there.

GINA: What are you thinking? We can't let her out. She's really mad right now. There's no telling what she could do.

ABBY: What could she do?

GINA: She could attack us.

ABBY: Mrs. Finley? No.

GINA: Well, she could have us arrested for assault.

ABBY: Oh.

GINA: You did grab her and shove her into a closet. She could have a broken nose or missing teeth. We don't know what kind of shape she's in.

ABBY: An arrest record would not look good on a college application.

GINA: And the whole reason we did this was so you could get into a good college.

ABBY: But do you really think Mrs. Finley would press charges?

GINA: Even if she didn't, she would have to tell the principal. I don't think the punishment for attacking a teacher is anything less than expulsion.

ABBY: Oh.

GINA: Yeah.

ABBY: I swear to you, Gina, I saw her get in her car and drive away. I thought she had gone home for the day.

GINA: I know. I don't blame you. Sometimes things don't go the way you plan. Sometimes teachers walk in while you're changing your grade on their computer.

ABBY: So what are we going to do?

GINA: I don't know. You're the smart one. You think of something.

ABBY: Yeah, but you're the one always getting into trouble. You must know how to get out of it by now.

GINA: Let me think.

ABBY: How did you get out of it when you accidentally set off the fire alarm?

GINA: I didn't get out of it. I had detention for two weeks, plus they made me write an apology letter to the fire department.

ABBY: Well, what about when you let all the rats in the biology room go free?

GINA: That was a month's detention and a 15-page research paper on all the diseases wild rats can carry.

ABBY: Have you ever gotten away with anything?

GINA: No. I'm good at getting into trouble, not getting out of it. I should have learned my lesson by now.

ABBY: I should have studied for the test. That's what I should have done.

GINA: Or you could have just lived with the C.

ABBY: Oh, no. You want to get into an Ivy League school; you have to have an A-average. Making a C on that test would have put my average at a B+. I might as well kiss my life good-bye with that.

GINA: Yeah, but now...

ABBY: Now I'm going to get expelled, maybe even arrested. I won't be able to get into a junior college. I'll have to get married as soon as I turn 18. By the age of 23, I'll be living on the streets with my 12 children. We'll all be addicted to crack or something; and to support our habits, I'll have to sell my ovaries. My existence will be hideous.

GINA: It won't be that bad.

ABBY: At this point, there really isn't any other possible outcome.

GINA: Maybe Mrs. Finley didn't see us that clearly. Maybe she doesn't know it was us.

ABBY: She called my name.

GINA: True (*pauses, thinking*) I'm stumped.

ABBY: But maybe there is a way out.

GINA: Yeah?

ABBY: We could convince her it wasn't us. We could make her think she's remembering it wrong, make her think she can't trust her memory.

GINA: How?

ABBY: Well, if she was unconscious...

GINA: She's not unconscious. I think I can still hear her banging on the door.

ABBY: We could make her unconscious.

GINA: Abby!

ABBY: What?

GINA: How are we going to make her unconscious?

ABBY: We take a large object and we bang her on the head with it.

GINA: Abby, how many times have you been banged on the head with something and not lost consciousness?

ABBY: I've never lost consciousness.

GINA: This isn't the movies. It's not easy to knock someone out. There is no Vulcan knock-out grip.

ABBY: What if we hit her really hard?

GINA: We could kill her.

ABBY: (*Thinks about it for a moment*) I guess we don't want to do that.

GINA: No, we don't.

ABBY: So what are we going to do?

GINA: I don't know.

ABBY: We could run away. Leave home. Let's do that.

GINA: I thought you said you didn't want to end up living on the streets.

ABBY: We won't, if we follow my plan.

GINA: What's your plan?

ABBY: We'll head for the coast and get jobs in coffee shops. We'll hang out with a really cool crowd, having one wacky adventure after another. We'll become Bohemians. I'll write poetry and you'll be a painter.

GINA: I'm no good at art.

ABBY: That's why everyone will love your work. The art critics will say it has childish simplicity.

GINA: Afraid they'll say I need a beginners art class.

ABBY: *(Struck with an idea)* We'll both do something really great. It will make us rebels. We'll be more Bohemian than the Bohemians.

GINA: I can live with that...I think.

ABBY: We'll both be famous among the hip intellectuals. Then some fashion designer will decide we're the perfect women to model his new designs. He'll want us to model his clothes. We'll have to jet between Milan, Paris, and New York, doing one fashion show after another. Then to top everything off, we'll both fall in love with rock stars and end up living fabulous lives in Europe.

GINA: I like that.

ABBY: Yeah. *(The girls sigh and take a moment to imagine their wonderful lives. GINA is the first to come back to reality.)*

GINA: But what are we really going to do?

ABBY: I don't know. It looks like I'll be selling my ovaries. My life is a wreck.

GINA: My life is a wreck, too.

ABBY: Yeah, but your life was already a wreck. I had big plans.

GINA: Don't give up hope yet.

ABBY: We've looked at all our options. It's inevitable.

GINA: What if I went to the principal now?

ABBY: Why? So we can be expelled before the weekend?

GINA: Listen for a moment. I'll go to the principal and you'll go home. I'll tell him I did it on my own. Then you won't get in trouble. You'll be able to get into a good college and all your big plans will turn out right. Your life will be perfect.

ABBY: But Mrs. Finley saw me. I'm the one who shoved her in the closet. She'll tell everyone that I was involved.

GINA: Everything happened so fast. She doesn't know what was really going on. I'll explain it. You knew what I was going to do and you were there to stop me. You didn't really push Mrs. Finley into the closet. You were trying to protect her from my uncontrollable rage.

ABBY: When have you ever been in an uncontrollable rage?

GINA: I'll try to rage around a bit as we tell the principal.

ABBY: I have to go to the principal, too?

GINA: Well yeah, 'cause now you're turning me in.

ABBY: No one will ever believe I didn't help you.

GINA: Yeah, but they won't be sure you didn't try to stop me, either. If we both stick to the story, then they can't punish you. You'll get off.

ABBY: And you'll get expelled and go to jail.

GINA: Ah, you already said it. My life's a wreck.

ABBY: It wasn't that much of a wreck. You were just a kid who got into trouble a lot. Now you're some kind of raging maniac. They might put you in a hospital. You could get shock treatment or even lobotomized.

GINA: It's no big deal.

ABBY: I'd rather sell my ovaries than have you lose your frontal lobe. No. We'll both go to the principal. We'll tell him the truth and face the consequences together.

GINA: They're big consequences.

ABBY: Well, maybe we can stress the part about how we weren't planning to hurt her. She walked in and we panicked. Maybe they'll just suspend us and hold us back a year.

GINA: That's a good strategy. And how about we cry, too. If we're really sorry and we didn't mean to do it, then they can't punish us too much.

ABBY: Good. The truth and tears will set you free.

GINA: How are you at fake crying?

ABBY: No one fake cries better than me, especially when my college education is on the line. Just look at how I make my lips quiver.

SHE quivers her lips for GINA.

GINA: Impressive. If you pull out your nose hairs, your eyes will really tear up.

ABBY: Let's do it.

GINA: Okay.

The girls pull on their nose hairs and start to cry. They continue to wail as they exit.

BOTH: Ow!!