

Her Own Worst Enemy**Scene 4**

The Rivera family car. A few days later, in the afternoon. Aida and Vanessa are in the backseat, and Laith pretends to open the front door and get in the driver's seat. (This can be created through the placement of chairs.) Laith has his keys in his hand. He starts to put them in the ignition.

Laith: Wait a sec. I forgot something.

Aida: Your phone?

Laith: Uh, yeah. . . . I thought I had it.

(Laith motions opening the door and getting out of the car.)

Aida: *(to Vanessa)* you know we're trapped.

Vanessa: What do you mean "trapped"? Like we can't get out? I just need a ride home.

Aida: Well, my dad likes to talk in the car. He knows I can't leave.

Vanessa: What's wrong with that? My dad talks in the car.

Aida: Normally it's fine, but now he only talks about this theatre school called Julliard. Have you ever heard of it?

Vanessa: Uh, yeah! It's like only the most famous acting school in the country!

Aida: Really? Well, that really scares me.

Vanessa: Why? You don't want to go. . . . *(Vanessa hesitates when she sees Aida's face.)* Do you?

Aida: Well, they invited me to audition. I guess it's a big deal to be invited.

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Vanessa: So go!

Aida: I'd just be wasting my time. . . . And theirs. . . . Shh. He's coming.

Vanessa: And you don't want to go?

Aida: No, I don't. I don't want to think about it. I don't want to talk about it. And I don't want to hear about it. . . . now quiet. Here he comes.

(Laith gets back in the car.)

Laith: All set?

(Laith turns on the engine and motions as though he is driving.)

Laith: So, Vanessa. Did Aida tell you about her letter?

Vanessa: Yes, Mr. Rivera.

(Vanessa makes eye contact with Aida. Aida sinks down in her seat.)

Laith: So, what do you think? Shouldn't she go?

Vanessa: Well, yeah, I mean, if she wants to.

Laith: It's an amazing opportunity!

Aida: But Dad, I don't want to be an actress!

Laith: Why don't you want to be an actress?

Aida: Because I'm going to study biology, microbiology, like Salma.

Laith: Like Salma? your cousin?

Aida: Yeah, isn't she a scientist.

Laith: I think she's a teacher now, I mean at a university. *(Laith looks out the window and then brakes. They all jerk forward and back.)* Oops! I passed your house, Vanessa.

Vanessa: That's okay. I can walk.

Laith: Sorry, I got distracted. It's Aida's fault. She's making me crazy.

Aida: Dad, you're the one making me crazy!

(there's a pause while Vanessa pretends to open the car door and get out.)

Vanessa: Thanks, Mr. Rivera. Bye, Aida.

Aida: Bye, Vanessa.

(Laith pretends to drive again by miming hands on the wheel.)

Laith: Aida. . .

Aida: Dad, stop. I don't want to talk about it.

Laith: It's just an audition.

Aida: Please, Dad!

Laith: Think about it. It's only a weekend in New York. Just you and your mom. you can see some shows, go shopping. you'd like that, right? And then just one afternoon, you go to Julliard. no big deal.

Aida: *(Frustrated)* Dad. I'm about to open the door and jump out of the car.

Laith: Okay, okay, okay. . . I'll stop. I just want to say one last thing.

Aida: Last thing!

Laith: If you go, and you don't like it, I promise never to mention it again.

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Aida: Promise?

Laith: Promise. I won't mention the word theatre or acting ever again.

Aida: Are you sure?

Laith: Yes. . . trust me. At least not in the same sentence as your name.

Aida: (*Resigned but perhaps secretly okay with it*) Okay, I'll do it. But only if you promise never to talk about it again. ever, ever, ever.

Laith: Never, ever, ever. Only cells, molecules, microscopes, and labs. I promise!

Aida: Alright, I'll go.