

THE BEST ESCAPE

By Carolyn West

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CAST: ABBY and 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?

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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.

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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?

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