

The Struggle is the Blessing Script Excerpt

The Characters:

Street KidAdrienne
Social WorkerKevin
Social WorkerMike

Scene 3: Child Welfare

Adrienne stands CS. Mike is DL. Kevin is DR. The advance on her throughout the scene.

Adrienne: Can somebody please help me??

Mike and Kevin: What??

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Adrienne: Help me.

Mike and Kevin: What??

Adrienne: Is anybody listening to me?? Can anybody hear me??

(Mike and Kevin turn their backs. Adrienne faces the audience).

Adrienne: Welcome to the child welfare system. So, things are really, really bad at home, and I need help. I turn to the people society tells me I can trust and be safe with: child welfare. You won't believe what I go through to just to get their attention. Well, you probably would. So, eventually I become part of the system. Now, suddenly, the "state" is my parent. My new mom is named "Alberta", and my dad is "Ralph Klein".

Adrienne: They sure care a lot about me. Spend millions of dollars each year, taking care of me and thousands of other kids. That's a good thing, I guess. But not for the 600 kids who can't get status. But I'm in, so every tax payer is my parent. Society takes responsibility for me by paying for this social programming. I guess that means that society supports the system. At least they're paying for it, and they sure criticize everything I do in it. Yeah, sounds like parents to me... (turn to Kevin and Mike).

(Mike and Kevin turn around and hand her a contract.)

Adrienne: What's this?

Mike: Just sign.

Adrienne: But what is this?

Kevin: Just sign.

Adrienne: (reads contract out loud)... honor roll, perfect attendance, curfew... Hold on a minute... I need help here. How am I suppose to do all this? I'm only 14. I've got things I need to deal with. I can't handle this. Don't I get support? Don't I get counselling, what about some rehab, a support group, anything? Somebody please help me? What do I have to do to get some real help???

(Mike and Kevin advance on her and act like salesmen.)

Mike: You're coping well, don't you think?

Adrienne: Well, I've been better...

Kevin: Are you taking drugs... because we can't support drug addicts!

Adrienne: I'm trying to cope other ways, but it's hard...

Mike: You're okay, though, right?

Kevin: Are you in bed by 10pm? We can't support kids who are out on the streets at night...

Adrienne: I'd like to be at home, but my foster dad keeps coming into my room and...

Mike: You like your placement, don't you?

Kevin: Are you skipping school? We can't support kids who don't believe in the value of an education.

Adrienne: It's hard to worry about school when you're hungry...

Kevin and Mike: Do you want out help or not???

Adrienne: Okay, okay. (Reads contract). I, Adrienne, in order to keep my status with the child welfare system will be home by 9pm each night. I will be on the honor role by December. And I will never take drugs again. (signs contract). There, are you happy now?

Kevin and Mike: Next please...