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Caught Between Two Worlds

A Multicultural Play for Young People

By

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Dramatic Publishing Company

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(CAUGHT BETWEEN TWO WORLDS)

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This play is a representation of what it's like to be of a mixed race, in this instance Anglo and Latino. I believe this play, with minor alterations and editing, could be changed to accommodate other combinations of races. The director has my permission to make the necessary changes to help illustrate how those in this position are not alone, and that the problems faced by them are quite universal, no matter what their genetic background.

Carlos Perez

Cast of Characters

ANDREA GARCIA, an attractive 15 year-old girl who is part Latino and part Anglo but enough Latino that she can't be confused for white. She is dressed in clothes that one might find at a garage sale.

ANDREA BROWN (AB)—This is one of Andrea's alter egos. She is what Andrea would have looked like if her father from Mexico had married a woman who was also of his same ethnic group. She is much darker than Andrea and appears much more ethnic. She wears clothes that demonstrate her desire to keep her Central American heritage.

ANDREA WHITE (AW)—This is Andrea's second alter ego. She is what Andrea would have looked like had her mother married someone who looked like herself and was of her own European origin. She wears up to date fashions appropriate to a girl interested in being in style and looking to keep within her peer group of friends.

MOTHER (MARJORIE)—This is Andrea's mother. She is white with strawberry blonde hair and blue eyes and is modestly dressed. Her clothes are those that might be found off the rack at Wal-Mart.

FATHER (JAVIER)--This is Andrea's father. He is clearly Latino with dark brooding eyes and black hair. He is small in stature. He wears a white shirt and dark pants. He speaks with a Spanish accent.

JUANITA, CARLOS, and VICTOR – Latino teens who attend Andrea's school

CHARLENE BROWN--An eighth grade African-American girl who looks for help from Andrea.

MIKE, RACHEL, CINDY and DANNY—Eighth grade kids who tease Charlene

FEMALE STORE CLERK– Stuck up clerk who suspects Andrea of being a thief.

CUSTOMERS IN RECORD STORE

GIRLS 1 - 5 (voice overs)--Teenage girls who tease Andrea.

All but the first four roles may be doubled. This play may be performed with 10 or more performers.

Settings

There are four settings. However, the settings do not need to be separate from the main setting of Andrea's Bedroom. It's possible for the actors in a new setting to enter Andrea's Bedroom and play out the scene there. By doing this, the only requirement might be having a light change to denote a change of scene.

The main setting is Andrea's bedroom, which is simply furnished, comprised mostly of a bed and vanity with various posters hanging on the wall and a few stuffed animals on the bed. There is a window, which can be pantomimed. In the room there is also a large stand-up mirror, a chest of drawers, and a privacy screen for dressing.

We also have the interior of a music store that sells CDs, Andrea's school lunchroom, a hallway in Andrea's school, and a living room in her.

Scenes:

Scene 1	Andrea's Bedroom--The Present
Scene 2	School Lunchroom
Scene 3	Andrea's Bedroom
Scene 4	A Music Store
Scene 5	Andrea's Bedroom
Scene 6	The Hallway of Andrea's Previous School
Scene 7	Andrea's Bedroom
Scene 8	The living room of Andrea's home
Scene 9	Andrea's bedroom

Time—The Present

Caught Between Two Worlds received a commission from Kansas City Young Audiences and was toured for two seasons.

SCENE 1

The scene opens with ANDREA entering. She has obviously had a bad day. She crosses to a CD player and turns it on. Latin music begins playing. She crosses to the window and opens it then grabs a book from her knapsack. She sits and tries to read. After a moment, from outside, we hear girls yelling up at ANDREA'S window. During the yelling ANDREA will cross to the window and look out. No actual window needs to be on stage. The entire moment could be pantomimed. Since the voices of the girls are only heard, it's possible for the voices to be recorded or for the actors not currently on stage to do the voices.

GIRL 1

Stay home Chiquita Banana, stay home!

GIRL 2

Yeah, Andrea Sangria, don't come out! Stay away from Brad, he's my boyfriend!

GIRL 3

Yeah, stick with your own kind!

GIRL 4

Too bad you don't look like your mom!

GIRL 5

Yeah, she's hot.

GIRL 1

I like her hair!

GIRL 2

Yeah, it's blonde. What happened to you, Sangria?

GIRL 3

A mutt must have gotten through the fence.

GIRL 5

Yeah, a big brown mutt!

All of the girls start barking. ANDREA slams the window closed. She pulls out her diary from the chest of drawers. She lies down on the bed and begins writing. AB and AW appear while she writes. They both look out the window then turn to ANDREA.

AB

What are you doing sitting in here with your diary? Get out there and tear their hair out.

AW

Yeah, right.

AB

I don't get you. You're tired of being picked on but you don't do anything about it.

AW

What can she do?

AB

Tell them off.

AW laughs.

AB

What are you laughing at?

AW

There were five girls yelling up at this window. Do you really think she can stop them from teasing her?

AB

So she just sits in here writing in her diary for the rest of her life? (To ANDREA) Who do you think you are anyway, Emily Dickenson?

AW

Leave her alone. If it weren't for her writing in her diary, we wouldn't even exist. Besides, if we didn't look like you we wouldn't have to hide inside.

AB

There's nothing wrong with being Mexican.

AW

Like there's something wrong with being White? You heard them, if we looked like mom, instead of like you, we'd be fine.

AB

You mean instead of like dad.

ANDREA

(Stops writing and looks at AB) Sometimes I think mom's ashamed of me because I look like dad.

AB

That's crazy.

ANDREA

No, what's crazy is talking to you two.

AW

Why? You're really only talking to yourself. You write about us all the time.

AB

Yeah, you created us. Besides, everyone talks to themselves every once in a while.

ANDREA

Maybe, but only the mental cases hear someone answer back.

From offstage we hear MOTHER.

MOTHER

Andrea! Andrea!

MOTHER enters the room and turns off the CD player. AB and AW both become quiet.

ANDREA

Mom, you could knock you know.

MOTHER

When you're old enough to pay rent, I'll knock. (Catches herself.) I'm sorry. I heard them yelling outside again. (Pause.) Are you okay? Want to tell me what happened?

AB and AW will talk, but MOTHER won't hear them because they're only ANDREA'S thoughts.

AB

What for? You never do anything.

AW

Besides, it's your fault.

ANDREA

No, I'm okay. It's nothing important.

MOTHER

Sounded important to me. Were you talking to yourself? I thought I heard talking.

ANDREA

No.

MOTHER

Why don't you join me in the kitchen? Dinner will be ready soon. You can tell me about your day and what that yelling was all about.

ANDREA

No, I'm going to stay in here awhile.

There is a long pause.

MOTHER

Okay. (*MOTHER starts to leave.*)

ANDREA

Mom?

MOTHER turns around and looks at ANDREA.

ANDREA

Why did dad leave?

MOTHER

We've talked about this before.

AB

No we haven't, you've just blown me off by giving me the same answer every time.

AW

That's true.

MOTHER

We just didn't get along. I've told you that.

AB

And just what does that mean anyway?

AW

Yeah, didn't get along how?

ANDREA

Didn't get along how?

MOTHER

Andrea, he isn't coming home, we're divorced.

ANDREA

That doesn't mean it has to be permanent.

MOTHER

Does this have something to do with those kids who were teasing you?

AW

Duh!

AB

What do you think?

ANDREA

I don't fit in.

MOTHER

Join the club. A lot of people don't fit in.

AB

Nice way to make me feel better.

AW

No kidding.

MOTHER

I had problems fitting in at school too.

You did? ANDREA

Yes. MOTHER

How? ANDREA

I had braces and the kids would tease me. MOTHER

Mom – ANDREA

--Braces can come off. AB, AW & ANDREA

(Pointing to her skin) This can't. ANDREA

I understand. MOTHER

I look like dad, don't I? ANDREA

Quite a bit so, yes. MOTHER

Why don't your parents like dad? ANDREA

What made you ask that? MOTHER

I heard them talking when you weren't around. ANDREA

My parents weren't happy that I married him. MOTHER

ANDREA

Why?

AB

Good question.

MOTHER

They felt he wasn't good enough for me.

AB

You mean not white enough. Ask her why she doesn't like it when you want to go out and get some sun.

ANDREA

Not good enough how?

MOTHER

Why are you so interested in this now?

AB

Don't let her blow you off.

AB crosses to ANDREA and stands beside her and AW does the same.

AW

Yeah, make her tell you the truth.

ANDREA

I'm curious. Not good enough how?

MOTHER

Your grandparents are rather old fashioned.

AB

In other words, they're bigots.

ANDREA

What's a wetback?

MOTHER

A name small-minded people call Mexicans. Where did you hear that name?

ANDREA

No where special.

MOTHER studies ANDREA'S face for a moment, hoping for a change of subject then goes over to the CD player to turn it back on. She notices the CD case and turns the player back on. During this action the following dialogue is taking place.

AB

Ask her why she didn't change her name back to Smith.

AW

Yeah, that way we wouldn't be stuck with a name like Garcia.

MOTHER

Where did you get this CD?

ANDREA

From your closet.

MOTHER

Your father and I used to listen to this all the time.

ANDREA

I know.

MOTHER

(As she starts to leave) We'll talk later. After dinner you'll feel much better.

AW

Great, like gaining weight will make me feel better.

MOTHER

Anything else?

ANDREA

No, I guess not.

MOTHER leaves.

AW

Why didn't you ask her? Everyone would stop picking on us if our name wasn't Garcia and you know it.

ANDREA

Our name's not the problem. It's how we look.

AW

Lucky us. We had to take after dad.

AB

We look great, like Selma Hayek.

AW

Too bad we don't have her money or her looks then we wouldn't be ignored by waiters in restaurants.

ANDREA goes over to the CD player and turns it off. AB falls silent. AW knows she's touched a nerve.

AW

(To ANDREA) You know it's true. If we had blonde hair and blue eyes like mom, we'd fit in. (ANDREA sits quietly.) You know it's true.

ANDREA

I know.

AB

Leave her alone. No one can choose how they'll look when they're born.

AW

Maybe not now, but someday you'll be able to design your own kid through genetics.

AB

Great, then we can all look like Barbie and Ken.

AW

Is there something wrong with being blonde and white?

ANDREA

No, of course not. It's not just the white kids that give us grief.

AW

Yeah, you try talking to Mexicans and all they say is “No hablo Englas.”

ANDREA

(to AB)

If mom were from the same country as dad I'd be speaking Spanish right now. All I know is a few words and phrases.

AW

Who cares? We're in America and English is what we should be speaking.

AW

(To ANDREA) And besides, you don't have an ac—

ANDREA

I know. I don't have an accent. That's what mom was worried about. She thought if I had an accent that things would be even worse.

AW

Dad didn't believe in speaking Spanish either, remember?

ANDREA

That's true. He believed in that "melting pot" thing where once you're an American citizen you speak English. He used to get mad at his friends if they spoke Spanish.

AB

We'd be more accepted by the Mexicans that live here if we spoke Spanish.
(To AW) We need to learn another language.

AW

Will you stop saying that! Besides, who wants to be accepted by them?
(To ANDREA) I mean, you tried to be friends with the Mexicans here at school. Remember?