

## Act 1, Scene 1

I'm in an office in Manhattan. There's a large mirror embedded in one wall. The furniture is small, a table and two chairs built especially for children. There are a few toys, but none of them are very interesting.

The room is bare and cold, even though it's mid-summer in Manhattan. *Honey, we have to go, but we'll be back soon, okay?* Mom says. *Where are you going?* I feel fidgety and kick at the kiddie chair next to me. *Just for a little walk, not too far.*

My tummy hurts and I don't want to be there. *Okay, Ady Maily?* Dad asks. *We'll be back in a jip,* Mom adds. *Jiff,* Dad says.

*Wha?*

*Jiff! We'll be back in a jiff.*

*Good grief. She knows what I mean, don't you honey?*

Mom and Dad look at the woman who brought us to this room. I don't remember her name, maybe it was Ms. Abramsky, but she's wearing beige polyester pants and a sky blue short-sleeved blouse with a ruffle running along either side of the buttons.

Her arms are folded across her belly. *It'll be okay. Your mom and dad will be here in a minute.* I look at my parents. *Mom and Dad are right here.*

Mom's eyes are sharp, head tilted, arms across her chest, purse grasped tightly in her right hand. Dad's eyes are soft, moist. His hands are in his pockets.

*I guess I mean Mr. and Mrs. Schoenowitz,* Ms. Abramsky says.

*Can we step out into the hall?* Mom asks.

*Yes Mrs. Cahn,* replies Ms. Abramsky.

*Will, why don't you stay with Ady,* Mom says to Dad. She and Ms. Abramsky

step into the hall. The door shuts solidly behind them.

I couldn't hear what they said, nor do I think I wanted to, but when I was older Mom rehashed the conversations she'd had with the agency.

*Everything was fine until I called to say we wanted to adopt Adrienne, Mom remembered saying. I know,* responded Ms. Abramsky.

*When we first came into this agency we were very clear that we were looking for a baby girl that we could adopt—*

*I wasn't here then—*

*I know that, but it should be in the file because when we were called we were told that you had a little girl from drug-addicted parents and that it would be a long-term foster parenting opportunity that probably would turn into an adoption.*

*At that time the mother was in jail and the father was nowhere to be found, said Ms. Abramsky. Right...and all the time your agency is telling us, 'Don't worry, everything is fine—'*

*And it was. When you asked about adopting Adrienne we had to try and contact the biological parents, which we did—*

*Uh huh—*

*—When Adrienne was born Mrs. Schoenowitz voluntarily put Adrienne into foster care, so we had to try to speak to both Mr. and Mrs. Schoenowitz—*

*So that's why we're here now— —and they wanted to meet Adrienne. What about adopting Adrienne? Is that still in the picture? Mrs. Cahn, we're a foster agency and in no way an adoption agency. We have certain guidelines. Does one of those guidelines include telling Mrs. Schoenowitz she has the right to take Adrienne back? It took a long time for Mom to get an answer to that question.*