

A PAINFUL LESSON

Written by

Jacqueline Anderson

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

A LITTLE GIRL, about five years old, and her MOTHER, a brown-skinned slender woman with natural curls are grocery shopping. Little Girl grabs a nearby foam spongy dish scrubber and pulls a piece off. Mother turns around right before the Little Girl is able to drop the piece of sponge.

MOTHER

Don't do that!

Mother swats the Little Girl's hand which brings an instant frown and tears to the Little Girl's eyes. Seeing the Little Girl's tears, Mother kneels, takes her hand and gently kisses it.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

That belongs to the store and now we might have to pay for it, do you understand why that was wrong? Come on.

Mother takes the torn scrubber and the Little Girl nods, wipes her eyes and smiles up at her. Holding hands, they walk in rhythm and encounter LITTLE GIRL TWO, around the same age.

The Little Girl smiles at her, but Little Girl Two sticks her tongue out and walks away. Little Girl freezes in her tracks, looking hurt and confused.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

What's wrong?

Eyes full of tears, the Little Girl looks up at Mother.

LITTLE GIRL

Why did she do that? I smiled at her.

Little Girl bursts into tears and Mother kneels down and tries to console her.

MOTHER

What happened, Baby?

LITTLE GIRL

She did this to me.

With tears rolling down her cheeks, Little Girl sticks her tongue out.

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)

Why, I was nice to her?

MOTHER

Oh, you didn't do anything to her, baby. She could have just been having a bad day or something.

LITTLE GIRL

That's not nice to do to people! When I was being bad, I was having a bad day and then you kissed my hand and I wasn't having a bad day anymore so I was nice to her!

Mother kneels and smiles at the Little Girl as she wipes her tears.

MOTHER

You're right, she had no right taking her bad day out on you. But, maybe you can try to understand how she might have felt because maybe nobody kissed her hand after her bad day.

LITTLE GIRL

Well, I didn't feel good either when I was having a bad day.

MOTHER

I'm sorry that hurt your feelings. Baby, sometimes, hurting people hurt other people because they're feeling so bad. It's not an excuse for bad behavior but, remembering that can help you understand when some people act mean so that you don't take it personally, ok?

Mother kisses the Little Girl on the forehead.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Hey, ice cream?

LITTLE GIRL

Yeah!

The Little Girl beams up at her mother and the pair walk off hand-in-hand.

FADE TO BLACK.