

ABANDONED

TEN MINUTE PLAY

By Laurie Allen

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SYNOPSIS: Jill thought her mother died when she was five years old. Now, years later, she discovers that her mother is alive but has never tried to make contact. Will she meet the mother that rejected her? What will she say after all these years?

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(2 WOMEN)

SARA
JILL

AT RISE:

SARA: (*pacing back and forth*) I couldn't sleep all night. All I could do was think.

JILL: It's all my fault.

SARA: It's not your fault.

JILL: I spilt the beans. I should have left it alone. All these years, you thought your mother was dead.

SARA: Looks like she did a fine job of raising you. Funny, she runs off and raises another man's child, but forgets about her own.

JILL: I never knew about you.

SARA: So see, it's not your fault.

JILL: Should I have kept it a secret?

SARA: No!...Oh, it hurts. It hurts all over. It's hard to understand. You know there's supposed to be a special bond between a mother and a daughter. But my mother, she just left. Left without a trace.

JILL: Sara, it wasn't your fault.

SARA: How do you know?

JILL: You were only five years old when she left!

SARA: Well, maybe I was a terrible child. Perhaps I cried all the time. Or maybe I was mean. I might have pulled everything out of the drawers and written on the walls with crayolas. Possibly I was never potty trained and I just went all over the house. (*pause*) Maybe she couldn't stand me!

JILL: Sara, I don't know why she left. She's the only one who has the answers.

SARA: My mother never talked about her past? Never uttered a word about me?

JILL: No. All I knew was that she was raised by her aunt because of her own mother dying. But that's about all.

SARA: Was my mother nice to you?

JILL: Yes...she was nice.

SARA: Did she ever tell you stories? You know, at bedtime when you were a little girl?

JILL: Yes. She would tell me stories every night.

SARA: Did she attend your activities at school? You know, PTA, Open House, special programs...

JILL: Yes, most of them.

SARA: She must have been proud of you.

JILL: I don't know. Maybe.

SARA: Sounds to me like she was a pretty good stepmother. Jill...do you love her?

JILL: Sara, she's been my stepmother since I was eight years old.

SARA: But do you love her?

JILL: I...I don't know.

SARA: My father did.

JILL: Did you?

SARA: I have bad memories.

JILL: Like what?

SARA: Like...she used to sew a lot. I remember...I remember playing with the scraps of material. And one day I was cutting this yellow flowery scrap of material with my scissors. And all of a sudden, she looked down at me from her chair and started screaming at me. "That's not a scrap! Why are you doing this to me? I hate you! I hate you! Do you hear me? I hate you!" *(pause)* I never told anyone that before.

JILL: I'm sorry those are the kinds of childhood memories you have about your mom.

SARA: Jill, who sent my mother those letters? The ones telling her all about me as I was growing up?

JILL: I don't know. There wasn't a signature.

SARA: What did they say?

JILL: The letters were very brief. When I found them, I knew I was looking at something I wasn't supposed to be seeing. I read them quickly because I was afraid I'd get caught. One letter talked about you singing a solo in church.

SARA: It was my father's birthday. I sang "Sweet Hour of Prayer." It was his favorite. What else?

JILL: One letter said that you broke your arm.

SARA: I was ten. I fell off Becky's horse. What else?

JILL: That you went steady with a boy. Scottie somebody.

SARA: Scottie...Scott. I was thirteen. What else?

JILL: Thirteen?

SARA: He was fifteen. What else?

JILL: You dated at thirteen?

SARA: We didn't date. We exchanged I.D. bracelets.

JILL: Oh.

SARA: What else?

JILL: I don't remember much more.

SARA: All these questions keep going around in my head. Why did she leave? Why didn't she take me with her? Why didn't she miss me?

JILL: Your mother is the only one who has the answers, Sara.

SARA: And to think, all these years, there's only been sixty miles between us! Sixty miles! I was here and she was there with her new family. With you!

JILL: I'm sorry.

SARA: She could've come back! At least to say "Hi"!

JILL: She should've come back...for her own daughter.

SARA: I don't care! I don't care!

JILL: My father and I didn't know about you, Sara. She never mentioned you. I thought I was her only child. Well, stepchild. I don't understand this, either. How could a mother...

SARA: She hated me.

JILL: No.

SARA: And I hated her!

JILL: You have the right. And look what she's missed out on. You're beautiful.

SARA: My father told me she was dead. Why did he do that?

JILL: To make it easier on you?

SARA: Yes, that's probably why. Because with me thinking my mother was dead, how could I expect her to come back?

JILL: It was probably for the best. I mean, what do you tell a little girl when she keeps asking about her mother?

SARA: I knew she left, but I kept thinking she would come back. I used to sit on the porch and cross my fingers that she'd come driving up that dirt road. After a while, I guess it was just too pitiful for my father to watch.

JILL: How old were you when your father said she'd died?

SARA: I was in the third grade. I came home from school one day with a pretty Mother's Day picture for my mother. That's when Dad sat me down and said she had been in a horrible car accident and died.

JILL: He was trying to protect you.

SARA: I used to imagine that she died while driving back to see me...but she's not dead... I have to see her!

JILL: Sara, she doesn't even know that I found out about you. You're still a secret as far as she's concerned.

SARA: Well, her secret is out!

JILL: What do you want me to do?

SARA: I want you to bring your mother...my mother...here. To me, Jill. Don't tell her where you're going, just put her in your car and don't stop driving until you reach my house. Then she'll have no choice but to face me, like it or not.

JILL: Sara, are you sure you're ready for this?

SARA: Jill, I've been prepared for this for eleven years.

JILL: What will you say to her? After all this time...what will you say to your mother?

SARA: (*short pause*) I thought you'd gone on a trip, Mother. A very long, long trip. But then the weeks passed, the months, the years...and yet, I always knew you'd come back. And look, here you are. You've finally come back to see me.

THE END

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