

Moo-lah-doe

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published by the Educational Theatre Association - 2022

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(Talking to her best friend, who has just pulled her away from an altercation)

What did she just call me?? What she say?? No...no, I'm not gonna calm down...SHE better calm down. What is a MOO-LAH-DOE?? Is she trying to say I'm mixed? That's offensive. Nobody here has ever even seen my Mom, so how does she know she's Black? My Dad never comes to the school, so how does she know he's White?? She doesn't even know me...she doesn't know anything about me. I don't even know about me. *(Long beat. Sits.)* I can't stand the girls at this school. They always think they know everything...always got something to say. I guess that was supposed to hurt my feelings. She better be glad my Dad doesn't like it when I get in trouble. He doesn't like any kind of trouble, even the good kind...where you stand up for yourself and protect the people you love. But if my Mom was still alive, you know what I think she would say? She would tell me everything my Dad won't. She would tell me not to start fights, but to finish them. She would be proud of me for defending myself. She would tell me it's ok, because that girl called me something offensive, and I don't have to take it. Shoot, if I knew my mom's sisters, I bet they would come up here and yell at the teachers if they tried to punish me too. Then they would take me out of school and take me to lunch and shopping. Then they would bring me home, tell my mom what happened...and she would hug me and say she is proud of me because nobody talks to her baby like that. She'd say, "Aren't you glad your aunties were there for you when I couldn't be?" And we would all laugh and start dinner. And instead of going into another room and avoiding me like he usually does, my dad would probably be sitting on the couch in the other room, pretending to read a newspaper, but really eavesdropping on us in the kitchen laughing and talking about it. And he'd just shake his head and smile; glad that she was the one handling it. Cuz if he had to handle it...how he would probably handle it...would be different. He doesn't want me "starting trouble." He always says that...I remember after the funeral, he kept telling all Mom's family that "he didn't want any trouble" and that the two of us would be ok, and everything would be fine. That's the last I heard from any of them. And we're not ok. And everything is not fine.



The Educational Theatre Association was awarded an ARI Community Arts Projects grant by the Ohio Arts Council to complete this work in the spring of 2022, under a project known as "Finding Voice".

