



Friend or Foe?

Plays About Bullying



By Catherine Gourley

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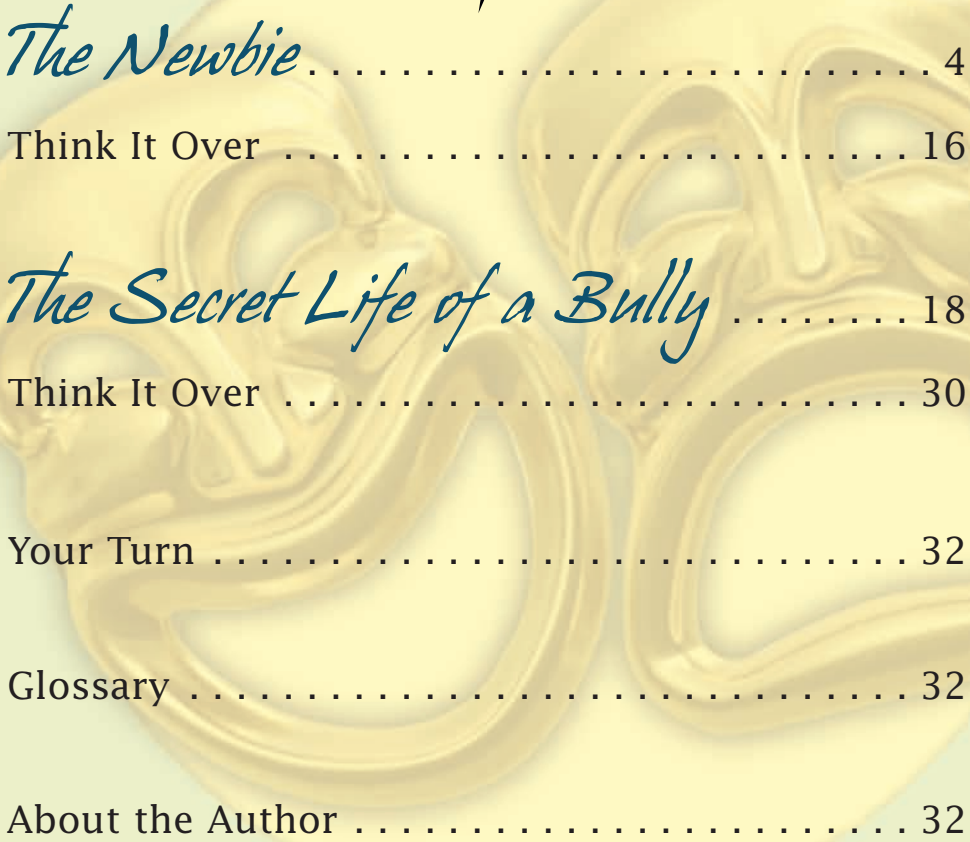
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Note to the reader: Be sure to look at the Glossary on page 32 to find definitions of words that might be unfamiliar.

The Newbie

When María, a seventh grader who is new to cell phones and texting, becomes the victim of cyber bullying, she begins to suspect her best friend of starting the rumors about her. When she learns the truth, María also learns a little about herself.

Characters:

Narrators 1, 2, 3

María Martínez, a seventh grade student

Mrs. Martínez, María's mother

Kaylee, María's best friend

Mr. Horrigan, science teacher

Megan, a student at the Center for Math and Science Charter School

Joey, María's biology lab partner

Sweet Pea, an anonymous sender of text messages

Scene 1

Narrator 1: On the last day of summer vacation, María and Kaylee are lying on their matching beach towels at the public pool. They are discussing the most important thing in their lives—the first day of school tomorrow.

Narrator 2: Both girls are going to new schools—Kaylee will enter the seventh grade at John F. Kennedy Middle School. But María has won a scholarship to the Center for Math and Science, a charter school in town. And she’s dreading it.

María: I’ve decided. I’m going to run away.

Kaylee: Where to?

María: Your house.

Kaylee: Don’t you think that’s the first place your mother will look for you?

María: I’m serious, Kaylee. I never wanted that scholarship. It was my mother’s idea.

Kaylee: JFK will be a new school for me, too.

Narrator 3: Kaylee’s phone beeps. Quickly, she picks it up, reads the message, and sends a reply.

María: Stop texting. I’m in the middle of a crisis here!

Kaylee: Did you ask your mother again about getting your own cell phone?

María: Every day. It’s always the same answer. I don’t need a cell phone to talk to my friends.

Narrator 1: That night, however, María’s mother surprises her with a back-to-school gift: a new backpack.

Mrs. Martínez: Look inside. I know how nervous you are about tomorrow, and I thought this might cheer you up.

María: My own cell phone? YES! I’m going to text Kaylee!

Mrs. Martínez: Wait one minute. You can only use the phone in school for an emergency. No gossiping. And if I think it’s distracting you from your schoolwork—

María: Okay, okay! I get the message!

Scene 2

Narrator 2: On the first day of school, Kaylee and María walk in different directions.

Narrator 3: A nervous Kaylee enters the doors of JFK Middle School. Within minutes she sees familiar faces—Tina and Rick. She thinks, “This isn’t going to be so bad after all!”

Narrator 1: Across town, however, María is lost. Literally. The charter school is a maze of hallways.

Joey: You a newbie?

María: A what?

Joey: You know, new to Sci High?

María: Oh! Yeah, I’m trying to find Mr. Horrigan’s class.

Joey: Biology. I’m going there, too. I’ll walk with you.

Scene 3

Mr. Horrigan: Welcome to seventh grade biology, the study of life.

Narrator 2: Mr. Horrigan writes the words “observation” and “question” on the chalkboard.

Mr. Horrigan: In life, an observation provokes a question. And a question leads to . . . ?

María: (*calling out*) An answer?

Mr. Horrigan: No . . . a hypothesis.

Narrator 3: The teacher looks at his seating chart.

Mr. Horrigan: Miss María Anna Martínez, correct? You’re new here. At this school, students raise their hands when they wish to participate in class.

Narrator 1: María sinks a little in her seat. At that moment, her phone vibrates. She pretends to get something out of her backpack and grabs her phone.

Mr. Horrigan: Miss Martínez.