

Don't Be Afraid
by Jason Johnson-Spinos

(A MOM helps her anxious DAUGHTER get her backpack on.)

DAUGHTER
Mommy, they're waiting for me.

MOM
Tell me again.

DAUGHTER
I'm gonna be late!

MOM
Tell me again.

DAUGHTER
(deep breath)
Don't talk to strangers.
Wash my hands after I go to the bathroom.
Keep my inhaler with me at all times.
No soda, ice cream, candy, chips, pizza, peanuts, almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, walnuts,
macadamia nuts, Brazil nuts, meat, cheese, or gluten.
(breath and beat)
Hear a loud noise...

(Long beat as she struggles to remember.)

MOM
Hear a loud noise...

DAUGHTER
(nervous) Hear a loud noise...

(Another moment of struggle.)

MOM
Honey, you're scaring me.

DAUGHTER
...find a place to hide.

MOM
Find a place to hide. *(smiles)* That's it. You did it.
(gives her a kiss)
I'll see you after school, honey. I love you.

DAUGHTER

Mommy, I don't think I'm ready.

MOM

Hey. You're ready. You've got this.
Don't be afraid.

(Blackout.)