

*Audacious Sally*

*CHARACTERS:*

*SALINA - A glamorous, perfect, stubborn and arrogant girl at Westerville Junior High. Her heart is soft and kind but her outside is as hard and cold as steel. All she wants is attention, but her ignorance leads people away from her, leading to a vicious cycle.*

*LILY - SALINA's bright ex-friend who left her when SALINA became too arrogant and crazy on popularity and attention. Kindhearted and able to persuade just about anyone, it is up to her to 'cure' her friend. She is rather popular as a nice friend and attracts people with her empathy and care toward others.*

*[The doors of Westerville Junior High open. Students cheer and pour into the school, refreshed after summer break. LILY laughs and chats with multiple friends; SALINA pecks at her followers about how they wrongly color coded their skirts. A common buzz of excitement echoes through the halls.]*

*LILY: [Leaving her friends and drawing into earshot of SALINA]. Sally! How are you? I haven't seen you in so long!*

*SALINA: [Smirking and eying her followers in the corners of her eyes] Oh my gosh, Lily, don't you remember seeing me at the mall? [To her followers] I got amazing things, all pink and glittery and perfect. I bet Lil didn't get a thing that matched her well. Oh, maybe she's a bit cute, as they think, but she never wears skirts! Ugh!*

LILY: *[Calmly] Oh, well. I saw you, of course. But not you. Your dirty ignorant self. That is not the Salina I knew from last year.*

*[SALINA makes an expression of fake shock to show off her new contour makeup. LILY rejoins her friends. One by one, SALINA's friends leave and she is left alone. LILY is invisible in her huge circle of friends.]*

LILY: *[Talking to herself] I wish Sally will turn back to normal. All this middle school drama is poisoning her. How can this stop?*

*[It is getting dark on Halloween Night. SALINA is strolling in the park with some companions, trying hard to think up things to keep their attention and make them laugh. In the shadows, LILY watches carefully, waiting for a chance to speak to SALINA.]*

SALINA: *... and the next day, I found it! Haha...!?* *[When nobody laughs, she keeps her mouth shut, embarrassed, as people giggle at someone else's joke.]*

*[Suddenly a great trumpet sounds from the road near the park, followed by loud cheers and music.]*

SALINA'S COMPANIONS: *Look! A parade!* *[They rush to the road where the procession is. LILY quietly follows them.]*

*[The crowd is huge. The speakers announce free candy and participation for the Halloween parade.]*

*SALINA: Why don't we head over there instead of going to the trick-or-treat at Brown Village? [Grits her teeth in disappointment and confusion when her friends rush ahead, ignorant of her wails]*

*[SALINA rushes toward her friends, but trips on someone's foot. A great crowd of people pour over her, and she is trampled seriously. LILY waits in the shadows of the trees, grimacing but waiting for the right time.]*

*SALINA: [Gasping and wheezing for breath under multiple feet] Amara! Luca! Maisie! H... Heh... Help! Anyone? D-d-don't abandon me...he...hee...! [Gives up calling for help and relaxes, helpless against the endless river of feet pounding on her back]*

*LILY: Sally! [She bursts from the dark and runs toward SALINA, who is covered in dirt and grime] Take my hand! [To the paraders] clear off! What are you doing -- you're suffocating my friend!*

*[People begin to clear away. SALINA chokes and sits up. LILY sighs in relief and leads her friend to a nearby bench.]*

*SALINA: [Amazed and relieved] Lily...*

*LILY: It's okay. Just rest.*

*SALINA: [Wincing as she shifts her position] You didn't have to come for me. You didn't have to save my life. I thought... I thought everybody hated me. Why... Why did you come?*

LILY: *Don't you worry. I was your friend all along. You see... [smiles in pleasure, for her plan worked] Those girls, the ones you thought were your followers, don't stick around to help you. They aren't any help to you in life. There's no point in chasing them around and trying to get their attention.*

SALINA: *I... I'm so sorry, my dearest Lily! [Breaks down into sobs] I... All I wanted was... was... attention. I wanted to shine above others. I... wanted to look better than you. You had so many friends and I didn't, so I wanted to know how you got to that. I guess I chose wrongly. [After a minute] Well, I s'pose you're just kind and smart and accomplished and caring... that's why people like you. Me? I'm a dunce and all I have is a pretty appearance... all useless like a lonely, brainless but pretty Barbie doll. That's me.*

LILY: *Sally, it's alright. Just try harder now. Focus on academic and social achievement. Be caring and help out. That's it -- all you need to do to make friends!*

SALINA: *[Nods and smiles through her tears] Alright, then, Lil. You just see me tomorrow -- I'll be someone else.*

*[It is the end of the year. The Award Ceremony approaches, and a lot of rumors are spreading about SALINA and LILY.]*

LILY: *[To SALINA] Sally! Guess what? I've heard that you might get the Kindness Award for this year!*

SALINA: *You're kidding. You'll see -- tomorrow everyone will know that you got it -- like always. Don't worry, I'll be proud of you!*

*[The day of the ceremony arrives. LILY and SALINA sit next to each other in the auditorium, waiting as the principal calls up the awarded students.]*

*PRINCIPAL: ...the Academic Achiever award is given to... drumroll please... LILY BAKER!*

*LILY: [Dazed] Why me? It should've been you, Sally! Maybe I got one milli-point higher than you -- not much!*

*SALINA: Way to go, Lily! I'm so proud of you! [Cheers along with the others]*

*[LILY receives her medal and speech and returns to her seat.]*

*PRINCIPAL: Now one of the most important awards... the Kindness Award! We honor this special student who has proved most worthy of praise in showing acts of kindness and inclusiveness. This particular student of this year has had some rough days before and nobody expected her to earn such an award. [A murmur passes through the crowd] Drumroll please... And the winner is... SALINA STARLIGHT!*

*SALINA: [Gasps and tries to speak but no words come out in her amazement]*

*LILY: I knew it, Sally! You did it! Yippee! C'mon, head up and fetch your medal!! Whatcha waiting for?*

*[SALINA stumbles up the stage. She happily receives her medal and her innumerable new friends clap excitedly for her. LILY flashes a smile. SALINA returns it. The principal drones on and on, but SALINA does not hear. For the first time, she feels successful.]*

*LILY: [To SALINA afterwards] This is just the beginning, my friend. You'll see how much your change has impacted this school and your friends... you just wait and see!*

*[SALINA is invisible among her huge crowd of new friends who are congratulating her. LILY smiles and joins in.]*

*[FINIS]*