

SCENE 1

LIGHTS UP
MID CURTAIN

A couch is on stage with a TV facing away from the audience.

JESUS
Yup, it's me. What, you don't
recognize me? I'm like, kind of
famous. Okay, well my name is-

MARY
(from off stage)
Yeshua Emmanuel!

JESUS flinches

JESUS
...but my friends call me *Jesus*.

MARY enters with a bath towel draped over her arm

MARY
I have been telling you for
millennia, *please* hang up your
towel when you are done with it!

JESUS
How do you even know it was *mine*?

MARY unfolds the towel, it has JESUS' face imprinted on it.

JESUS (CONT'D)
Well, I guess now you're up to
speed. That's right, it's my second
coming. But first, I gotta go to
high school. Like I didn't suffer
enough in my last coming. Anyway, I
was hoping to just have a normal
life this time, but things actually
seem even weirder than the last
time I was here. Oh well.

WELCOME TO THE 21ST CENTURY

JESUS
WELCOME TO THE TWENTY-FIRST
CENTURY.
CHECK OUT MY MODERN CLOSED-TOED
SHOES. MY MOM IS KIND OF STUCK IN
THE BRONZE AGE,

MARY enters again, sits on the couch, and turns on the TV.

JESUS (CONT'D)
ESPECIALLY WHEN SHE'S WATCHING FOX
NEWS. IT'S MY SECOND COMING BUT
THIS TIME I'LL STAY SANE' CAUSE
CRUCIFYING PEOPLE IS NO LONGER
CONSIDERED HUMANE.

Hey, Mom!

JESUS sits on the couch with MARY.

JESUS (CONT'D)
Hey mom! Oh God, what are they
saying on tv now?

MARY
Shh! They're talking about a public
school where God's allowed.

REPORTER
Reporting live from the Gail County
Board of Education.

MIDDLE CURTAIN
OPENS PARTWAY

ANNELISE, SAMANTHA, CHERYL, the MOMSEMBLE, and BOARD MEMBERS
are at the Board of Education. There is dais and microphone
stand with a sign that reads "DO NOT TOUCH THE MICROPHONE!"

ANNELISE approaches the dais and pulls the microphone from
the stand, holding it in hand.

ANNELISE
WELCOME TO THE TWENTY-FIRST
CENTURY.
THE TIME FOR CHANGE IS NOW!
WE'RE WINNING HEARTS AND MINDS,
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW.

SAMANTHA
IF THE FACT OF THE MATTER ISN'T
ENOUGH... UM...

MOMSEMBLE
(yelling at SAMANTHA)
MAKE A CONTROVERSY UP!

CURTAIN CLOSES

ANNELISE

Enroll at Mosaic Classical Charter
by The Mother Frontier, where
unlike other public schools, God's
al-

JESUS turns off the TV.

JESUS

Mom, you don't really believe that,
do you?

MARY

WELCOME TO THE TWENTY-FIRST
CENTURY,
I JUST WANT THE BEST FOR MY SON.
KEEPING UP IS SO HARD NOWADAYS
WITH SO MUCH INFORMATION.
EVERYONE'S AN EXPERT OR SO THEY
CLAIM,
BUT TO ME IT ALL LOOKS THE SAME.

Well if other public schools won't
even allow God inside, I don't know
where else to enroll you, Yesu-Pop.

JESUS

Oh my God, Mom... that's not even
what that means.

MARY

Well, what am I supposed to
believe? It says so on the news!

THE CURTAIN
OPENS FULLY

COMPANY is at the Mosaic Classical Academy open house, donned
in patriotic themed decor

JESUS

WELCOME TO THE TWENTY-FIRST
CENTURY.
CHECK OUT MY MODERN CLOSED-TOED
SHOES.
MY MOM IS KIND OF STUCK IN THE
BRONZE AGE,
ESPECIALLY WHEN SHE'S WATCHING FOX
NEWS.
IT'S MY SECOND COMING BUT THIS TIME
I'LL STAY SANE' CAUSE CRUCIFYING
PEOPLE IS NO LONGER CONSIDERED
HUMANE.

ANNELISE AND MOMSEMBLE

WELCOME TO THE TWENTY-FIRST
CENTURY.
THE TIME FOR CHANGE IS NOW!
WE'RE WINNING HEARTS AND MINDS,
IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW.
IF THE FACT OF THE MATTER ISN'T
ENOUGH...
MAKE A CONTROVERSY UP!

MARY

WELCOME TO THE TWENTY-FIRST
CENTURY,
I JUST WANT THE BEST FOR MY SON.
KEEPING UP IS SO HARD NOWADAYS
WITH SO MUCH INFORMATION.
EVERYONE'S AN EXPERT OR SO THEY
CLAIM,
BUT TO ME IT ALL LOOKS THE SAME.

SCENE 2A

NO TRANSITION

JESUS

Mom, I don't want to go to school in... The Greater Gail Area Business Park. I'm gonna have to take like, three buses to get here. I can walk to Sycamore Hill High School. Why can't I go there?

MARY

Public schools don't allow God now apparently. We don't have private school money. Mosaic Classical Charter Academy is our only reasonable option - unless you want to get persecuted by the government *again*.

JESUS

I think I'd rather be on another cross than at this open house.

ANNELISE approaches the microphone

ANNELISE

Welcome to all our prospective primary stakeholders... and your kids. If you want a child to brag about, consider joining the pickle ball team! MCCA's is the best in Gail County!

JAMIE

Aren't we the only school pickle ball team in Gail County?

JESUS

Yeah, this sucks.

MARY

This is your second coming, Jesus. It only happens once!

JESUS

Oh *big deal*, I'm fourteen. Unless I'm 30 or a baby, when has anyone even cared about what I am doing enough to write it down?

MARY

Just give it a chance. I think you'll be popular!, aren't all these kids... what's that word again? Um - *Christians!*

JESUS

Yeah I still am kind of confused on Christianity. At times, it just seems we lost the plot somewhere. Like they're just *adding their own stuff.*

MARY

Now why in the world you so loved would you ever think that?

SAMANTHA approaches the microphone

SAMANTHA

Attention everyone. Your votes for the MCCA school mascot are in, and our mascot is... a *dead tie* between the crusaders...

JESUS cringes

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

...and the patriots...

JESUS cringes more

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

So, I have made an executive decision... The mascot will be... the Mosaic Classical Crusatriots!

A mascot with a crusader helmet, tricorn hat, cross shield and pickle ball paddle enters, confetti shoots off

JESUS

My God, why do you insist on constantly **forsaking me?**

MACKAISELEIGH

Excuse you. Can you *not* take the Lord's name in vain? I enrolled here to not hear that all day.

MARY

(mouthing)

Go talk to them!

JESUS

(begrudged)
Hey guys. Sorry about that.

MACKAISELEIGH ROCKI and ANDRE stare at Him.

JESUS (CONT'D)
Um. It's nice to meet you.

MACKAISELEIGH
Okay...
(back to her peers)
Anyway like I was saying - high school is going to be great. The prime of my life!

JESUS
(wedging Himself in)
Yeah! I am uh - super stoked to be here... What are you all most excited about?

ROCKI
Well I'll be able to focus on English now that the teacher isn't allowed to teach pronouns. Ha ha pronouns are dumb.

JESUS
What?

ANDRE
And I'll be able to focus on English now that it's the only language spoken in school. No more immigrant kids subjecting me to their *Spanish*. This is America!

JESUS
Okay slow down-

MACKAISELEIGH
And most important, the student body is finally on the same page about who deserves our respect...

MACKAISELEIGH ANDRE AND ROCKI
America!

MACKAISELEIGH
(to JESUS)
How about you?

JESUS
Um... I need to find a bathroom.

JESUS walks back to MARY

MARY
How did it go?

JESUS
Bad.

MARY
What? Why? Did you call them a
brood of snakes again? Did you tell
them (*whispering*) "come out"? I
told you last time, people don't-

JESUS
No! Mom, whatever a christian is,
it's got nothing to do with me.

MARY
Oh come on.

JESUS
I'm serious! These kids aren't
welcoming immigrants, forgiving
others as they are forgiven. They
even seem a little into idol-
worship.

MACKAISELEIGH ROCKI and ANDRE stare longingly at a US flag

JESUS (CONT'D)
I've seen this tree before, and I
don't like its fruits.

ROCKI
What the hell did He just call me?

JESUS
Mom, I just want to go to my normal
school and be a normal kid!

MARY
Well, you aren't a normal kid.
(*whispering*) You are Jesus.

JESUS
Mom, please...

SAMANTHA KAREN and SUSAN enter

MARY

There's a messianic job ahead of you which you can't do if a government school persecutes you now...

SUSAN

Say it louder for the people in the back, momma!

SAMANTHA

I haven't seen you before. Are you new to the area?

MARY

I heard about the charter on the news. My Son *needs* to be in a school where *God is allowed*.

KAREN

Right, if Pride flags are allowed, Jesus *cannot* be banned!

MARY smiles, relieved

SAMANTHA

What middle school are you both coming from?

JESUS

Sycamore Hill Elementary-Middle,
Public School #316?

SAMANTHA KAREN and SUSAN shutter and clutch their bags

KAREN

Sycamore Hill?

SUSAN

In the... the... the... *South Side*?

JESUS

Yes, Just off South Sycamore Boulev-

SAMANTHA

Great meeting you! Good luck running from the government.

SAMANTHA KAREN and SUSAN speed walk away

MARY

They seemed nice.

JESUS

We've been running from the government forever... I'm tired.

MARY

Then this is a good thing. This is a school that welcomes *Jesus*.

JESUS

This is a school that wouldn't recognize *Jesus* if I was literally in the same room. Wait a minute...

KAREN

Okay anyone that hasn't gotten a uniform, line up!

MADDOX, ANDRE, and JESUS form a line at the table.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Name?

MADDOX

Maddox Farmer.

KAREN

Here you go. Next.

ANDRE

Andre Fisher.

KAREN

Here is yours. Next... Young man? Your name?

ALL freeze in place except for JESUS

THIS TIME

JESUS

(addressing the audience)

WHERE I COME FROM, I'M USED TO
LIVIN'

WITH A TARGET ON MY BACK

I GET PRETTY TIRED OF RUNNIN'

JUST TO BUY SOME TIME UNTIL THE
NEXT GUY ATTACKS

I'VE RUN LITERALLY SINCE BIRTH TO
THIRTEEN,

GOING ON THIRTY THEN BACK
TO OUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED

PERSECUTORY ACTIVITIES

(MORE)

JESUS (CONT'D)
 NO ONE CARES WHAT I DO
 BETWEEN MY INFANCY AND MY PRIME

STUDENTS unfreeze and join in choreography around JESUS

JESUS (CONT'D)
 WHICH MEANS I'VE GOT A DECADE AND
 SOME CHANGE
 AND I JUST WANNA BE A KID THIS TIME
 MAYBE I'VE FOUND MY NEST,
 MAYBE I'VE FOUND MY DEN
 AT LEAST UNTIL THE DAY
 I'M CRUCIFIED AGAIN.
 IF BIDDING MY TIME IS THE BEST I CAN
 GET
 THEN I GUESS I'VE GOT NOTHING TO
 LOSE
 CAUSE IF I TELL THEM I'M CHRIST,
 THEY'LL NEVER BELIEVE ME
 SO I'M JUST A KID WITH NOTHING TO
 PROVE
 IF THEY'D READ THE BOOK
 OR TAKE A LOOK
 EVEN FOR JUST A MINUTE THEY'D SEE
 THAT THIS AIN'T ME,
 I'D SOW GOOD SEEDS,
 BUT UGH. THEY'RE SO DEEP IN IT!
 I'LL NEVER BE THE MESSIAH THEY
 WANT,
 BUT SOMEDAY I'LL BE WHAT THEY GET

STUDENTS closely surround JESUS pointing at Him, with cold
 stares.

JESUS (CONT'D)
 OR I'LL BE THE NEXT HERETIC THEY
 CRUCIFY

Wait, hang on, I'm getting way
 ahead of myself... I'm just
 fourteen years old!

STUDENTS break their stares and abruptly resume enthusiastic
 dancing joyfully around JESUS

JESUS (CONT'D)
 I'M NOT EVEN HALFWAY THERE YET!
 SO MAYBE I'VE FOUND MY NEST,
 MAYBE I'VE FOUND MY DEN!
 MY NEW DISCIPLES ARE NOTHING LIKE I
 THOUGHT THEY'D BE
 BUT THAT SOUNDS LIKE A PROBLEM FOR
 WHEN I'M THIRTY-THREE
 (MORE)

JESUS (CONT'D)

THIS TIME BEFORE THE PALMS, THIS
TIME BEFORE THE SHROUD
I CAN JUST HAVE FUN AND IF IT GOES
WRONG, OH WELL!
IT'S NOT LIKE ANYONE'S WRITING THIS
DOWN...
MAYBE I'VE FOUND MY NEST,
MAYBE I'VE FOUND MY DEN!
AT LEAST UNTIL THE DAY I'M
CRUCIFIED AGAIN
I'M GONNA BE NORMAL!
I'M GONNA BE FREE 'TILL I GOTTA BE
CHRIST AGAIN

SCENE 2B

STUDENTS return to the positions in which they began

SUSAN

Hello? ...What is your name?

JESUS

(startled)

Sorry! My name is Je- nald.

SUSAN

Your name is... *Jeenald*?

JESUS

Yes. *Jeenald* uh... Carpenter!

ANNELISE

Unfortunately *Jeenald*, we are out
of seats. I will add you do the
waitlist.

SCENE 3A

NO TRANSITION

SAMANTHA

(Pulling ANNELISE aside)

Anne, we can't enroll Him. That kid is from *Sycamore Hill*... Nothing good comes from *Sycamore Hill*.

ANNELISE

Relax. He only enrolls if someone withdraws.

SAMANTHA

Whatever. At least we can use the title I funding he'd come with to make sure the lockers *lock*.

ANNELISE approaches the microphone

ANNELISE

Good afternoon. My name is Annelise Vincent, but many of you know me as the chair and founder of the Mother Frontier chapter in Gail County. I couldn't be prouder of our little grassroots movement. Now, I will be leaving that role to serve as our school principal. For years we fought against the never-ending agenda that destroyed our neighborhood schools. Starting this school year, all that nonsense ends, where the doors of the Greater Gail Area Business Park begin!

APPLAUSE, SAMANTHA upstages ANNELISE

SAMANTHA

Hi everyone, I am Samantha Spade! You might know me as the Mother Frontier's social media manager.

KEN

Isn't she the mom that quoted Hitler?

SAMANTHA

That was literally one time... For too long you have been lied to... by the *teachers unions*.

(MORE)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Teachers call themselves *experts*, yet they spend their day flipping through PowerPoints wondering why test scores are low. Then they blame *us* for not volunteering enough. Instead of doing their damn jobs, they cry *parental involvement*, and *rewards systems*, and *SEL*!

KEN

Social emotional learning?
Seriously?

ANNELISE

(to KEN)

Sir, this is your warning to stop disrupting.

SAMANTHA

Who are these so-called *experts* to point fingers at everyone else while they work two months a year less than the rest of us? well not me. I am a stay at home mom but, you get the idea. Why would anyone listen to a teacher? Then, they call *us* terrorists!

SUSAN

(showing her iPad screen)

Let's talk terrorism. This teacher is online bragging about gay pride propaganda in his classroom.

BARBIE

(quietly)

Is that terrorism?

KAREN

Don't worry, everyone. I have tweeted it *and* tagged his school. He'll be fired by Friday.

KEN

Okay, this is starting to just feel homophobic.

SAMANTHA

Us? No, never! The Mother Frontier welcomes all people. We even have a lesbian! Jamie, where are you?

JAMIE

It's true! I'm gay! I am so sorry about Pride Month by the way. LGBT-LMNOP-123, *am I right?* I am a dues-paying Mother Frontier member. These moms respect that I have the right to live how I want, and I respect that no kid should ever have to see such a thing... and I am treated like gold.

ANNELISE

Thank you, Jamie. You are very different. Now... there's kids here. Could you please um...? Yeah.

JAMIE

Right. Sorry!

JAMIE puts a paper bag over her head

SAMANTHA

That is why The Mother Frontier! ...and Bill

BILL waves and smiles

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Sponsored this charter: So kids can learn in an academic environment without distractions like *feelings* and *cross dressers*.

BARBIE

(quietly)

Is... *Bill* wearing a women's shirt?

SUSAN

(sharply)

That's **all** we ordered...

SAMANTHA

To close, since Annelise must step down from her role as chair, I am nominating myself to fill the role!

ANNELISE

(quietly)

What? I thought Cheryl was taking over...

SAMANTHA

Anyway, now a word from our school board representative, Cheryl Díaz.

CHERYL

Whaddup constituents? I don't have to introduce myself. You all voted me onto the school board. Anyway, I am getting some... bad PR for being too involved in charter the board oversees. So the Frontier and I are gonna be on some more... unofficial terms. You know what I'm saying?

KAREN

Fuck... They're getting on Cheryl for conflicts of interest. There's no way she can be chair.

BILL

Well, it *cannot* be Samantha.

SUSAN

Don't look at me, I'm Catholic.

JAMIE

I'll do it!

MOMSEMBLE

No!

ANNELISE

Let Sam run for a bit. If anyone can take a hit right now it's the mom that quoted Hitler. We can cut the cord later.

SAMANTHA

Thank you Cheryl... I think. That's all for opening ceremonies. We are looking forward to a year that *is not woke!* Does anyone have any questions?

KEN

Yeah, what does woke mean?

SAMANTHA

(struggling)

Um... well...

ANNELISE

(quietly)

Fucking Christ.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

That is... actually a great question...

BARBIE

Oh my god, they don't even know
what they're mad at.

MOMSEMBLE point their phones at KEN and BARBIE

CHERYL

Sir do you condone teachers talking
to minors about who they sleep
with?

KEN

That... isn't happening.

KAREN

Do you think kids should just be
allowed to go by a secret name at
school?

BILL

Without their parents consent?

KEN

Like a nickname? Like *Bill*?

BARBIE

This is weird honey, let's just go.
And by the way we are unenrolling
our child!

SUSAN

Then I suppose you're fine with
your kid accessing all the explicit
library books exposed by The Mother
Frontier?

KEN AND BARBIE

What even is the Mother Frontier?

CHERYL

Ugh... we've been asked for the
origin story.

ANNELISE

(drinking from a flask)
God damn it... Okay hit it!

MOMSEMBLE gets into a formation with ANNELISE at the center

MOMS U MESS WITH

ANNELISE

BACK IN THE OLD DAYS, WE NEVER
COMPLAINED ABOUT THE THREE-HOUR
WALK TO SCHOOL.
ONCE WE WERE THERE, WE LEARNED
READING AND WRITING AND MATH AND WE
FOLLOWED THE RULES.

MOMSEMBLE

THAT'S JUST HOW IT WAS!

ANNELISE

WHEN I WAS A GIRL, BACK BEFORE IT
ALL WENT SOUTH.
AND IF YOU "SLIPPED UP", IT WAS
FIXED RIGHT AWAY...

KAREN

BY A BELT!

MOMSEMBLE

OR SOAP TO THE MOUTH!

ANNELISE

THIS NEW GENERATION SAYS I HAVE
TRAUMA, BUT I OBVIOUSLY TURNED OUT
FINE

SUSAN

AS KIDS WE WERE RAISED WITH RESPECT
FOR OUR PARENTS.

ANNELISE

AND THAT'S HOW I'M RAISING MINE!

SAMANTHA

WELL OUR WORLD GOT SHOOK UP BY A
(using air quotes)
"GLOBAL PANDEMIC" AND WELL PAST A
YEAR BY SOME MEANS
I WORE A MASK TO THE GROCERY STORE

MOMSEMBLE

AND THE KIDS WENT TO SCHOOL ON A
SCREEN

SAMANTHA

THEN THEY ROLLED OUT THE JAB AND
THEY SWORE IT WAS SAFE, BUT I KNEW
I COULDN'T GIVE IN.
I MIGHT NOT BE AN EXPERT, BUT ONE
THING'S FOR SURE,

MOMSEMBLE
I'M NOT YOUR EX-PER-I-MENT!

BILL
THEN THEY STOLE THE ELECTION!

MOMSEMBLE
AND IMPOSED THEIR MANDATES.
THAT'S HOW I KNEW I HAD TO FIGHT.

SAMANTHA
THE GOVERNMENT'S BIG, BUT IT AIN'T
NO MATCH FOR

MOMSEMBLE
SOME MAMA BEARS THAT KNOW THEY'RE
RIGHT!

SUSAN
SO WE BECAME A GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT
WHILE THE WORLD WAS FULL OF SHEEP

JAMIE
WE LAUNCHED OUR FIRST CAMPAIGN.
OUR PLATFORM WAS PARENTS' RIGHTS

CHERYL
WE OPENED SCHOOLS IN PERSON ONCE WE
SECURED OUR SCHOOL BOARD SEATS

SAMANTHA
YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW OUR NAME...

ANNELISE
(glaring at SAMANTHA)
BUT YOU KNOW WE PUT UP A FIGHT.

MOMSEMBLE
I'M NOT THE MOM YOU MESS WITH
I'M NOT THE MOM YOU MESS WITH
I'M NOT THE MOM YOU MESS WITH
I'M NOT THE MOM, I'M NOT THE MOM!

CHERYL
WE THOUGHT IT WAS OVER TILL ONE DAY
THE KIDS CAME HOME WITH THEIR STATE
TEST SCORES
THEY CAN'T FIND AN AVERAGE

SUSAN
CAUSE THEY'RE WELL BELOW IT

KAREN AND BILL
AND READING TWO GRADE LEVELS LOWER
THAN BEFORE!

CHERYL
(angry, humiliated)
I PARKED MY CHEVROLET VENTURE IN
THE SCHOOL BUS LOOP,

MOMSEMBLE
NO STOP ZONE!

CHERYL	BILL
TO SEND THAT FUCKING TEACHER	
TO HELL!	YEAH, TELL THAT BITCH!

CHERYL (CONT'D)
BUT THE KIDS IN THE CLASSROOM
WEREN'T READING OR WRITING, ONLY
LETTERS THEY WERE LEARNING WERE

MOMSEMBLE
SEL!

CHERYL
SO I KICKED DOWN THE DOORS AND I
WALKED UP TO THAT TEACHER AND SAID,

CHERYL (CONT'D)
EXPLAIN THIS TEST RESULT
SHE SAID,

MS. CARVER
DO YOU READ WITH YOUR KIDS AT HOME?

CHERYL
AND I SAID,

MOMSEMBLE
SHUT THE FUCK UP!

CHERYL
THIS CAN'T BE MY FAULT!

BILL
SO OUR LITTLE GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT

MOMSEMBLE
NOW WITH SEVERAL SEATS ON THE BOARD

CHERYL
FIRED THE SUPERINTENDENT, THE VOTE
WAS SIX TO ONE!

KAREN
WE CUT THE SO-CALLED WELLNESS
PROGRAM

SUSAN
AND PUT THE FOCUS BACK ONTO CORE

SAMANTHA
YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW OUR NAME...

CHERYL
(overshadowing SAMANTHA)
BUT YOU KNOW WE GET SHIT DONE!

MOMSEMBLE
I'M NOT THE MOM YOU MESS WITH
I'M NOT THE MOM YOU MESS WITH
I'M NOT THE MOM YOU MESS WITH
I'M NOT THE MOM, I'M NOT THE MOM.

ANNELISE
ONE DAY MY CHILD GOT OFF THE BUS
AND SAID,

MOMSEMBLE
"MOM, MY PRONOUNS ARE THEY"

ANNELISE
I KNEW IN THAT INSTANT THAT SCHOOL
WAS TO BLAME AND I GOT IN MY
CHEVROLET

MOMSEMBLE
CHEVROLET VENTURE!

BILL
IN HALLS THERE WERE RAINBOWS!

SUSAN
AND IN THE LIBRARY,

MOMSEMBLE
A BOOK ABOUT A BOY IN A SKIRT!

KAREN
OH, THEY'RE TRANSING OUR CHILDREN!

MOMSEMBLE
BUT NOT ON OUR WATCH!

ANNELISE
AND THIS TIME WE GOTTA MAKE IT
HURT.

(MORE)

ANNELISE (CONT'D)
THIS WHOLE TIME THE SCHOOL HAD KEPT
THIS A SECRET, IF ONLY WE COULD
HAVE KNOWN

JAMIE
(lifting her bag)
IF A TEACHER IS GAY, WELL THAT'S
NOT MY BUSINESS.

ANNELISE
(pulling bag back down)
BUT LEAVE THE KIDS ALONE!

CHERYL
SO MAYBE OUR GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT
HASN'T HAD TIME TO VOLUNTEER

MOMSEMBLE
BUT NOW WE'VE OUTGROWN THE SCHOOL
BOARD AND YOU CAN BET WE'LL SET
THIS RIGHT
THANKS TO OUR RICH HUSBANDS, WE
TRADEMARKED THE MOTHER FRONTIER.

ANNELISE
NOW YOU WON'T FORGET OUR NAME AND

MOMSEMBLE
IT'S WAY TOO LATE FOR YOU TO PUT UP
A FIGHT.

BARBIE
Hey! We need to go! People online
are calling you a child groomer.

KEN
I don't care about some made up- Oh
my God, that's our address... you
freaks doxxed us?

BILL
Doxxing? It's legal to publish a
video taken in a public place.

KAREN
And that's all we *did*. We don't
control the comments.

ANNELISE
You were warned to stop disrupting.

BARBIE
 (to KEN)
*It isn't worth it! Let's get the
 kids and go to my parents'.*

KEN and BARBIE exit

ANNELISE
 I'M NOT THE MOM YOU MESS WITH
 I'M NOT THE MOM YOU MESS WITH
 I'M NOT THE MOM YOU MESS WITH
 I'M NOT THE MOM

 I'M NOT THAT MOM!

SCENE 3B

ANNELISE
 (phoning in)
 It is sad, but that family just
 wasn't fit for the community.
 Better it's out of the way now.
 Thoughts and prayers.

SUSAN
 Good news is a seat has opened up!
 To decide who gets it, we will
 conduct a randomized lottery.

ANNELISE AND SAMANTHA
 (quietly)
Oh no.

BILL pushes out an oversized bingo console and cranks it
 KAREN pulls out the only ball and hands it to ANNELISE

ANNELISE
 (reluctantly)
 The empty seat will go to...
Jeenald Carpenter.

MARY
 (to JESUS)
...Jeenald Carpenter?

BLACKOUT

SCENE 4

LIGHTS UP ON
CLASSROOM

ANNELISE

Welcome students, to your first day
at Mosaic Classical Charter
Academy. We have some rules he-

JEENALD enters, stationary and kerchiefs fall from His bag

JEENALD

(catching His breath)

Hi! Sorry I'm late. I took three
busses just to...

STUDENTS stare at Him blankly. There is **unbearable** silence.

JEENALD (CONT'D)

I - I'll just sit.

JEENALD sits, wipes His face, begins organizing His bag.

ANNELISE

Unlike the public schools *some of*
you come from, at MCCA we value
Respect, Accountability, and Merit.
On these pillars rests not only our
school, but our way of life. Now, I
would introduce your teacher, but-

SAMANTHA enters holding a cup of coffee, also rushed.

SAMANTHA

(catching her breath)

Hi! Sorry I'm late. I left as soon
as I saw your message this morning.
Why did you call me here?

SAMANTHA takes a sip of her coffee

ANNELISE

Don't even worry about it.

(to STUDENTS)

Everyone this is your homeroom
teacher.

SAMANTHA

(spitting out coffee)

I - *What?*

ROCKI

Mrs. Sam is our teacher?

ALPHEE
(absolutely horrified)
My mom is our teacher!?

SAMANTHA
Alphee, what are you doing so far back there? You won't be able to read the board.
(to ANNEЛИSE)
His IEP says he needs to sit in the front due to his visual impairment.

ANNEЛИSE
You already know federal laws. See, you're basically overqualified.
(back to STUDENTS)
Mrs. Spade is your teacher. And so, you will stand up when she enters the room. (beat) So stand up...

STUDENTS stand and sit back down

ANNEЛИSE (CONT'D)
This is how we show **respect** to adults at MCCA.

SAMANTHA
(quietly, to ANNEЛИSE)
Anne, I can't be a teacher. I just became Mother Frontier chapter chair. I have four tweets exposing teachers' unions scheduled today!

ANNEЛИSE
We couldn't find a licensed tea-

ANNEЛИSE pauses, realizing she needs to buy time.

ANNEЛИSE (CONT'D)
(to STUDENTS)
Um... Pledge of allegiance. Go!

STUDENTS stand again, with right hands on their hearts.

ANNEЛИSE (CONT'D)	STUDENTS
In your own words, <i>literally</i>	(VERY slowly)
anyone can teach... on a	<i>I pledge allegiance (beat)</i>
conditional certification.	<i>to the flag (beat)</i>
	<i>of the United States of</i>
	<i>America (EXTRA beat)</i>

SAMANTHA
I don't know know...

ANNELISE

Let me put it simply...

ANNELISE (CONT'D)

You need to show you have the
grit of a chapter chair.
We need a warm body
babysitting and running
PowerPoints. Samantha, all
you need to do to prove your
merit is teach high school.

STUDENTS

and to the republic (beat)
for which it stands (beat)
one nation (beat)
under God (beat)
with liberty (beat)
and justice (beat)
for all.

ANNELISE (CONT'D)

Surely, even you can handle the
easiest task a chapter chair could
hope for.

SAMANTHA

Yes, obviously I can *handle* being a
stupid teacher. (*whispering*) But I
am *not* joining the fucking union...

ANNELISE

Just until we find someone. You'll
be done by October. Thank you!

(to students)

Everyone... Let's show some **respect**
to your teacher... *Stand up!*

STUDENTS stand again, annoyed.

ANNELISE (CONT'D)

(Whispering to SAMANTHA)

Here is your roster. You got this!

ANNELISE hands SAMANTHA the roster and exits

SAMANTHA

Alright, let's take attendance.
That *can't* be hard. When I say your
name, say *here*. Seymore Butz.

STUDENTS hold back laughter

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Seymore Butz... Okay, absent.

The whole class laughs. ROCKI and ANDRE high five one another.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(a little flustered)

Okay *ha ha*. Jeenald Carpenter?

JEENALD says nothing, preoccupied organizing His backpack.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
 Okay, Jeenald Carpenter... absent!

JEENALD
 Wait, sorry! That's me, I'm here.

SAMANTHA
 (visibly frustrated)
 Come on guys, when I say your name,
 you say *here*. Andre Fisher.

Silence

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
 Absent.

ANDRE
 I was literally raising my hand!

SAMANTHA
 (more frustrated)
 I said to ***say here***. Peter Fisher.

ROCKI
 I wanna be called Rocki.

SAMANTHA
 (boiling point)
 Made up names are for public
 schools, *Peter*. Class, *please*, I am
 not asking for much. When I read
 your name just *say here*.

CHAD hurls a pickle ball paddle at SAMANTHA. She ducks.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
 (flabbergasted)
Jesus Christ!

JEENALD
 Here!
 (quietly)
 Fuck...

SAMANTHA glares at JEENALD, then looks back at CHAD

SAMANTHA
 Why did you do that?

CHAD
 Ha ha, I dunno.

STUDENTS laugh

SAMANTHA
(stern, teacher voice)
Okay, enough!

STUDENTS stop abruptly, there is silence.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
I'm just marking everyone present.
We need to start. The curriculum
for this class is... *Health: Our
Changing Bodies* - Absolutely not.

SAMANTHA shuffles through papers on her desk, improvising

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
Okay, I know *all* of your parents
opted *out* of health, and *into*
religious ed. So, we are going to-

ANNELISE
(bursting the door open)
Stop! You *cannot* teach religion on
public school property or we lose
funding. (beat) Students that *opted*
into religious ed. can do it, but
only off school grounds. You can
take them to the youth center.

JEENALD
Man another bus ride? I took three
just to get *here*.

ANNELISE
No bus will be necessary. The youth
center is right here...

ANNELISE AND SAMANTHA
...at the Greater Gail Area
Business Park!

ALL exit

BLACK OUT

SCENE 5A

LIGHTS UP ON
YOUTH CENTER

STUDENTS and SAMANTHA enter

SAMANTHA

Alright, now that we are officially
off school property, let's start
with a review of what we already
know about The Parables of Jesus
Christ. Go ahead and get into
costume.

JEENALD

(forcing enthusiasm)

Oh boy! I sure am excited to learn
about The Lord!

SAMANTHA

Actually Jeenald, since you
couldn't help yourself from *mocking*
Jesus earlier with your little joke
during attendance, maybe you can
take a walk in His shoes for once,
and play the part of Jesus Christ
for *The Skit*.

JEENALD

(nervously)

What...?

SAMANTHA hands JEENALD an oversized white t-shirt, a thick
red ribbon sash, and a fake crown of thorns

JEENALD (CONT'D)

Uh, what is this crown made of?

SAMANTHA

Pipe cleaner.

JEENALD puts on the costume

LIKE YOU MEAN IT

SAMANTHA

ALRIGHT, EVERYONE IS IN THEIR USUAL
PARTS. JEENALD, DON'T WORRY. YOUR
PART IS VERY EASY, AS LONG AS YOU
STICK TO THE SCRIPT. JUST READ
EXACTLY WHAT'S ON THE PAGE. OKAY?

CHAD
 (as Judean ICE Agent)
 NOW LISTEN SEÑOR, I DON'T
 KNOW HOW YOU BYPASSED THE
 CUSTOMS CHECKPOINT AT THE
 JUDEAN BORDER, BUT IT'S TIME
 TO GO BACK TO SAMARIA - WHERE
 YOU CAME FROM!

JEENALD (CONT'D)

OKAY, *NO!*

STUDENTS
 CHRIST THE LO-

JEENALD (CONT'D)

NO. NO, STOP! STOP- GIVE ME
 THE GUITAR!

JEENALD takes the acoustic guitar and the music stops.

JEENALD (CONT'D)

HAVE YOU NEVER READ ANY OF THOSE
 STORIES?

SAMANTHA

YES. SO THESE ARE ADAPTATIONS AND
 WITH A *LITTLE* FILLER, BUT THAT
 HELPS KIDS UNDERSTAND GOD'S
 MESSAGE.

JEENALD

REALLY?... ALRIGHT KIDS, *WHAT'S*
GOD'S MESSAGE?

STUDENTS
 IT GOES LIKE
 NA-NA-NA-NA-NA-NA-NA-NA-NA-NA-
 NA NA-NA-NA-NA-NA-NA-NA-NA-NA-
 NA-NA-NA-NA NA-NA-NA-NA-NA-NA-
 NA-NA

JEENALD (CONT'D)

THAT ISN'T A MESSAGE, THOSE
 ARE JUST MEANINGLESS
 SYLLABLES. DO YOU EVEN HEAR
 WHAT YOU'RE SAYING? AND WHERE
 DO YOU KEEP ALL THESE
 GUITARS?!

The guitar player plugs in an electric guitar

STUDENTS (CONT'D)

GOD IS GOOD, I AM TRASH,
 WORTHY OF DEATH.
 I SUBMIT AND SURRENDER, BECAUSE GOD
 IS THE BEST!

STUDENTS (CONT'D)

OH DEAR GOD, THOU ART
 AWESOME. I AM A DISGRACE.
 LORD WHEN I DISOBEY THEE, PUT
 ME IN MY PLACE.

STUDENTS (CONT'D)

HOSANA BENIDICTUS
 QUI VENIT
 IN NOMINE
 DOMINI

STUDENTS (CONT'D)
 FOR MY SINS, I'M UNCLEAN. I
 OWN THE BLAME.
 THANK YOU, GOD, FOR THY LOVE,
 WHEN I DESERVE SHAME.
 WITHOUT GOD I AM NOTHING, I
 UNDERSTAND.
 GOD, THE GLORY IS THINE, FOR
 ANY GOOD THAT I AM.

STUDENTS (CONT'D)
 HOSANA BENIDICTUS
 QUI VENIT
 IN NOMINE
 DOMINI
 HOSANA IN EXCELSIS DEO
 HOSANA IN EXCELSIS DEO

STUDENTS (CONT'D)
 LOREM IPSUM DOLOR
 SIT AMET CONSECTETUR
 ADIPISCING ELIT
 SED DO EIUSMOD TEMPOR
 INCIDIDUNT

STUDENTS (CONT'D)

AMEN!

SCENE 5B

JEENALD slams the electric guitar into the floor.

JEENALD

Those *aren't* the parables... you
 are lying to these kids about-
 about Jesus, and you owe them
 better.

ALPHEE

Did Jeenalld just talk back to a
 teacher?

ROCKI

And He... stood up for us?

SAMANTHA

To the principal's office... **now.**

JEENALD

(angry)
 Oh come out!

SAMANTHA collapses to the ground. JEENALD stares at SAMANTHA
 In shock, STUDENTS stare at JEENALD In shock.

BLACK OUT

SCENE 6

LIGHTS UP

ANNELISE paces back and forth in her office
 SAMANTHA sits on a couch holding an ice pack to her head
 JEENALD Sits in a chair off to the side

ANNELISE
 It's the *easiest* job in the world.
 How did this happen on the first
 day?

SAMANTHA
 I don't know I just - I had so much
 to manage all at once, that *wasn't*
even teaching. How is one person
 supposed to do all of this?

ANNELISE
 Why don't you call your husband and-

JEENALD
 (cutting her off)
 She doesn't have one.

ANNELISE AND SAMANTHA
 What?

JEENALD
 Well you have had husbands, but the
 man around now is not that.

SAMANTHA
 How could He-

MARY enters

MARY
 What's going on? It's only the
 first day!
 (whispering to JEENALD)
Did you call the kids a brood of
snakes?

ANNELISE gestures to SAMANTHA, who exits

ANNELISE
 We had some trouble in health
 today. Jeenald, care to explain
 what happened?

JEENALD is silent

ANNELISE (CONT'D)

(taken aback)

Not so talkative now. I'd love to know what or who gave you the right to act in this manner?

JEENALD

What gave you the right to change the Bible?

ANNELISE is silent

JEENALD (CONT'D)

Was it God Himself? ...some guys? I'll answer you if you answer me.

ANNELISE

How we write our curriculum is none of your concern.

JEENALD

Then I guess I don't know either.

MARY

Jes- Jeenald, **what happened?**

JEENALD

I might have said... *come out*.

MARY looks at JEENALD with "daggers" knowing what that means

ANNELISE

And, Mrs. Spade, a brand new teacher who happens to have POTS, experienced a sudden drop in blood pressure and *fainted*, all because of Jeenald's outburst.

MARY

My God, is she okay?

JEENALD AND ANNELISE

She's fine.

ANNELISE

She does this all the time, she's dramatic.

MARY

Well I am glad she's alright.

ANNELISE

Mary, we are taking this very seriously. If Jeenald remains here, He will **respect** this institution.

JEENALD

(scoffing)

Tear this school down and *I'd* build a better one.

ANNELISE

Excuse you? You have no idea how much time went into this charter.

JEENALD

In three days. Tops.

ANNELISE

Threats against the building are punishable by expulsion.

MARY

Mrs. Vincent please, He *cannot* go to a public school, He'll be persecuted. He will make this right.

JEENALD

I will *what*?

ANNELISE

Mary, I like you. You're a good mom. So I'll tell you what. Jeenald can redeem Himself by filling in as an alternate on the pickle ball team in tomorrow's match.

JEENALD

But, I've never played pickle ball.

ANNELISE

You're an alternate. You only play if someone is injured.

JEENALD

And if no one gets injured?

ANNELISE

Then you'll still see your peers show you what a *real* thirst for merit looks like. That'll be good for you. Do that without causing a *scene*, and this is settled.

(MORE)

ANNELISE (CONT'D)

(to MARY)

If He fails, He will be suspended.

JEENALD

(angry)

Oh, come ou-

MARY

Deal! *Thank you*, Mrs. Vincent.

ANNELISE

Mary, it's okay to need some help.

MARY

What do you mean?

ANNELISE

The Mother Frontier meets this Thursday night at the Lead Tap. It's the brewery caddy corner to us, right here in the Greater Gail Area Business Park. Consider attending. Plenty moms have come to us with a... *troubled teen*.

MARY

I don't know what all that's about. I try to stay neutral on things.

ANNELISE

There is no pressure Mary, the choice is yours. If push comes to shove, you know where to find us.

MARY

We will attend the match and see how it goes. Where is it?

ANNELISE

Just two doors down, right here in the Greater Gail Area Business Park!

JEENALD

Convenient.

BLACK OUT

SCENE 7A/GET OUTTA THE KITCHEN

LIGHTS UP

JEENALD and STUDENTS are in pickle ball uniforms, stretching/preparing for the coming match. MOMSEMBLE and MARY sit in the bleachers. A Crusatriots mascot is present.

STUDENTS

(popcorn style)

WE HAVE A REPUTATION. IT'S OURS TO UPHOLD.

SO WE'RE COOKING UP AN ASS-KICKING AND SERVING IT COLD

I'M EARNING MY PLACE, I'M MAKING MY NAME

SO WHEN THEY RAISE THE TEMPERATURE I'LL PUSH THROUGH PAIN

I GOTTA DO IT ANYWAY I GOTTA BE TOUGH

I GOTTA SHOW THE SPECTATORS THAT I'M GOOD ENOUGH

IF YOU WANT PARTICIPATION OR JUST TO HAVE FUN

THEN IT'S TIME TO STICK A FORK IN YOUR ASS, CAUSE YOU'RE DONE

IF YOU'RE NOT HERE TO PLAY, JUST GET OUT OF THE WAY

WE WON'T ACCEPT DEFEAT

GET BACK IN THE GAME, LIVE UP TO THE NAME

OR GET OUT OF THE KITCHEN IF YOU CAN'T TAKE THE HEAT

OHHHH WHY THE HELL ARE YOU STILL IN YOUR SEAT?

OHHHH GET OUT OF THE KITCHEN IF YOU CAN'T TAKE THE HEAT

KILL THE COMPETITION. THIS IS OUR PARK.

WE'LL CHEW YOU UP AND SPIT YOU OUT - THAT'S JUST WHO WE ARE

I'M CLIMBING THE LADDER, I WILL BE THE BEST

AND THERE'S NOTHING I WOULDN'T DO TO RISE ABOVE THE REST

(MORE)

STUDENTS (CONT'D)

THIS COMPETITION'S OVER NOW THAT I
HAVE ARRIVED
GIVING UP OR GETTING BENCHED JUST
MEANS YOU LACK DRIVE
IT REALLY MAKES ME SAD TO SEE MY
FRIENDS CRY IN PAIN
BUT HOW COULD I CRY WITH THEM WHEN
THEIR LOSS IS MY GAIN?

YOU'RE NOT HERE TO PLAY, JUST GET
OUT OF MY WAY
I WON'T ACCEPT DEFEAT
YOU COST US THE GAME, SO I'LL LIVE
UP TO THE NAME
NOW GET OUT OF THE KITCHEN SINCE
YOU CAN'T TAKE THE HEAT
OHHHH WHY THE HELL ARE YOU STILL IN
MY SEAT?
OHHHH GET OUT OF THE KITCHEN SINCE
YOU CAN'T TAKE THE HEAT

WHEN WE TAKE TO THE COURT WE ARE A
TEAM
WE SHARE THE COLORS WE SHARE A
DREAM
WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS TILL WE GET
HOME
SO WE'RE ALWAYS IN A MATCH OF OUR
OWN
IT'S NOT ABOUT SELF-BETTERMENT,
IT'S NOT A WAY OF LIFE
BEING THE BEST, ALWAYS ON TOP,
IS JUST HOW WE SURVIVE SO...
I'M HERE TO PLAY, GET THE FUCK OUT
MY WAY
I CAN'T AFFORD DEFEAT
THIS IS MY GAME, BECAUSE I PUT YOU
TO SHAME
NOW GET OUT OF THE KITCHEN CAUSE
YOU CAN'T TAKE THE-
YOU CAN'T TAKE THE-

OHHH GOD, IT HURTS SO GOOD TO
SUCCEED!
OHHH GET OUT OF THE KITCHEN IF YOU
CAN'T TAKE THE-

CHAD throws his pickle ball paddle which hits ALPHEE in the
face, who falls and holds his forehead.

ALPHEE

AHH!

SCENE 7B

ALL look at ALPHEE
SAMANTHA enters

SAMANTHA
Alright kids, the other team is
will be here in- Alphee baby, oh my
goodness... What happened?

JEENALD
Chad threw his paddle and it hit
him in the face.

SAMANTHA
Chad... why did you do that?

CHAD
Haha I don't know.

MACKAISELEIGH
Well if Alphee can't play I'm *happy*
to take his place, Coach Spade.

ALPHEE
I can play. I just need my glasses.

SAMANTHA
Oh no. No no no no where are they?

JEENALD
Here's half of them.

He hands SAMANTHA one lens attached to half of a broken frame

SAMANTHA
Fuck!

ANNELISE
Jeenald, let Alphee handle himself.
(eyeing SAMANTHA)
He needs to show his merit.

SAMANTHA
Well that's so funny, when his his
visual impairment got MCCA special
ed funding it wasn't an issue.

MARY
(lippping to JEENALD)
Stop...

KAREN

Well, you know the rules, Samantha.
You have to bench Alphee.

SUSAN

Yeah, you can't take it easy on him
just because he's your son and he
can't see.

SAMANTHA

But that isn't fair...

ANNELISE

Samantha, the boy cannot play. He
demonstrably lacks the merit.

JAMIE

(Who is the Crusatriot
mascot, lifting the mask)
Yeah Samantha, don't make excuses
for him. This helmet severely
limits my vision and I don't let
that get in my w-

JAMIE walks into a pole.

JEENALD

Mrs. Vincent, you can't be serious,
why are you punishing Alphee?

CHERYL

Honey, she isn't punishing Alphee.

ROCKI

Carpenter, what are you doing? This
is the chance we'd all kill for.
Get in the game!

MACKAISELEIGH

Well, if *He* doesn't want it, I do!

ANNELISE

Mackaisleigh, sit. Jeenald, you
will take Alphee's place.

ALPHEE

(To JEENALD, teary)
Come on man, please don't do this.
I *need* to play.

ANNELISE

Alphee, quiet. You need to learn to
pull yourself up by your own
bootstraps.

MACKAISELEIGH

Yeah come on, Alphee. That's just how the game goes.

ROCKI

It's really not even a big deal, Alphee. I am still willing to play though!

JEENALD

(After a beat)

...No

Everyone gasps

JEENALD (CONT'D)

The other team isn't even here yet. I'm going to find the other half of the glasses.

ALPHEE

Thank you... no one has ever been this... nice to me.

JEENALD putters about, gaze down

ANDRE

If it was you, Alphee wouldn't be looking for your glasses.

MACKAISELEIGH

None of us would.

JEENALD

Ah!

JEENALD picks something up and brings it to ALPHEE

JEENALD (CONT'D)

I found the other half!

SAMANTHA

Jeenald... thank you.

SAMANTHA tapes the glasses together and hands them to ALPHEE

ALPHEE

(holding the glasses up)

The lens is shattered! (beat) These are useless... Jeenald, I- I'm not good enough. Just take my place. I have to learn mine.

JEENALD looks at MARY, their stare holds for a beat.

JEENALD

Hold on.

MARY reads the pamphlet ANNELEISE gave her

JEENALD spits on the glasses, then wipes them with His shirt

ANNELEISE

What the hell are you doing?

JEENALD hands the glasses to ALPHEE

JEENALD

Here. Put them on, then go play.

ALPHEE puts the glasses on

ALPHEE

The lens is still shattered.

Jeenald, what was the point of-

ALPHEE takes the glasses off and stumbles

ALPHEE (CONT'D)

Whoa.

SAMANTHA

Alphee, what's wrong? Alphee,
please say something.

ALPHEE looks around the sports court, then fixes his gaze

ALPHEE

*The Gail Parks and Recreation
Association is a is run by
volunteers committed to
developing opportunities to
Gail County Residents. Since
2002, we ha-*

ANNELEISE

See? He is unwell. Sit.
Jeenald. Go.

SAMANTHA

Alphee, what are you saying?

ROCKI

Is he reading the rec center sign?

MACKAISELEIGH

Oh get real, Rocki. That poster is
across the room. He can't see six
feet in front of him.

SAMANTHA

Alphee, you have 20/160 vision. *I can't read that poster from here.*
How are you doing this?

ALPHEE

I don't know... I can just see.

ANNELISE

No! You cannot. How can you-

ALPHEE

Since 2002, it has been our top priority that our facilities be accessible to all people-

JAMIE

(lifting her mask)

That is what it says, Anne. I'm here every week with my all-lesbian cup-in-hand kickball team and-

ANNELISE

(pulling the mask down)

Don't be vulgar in front of the fucking children, Jamie!

ALPHEE

Jeenald, I don't know what you did, but I can see!

(turning to SAMANTHA)

Mom... I can play!

SAMANTHA

(looking at ANNELISE)

There is no good reason he can't.

ANNELISE glares at SAMANTHA, then MARY
MARY immediately leaves her seat and exits

BLACKOUT

SCENE 8A

LIGHTS UP

Middle Curtain is closed, ANNEЛИSE and SAMANTHA are present

ANNEЛИSE

(stern)

Because I am kind, I am giving you another chance. Your repeated failure to control your class reflects poorly on your merit.

SAMANTHA

Annelise, I'm not a teacher! No one else in the Mother Frontier has ever had to teach to be chair.

ANNEЛИSE

That is why I am giving you another chance.

ANNEЛИSE hands SAMANTHA a folder

ANNEЛИSE (CONT'D)

If, *and only if*, you successfully lead this chapter meeting, will you be considered further.

CURTAIN OPENS

MOMSEMBLE shuffles into The Lead Tap

CHERYL

Let's get this monthly chapter meeting started!

CHERYL opens a box of wine

JAMIE

(with 6 plastic wine cups)
Fill me up!

KAREN

Save some for the rest of us!

SUSAN

This is why I bring my own...

SUSAN drinks from a flask, MOMSEMBLE gives her a look

SUSAN (CONT'D)

What? Drinking in excess is the one *sin* catholics are cool with.

BILL
Hell yeah! Chug chug chug!

SAMANTHA
(timidly)
Okay, attention fellow momma bears!

MOMSEMBLE continues socializing, ignoring SAMANTHA
MARY enters

ANNELISE
Mary Carpenter actually *came*!
Samantha, get her to speak at a
school board meeting and you'll be
the *official* chapter chair
effective immediately.

SAMANTHA
Seriously? *Jeenal*d Carpenter's mom?
He is the worst kid in my class.

ANNELISE
Most of Gail County knows how they
are going to vote. Sycamore Hill
has lowest voter turnout. *Mary*
Carpenter can reach them.

SAMANTHA
I don't know, Anne. We took on
Jamie for *gay buy-in*, and now we
are stuck with, well... *Jamie*.

JAMIE bounces a ping-pong ball into a wine glass and chugs it

ANNELISE
Do you want to lead this chapter?

SAMANTHA
...Yes. More than anything!

ANNELISE
Then you know what to do. Make her
feel *special*.

SAMANTHA
Attention! one two three eyes on
me!

MOMSEMBLE continues socializing, ignoring SAMANTHA

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
Hey, we are out of wine!

MOMSEMBLE stops, heads whip in SAMANTHA'S direction

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Now that I have your attention,
please give a warm welcome to our
future member, Mary Carpenter.

MARY

Thank you. I don't know if I am
joining, but-

SAMANTHA

(cutting her off)

Tonight's topic is *Reach*. Let's
face it, mommas... and *Bill*, we
have got to expand. As the newly
appointed chapter chair...

JAMIE

(fake coughing)

Self-appointed.

MOMSEMBLE laughs

SAMANTHA

(flustered)

We must continue to gain support
from other communities. Does anyone
know how?

BILL

Ooh I know! By um, quoting
Hitler... but in *the right context*?

MOMSEMBLE laughs, SAMANTHA is visibly holding back tears

SAMANTHA

What we must do to reach the whole
community, is speak at board of
education meetings. Tonight we will
be drafting public comments in
support of three new draft policies
proposed by our very own, Cheryl.

CHERYL

These policies all will do some
necessary cleaning up in Gail
County Public Schools. First, Draft
Policy 0328 bans all flags except
the American flag in GCPS
classrooms.

SUSAN

Finally!

KAREN
Great policy, Cher!

CHERYL
Draft Policy 2540 will remove
restrictions on federal agents
entering schools.

MARY
Why?

BILL
To get the illegals out of classes
with my *American* kids.

CHERYL
And last, Draft Policy 1930
requires that records necessary for
enrollment be maintained, and
allows for more audits. Boring I
know, but neutral! I wrote this one
on purpose to *reach around the*
aisle.

SAMANTHA
Across.

CHERYL
What?

SAMANTHA
It's, reach *across* the aisle.

CHERYL
I know what I said.

SAMANTHA
Well, let's get drafting. Karen,
Susan, you two get to work on 2540.
Channel that fear. Jamie, you take
328 with the flag.

JAMIE
From a lesbian's mouth!

SAMANTHA
Bill, can you help her? Mary, I
know you are new to all this. Let's
have you on policy 1930.

MARY
Oh. What? I haven't really done
that kind of thing before. I'm not
much of a *public speaker*.
(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

I'm really just here for some help with my Son's behavior in school. Can we start there? You're His teacher, the expert.

SAMANTHA

(thinking)

Yes!... I *am the expert*. And an expert would say controlling - or *reaching* your Son starts with... parental involvement!

MARY

Really? How?

SAMANTHA

Jeenalld just needs a *good example* at home. What could do that better than seeing His own mom embodying the MCCA values in a public comment?

MARY

Well, I guess that makes sense.

CONTR0VRZY

SAMANTHA

MARY, GLAD YOU MADE IT, COME ON IN, HAVE A DRINK
WELCOME ABOARD, LET'S SKIP THE PLEASANTRIES 'CAUSE GIRLFRIEND, I THINK
YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING SPECIAL, YEAH, YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES
MRS. CARPENTER, YOU ARE SO UNIQUELY AWAKE
WHAT IF YOU COULD SAY ANYTHING AND MAKE IT TRUE?
WOULDN'T IT BE NICE IF ALL THAT POWER BELONGED TO YOU?
COME NOW, CLOSE YOUR EYES, I'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO SET THE BAIT
TO PUT IT SIMPLY, SOMETIMES YOU'VE JUST GOT TO CREATE A
CONTROVERSY, WE STIR IT UP ALL THE TIME CONTROVERSY, THE PROOF IS IN THE HEADLINES 'CAUSE UP FOR DEBATE IS AS GOOD AS FACT CREATE A
CONTROVERSY, DON'T TELL ANYONE I SAID THAT

KAREN
A CAT INSIDE THE BOX IS BOTH DEAD
AND ALIVE

SUSAN
SO IT'S NOT MISINFORMATION TO
ANNOUNCE THAT IT DIED

CHERYL
CHECK YOUR FACTS AND CHERRY-PICK
AND STILL CITE YOUR SOURCE

SAMANTHA
SAVE THE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT FOR
WHEN YOU'RE TAKEN TO COURT

MOMSEMBLE
NO ONE

SAMANTHA
WRITES A HIT BY GETTING LOST IN THE
WEEDS

MOMSEMBLE
OMIT

SAMANTHA
THAT BORING SHIT THAT WE BOTH KNOW
NO ONE WILL READ

MOMSEMBLE
SHOW ME

SAMANTHA
A FRONT-PAGE STORY WITH ONE IOTA OF
COMPLEXITY
MARY, I THOUGHT I ASKED YOU BEFORE
LET'S SKIP THE PLEASANTRIES FOR

MOMSEMBLE
CONTROVERSY!

SAMANTHA
LET'S CUT TO THE CHASE

MOMSEMBLE
CONTROVERSY!

SAMANTHA
LET'S SEE IT ON THE FRONT PAGE
A SLIGHT EXAGGERATION BRINGS THE
READER RIGHT BACK

MOMSEMBLE
CREATE A CONTROVERSY

SAMANTHA
DON'T TELL ANYONE I SAID THAT

KAREN
THE NEWS CYCLE MOVES FAST SO HAVE
URGENCY

CHERYL
REMEMBER PUBLIC OUTRAGE IS THE MAIN
CURRENCY

SAMANTHA
THE COMMENT SECTION STOKES THE FIRE

BILL
(Holding up a news story
of SAMANTHA quoting
Hitler)
AND FANS THE FLAME

CHERYL
YOUR STORY GETS A FOLLOW-UP AND YOU
STAY IN FRAME

SAMANTHA
TWO PLAYERS FIGHTING FOR THE BALL,
AGREED TO THE GAME
YOU DON'T NEED TO SPIKE THE BALL,
YOU JUST GOTTA KEEP IT IN PLAY
WE OWN THE NARRATIVE UNTIL THE LAST
WORD IS SPOKEN
THE CAT IS DEAD IF THE BOX STAYS
CLOSED
AND THE DISCUSSION REMAINS OPEN

MOMSEMBLE
CONTROVERSY!

SAMANTHA
IT KEEPS THE CHAOS ALIVE

MOMSEMBLE
CONTROVERSY!

SAMANTHA
I'LL PASS IT TO THE NEXT GUY
'CAUSE HE'LL KEEP THE VOLLEY GOING,
KILLS HIS OWN CAT

MOMSEMBLE
SO CREATE A CONTROVERSY

SAMANTHA
All right everybody, I know we're
having fun, but seriously...
DON'T TELL ANYONE I SAID THAT!

SCENE 8B

SAMANTHA
Mary, this community, and your Son,
need *your voice*.

MARY
No one needs my voice I mean... I'm
just Mary.

SAMANTHA
You're more to us than *just Mary*.
We want you to believe you
matter...

MARY
Okay! I'll draft something - *if it
helps my Son*.

SAMANTHA
(elated)
Great! Policy 1930 is easy. Just
think of some good reasons to keep
records accurate.

MOMSEMBLE begins to file out and exit

MARY
Thanks! I'll let you know if-

SAMANTHA is already walking out, almost dancing

SAMANTHA
See you Tuesday Mary, welcome
aboard your voice is *extremely
valued!*

MARY looks at the policy and scrap paper, smiles, and exits

BLACKOUT

SCENE 9

LIGHTS UP

To Classroom

The chalkboard reads "Group Character Education"
STUDENTS sit at their desks writing as SAMANTHA circulates.

SAMANTHA

Class, the last couple days have
been rough. Clearly we all need a
reminder of the MCCA pillars:
Respect, Accountability, and Merit.
So, today you will write an essay
on how you can show each. One page
per pillar.

STUDENTS groan

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Front and back.

STUDENTS groan louder

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

In cursive.

STUDENTS mumble indistinct verbal complaints

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

(angrily)

Silently! My God, I personally know
the mothers raising you all, and
they did not teach you to... to...
talk back. Where did you all get
these defiant attitudes from?

GEMMA

(quietly)

Psst. Hey where's that new kid?

MACKAISELEIGH

Who?

GEMMA

He had a weird first name, but I
think His last name is um...
Carpenter?

MACKAISELEIGH

What about Him?

CARPENTER BOY

GEMMA
HAS ANYBODY HEARD FROM THE
CARPENTER BOY?

MACKAISELEIGH
HAVEN'T SEEN HIM FOR AT LEAST A FEW
DAYS, WHY?

GEMMA
NOTHING! ...I JUST HOPE HE'S OKAY.

SAMANTHA

SHH!

ANDRE
I HEARD THEY SUSPENDED THE
CARPENTER BOY.

ROCKI
NO ONE REALLY KNOWS WHAT HE DID
WRONG

ROCKI AND ANDRE
SO IT SHOULDN'T BE LONG.

SAMANTHA

SHH!

MACKAISELEIGH AND NATALY
GUESS WHO BLEW HER SHOT WITH THE
CARPENTER BOY

SYMONE
OH MY GOD, CAN WE LET IT GO?
...SO I ASKED HIM IF HE'D LIKE TO GET
NAILED

MACKAISELEIGH NATALY AND SYMONE
HE MADE A FACE LIKE HE'D JUST BEEN
IMPALED!

SAMANTHA
OH, WHAT'S THE BIG APPEAL ABOUT THE
CARPENTER BOY?
WE NEED TO HAVE ORDER, THAT'S WHY
THERE ARE RULES.
IF HE DOESN'T LIKE IT HE CAN FIND A
REGULAR SCHOOL.

STUDENTS
WELL I'D GET ON MY KNEES FOR THE
CARPENTER BOY
WE'RE DOWN BAD FOR THE CARPENTER
BOY!

CHAD
HE MAKES ME FEEL HEARD.

ROCKI
HE MAKES ME FEEL SEEN

STUDENTS
FOR ONCE IN MY LIFE I AM VALUED AND
CLEAN!

DRAW MID CURTAIN

To ANNEЛИSE's office

SAMANTHA remains, ANNEЛИSE enters

ANNEЛИSE
YOU WERE TRUSTED WITH THE CHILDREN,
THAT'S ALL GONE TO HELL

SAMANTHA
UNTIL YOU KNOW WHO SHOWED UP THEY
ALL DID QUITE WELL

ANNEЛИSE
HIS ENROLLMENT GETS FUNDING, WE CAN
CUT THE CORD LATER.
DO DAMN YOUR JOB, MS. SPADE, AND
MANAGE BEHAVIOR.
IF HE CARRIES ON, THERE'S NO WAY HE
STAYS HERE

ANNEЛИSE AND SAMANTHA
THAT SYCAMORE-HILL CONDUCT HAS NO
PLACE HERE

SAMANTHA
HOW DO YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM LIKE A
CARPENTER BOY?
HOW CAN I MANAGE IF THE KIDS THINK
HE'S COOL?

ANNEЛИSE
FIGURE IT OUT BEFORE HE SHUTS DOWN
THE SCHOOL!

ANNELISE exits

OPEN CURTAIN
LIGHTS LOW

Cut to CAFETERIA, in the evening.

MOMSEMBLE surrounds SAMANTHA
A rolling chalkboard reads Parent Teacher Conference Night

SAMANTHA
GOD, I'M GONNA LOSE MY JOB OVER THE
CARPENTER BOY!

MOMSEMBLE
THIS TEACHER LOST HER COOL TO A
FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD BOY

KAREN
IS SHE GONNA QUIT?

SUSAN AND BILL
IS SHE GONNA CRY?

SAMANTHA
IF YOU ALL THINK MY JOB'S SO EASY
LET'S SEE YOU TRY!

MOMSEMBLE
WHY ARE OUR KIDS DISTRACTED BY THE
CARPENTER BOY?

JAMIE
IF IT WERE UP TO ME, YOU'D BE
UNEMPLOYED!

SUSAN
WE RAISED THEM WITH RESPECT,
ACCOUNTABILITY, AND MERIT.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
WHAT COULD THAT BOY HAVE...

MOMSEMBLE
...THAT THEY DON'T GET FROM THEIR
PARENTS?

ALPHEE enters

ALPHEE
HE TOUCHED MY BROKEN GLASSES AND
NOW I CAN SEE

STUDENTS file in a few at a time

STUDENTS
NO ONE'S EVER BEEN THAT NICE TO ME.

MOMSEMBLE members each lash out at SAMANTHA once more before exiting, strike Chalkboard.

STUDENTS (CONT'D)
HOW DID WE EVER GET BY BEFORE HIM?

SAMANTHA
(walking to center)
HE FEEDS OFF ATTENTION, PLEASE JUST
IGNORE HIM!

ROCKI
WE CANNOT PRETEND WE ALL DON'T
ADORE HIM.

STUDENTS
IT'S ALMOST LIKE WE'VE BEEN WAITING
FOR HIM!

LIGHTS UP

Cut to the next school day

STUDENTS (CONT'D)
WAITING ON THE RETURN OF THE
CARPENTER BOY!

SAMANTHA places signs promoting each pillar on walls, tables.

GEMMA
I'D DO ANYTHING TO BE HIS FRIEND!

STUDENTS
I'D GIVE ANYTHING TO SEE HIM AGAIN!

JEENALD enters from the back and takes center stage

SPOTLIGHT ON
JEENALD

JEENALD
(quietly, hesitant)
Hey, guys...

STUDENTS whip their heads toward JEENALD, then stand

STUDENTS
(joyfully)
EVERYONE ON YOUR FEET
IT'S THE CARPENTER BOY!

ANDRE
LET'S SHOW SOME RESPECT FOR THE
CARPENTER BOY!

ANNELISE
(to SAMANTHA)
DID YOU NOT TEACH THEM THAT THEY
STAND FOR ADULTS?

SAMANTHA
OF COURSE I DID!

ANNELISE storms off stage, literally stomping

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
WHY'S IT ALWAYS MY FAULT?

STUDENTS
WE'VE GOT NOTHING BUT RESPECT FOR
THE CARPENTER-
ACCOUNTABLE WE WILL BE TO THE
CARPENTER-
MERIT IS ALL WE SEEK...

SAMANTHA white-knuckles her clipboard

STUDENTS (CONT'D)
...FROM THE CARPENTER BOY!

SAMANTHA throws her clipboard on the ground and exits
STUDENTS dance carelessly knocking down virtue posters

JEENALD
(relieved)
Uh thanks! I missed you guys too
but uh... you can just call me
Jeenald.