

The Book of Adam

By

Matt Fotis

Copyright © Matt Fotis
773-369-8566
shantz100@msn.com

CHARACTERS

- Adam 40, an account manager at a public relations firm. He is used to talking his way into or out of anything.
- Evelyn 39, Adam's wife. She is the president of the PTA and quite possibly the most active parent in the history of elementary school. They have three children together, Luke-12, Mary-9, Isaac-3.
- Charles 67, he is a retired chemist. A practicing Catholic that identifies as Jewish. He also plays God whenever He visits Adam - signified by Charles/God holding an apple. He might have dementia.
- Joss 30, she is an Episcopalian priest searching for love.
- Emma 30, the face of The Seven Day Society. She is extremely attractive, articulate and persuasive; essentially she should be working in PR.

SETTING

The play takes place over a variety of locales. Most scenery can be suggested and the play is designed to move quickly and fluidly between scenes, so ideally most of the necessary items will be onstage throughout.

TIME

Fall of 2010. Various locales in Tucson.

CHAPTER I
BREATH OF LIFE

(The lights rise on a public relations office. There should only be a desk and a rather large ficus tree. ADAM is asleep with his head down on his desk. It is three in the morning. He has clearly been in his office all night.

After a few moments CHARLES enters. He is carrying a bowl of fruit and a Bible. He sits down opposite Adam and waits. He puts the bowl of fruit on the desk. Waits. He gets up and looks around the office. He picks the dead leaves off the ficus. Sits. He picks up an apple and takes a bite. While he has the apple Charles is GOD. As he eats the apple we become aware that there is something special about him, he moves with a certain effortless purpose and possesses an ease, calm and decisiveness that is both calming and slightly unnerving. A subtle light shift may accompany his eating the apple to make His status known. He flips through the Bible, skimming Genesis. Eventually he bends over and blows air into ADAM's nostrils. Nothing happens. GOD tosses the apple into the trash, leaves the Bible on the desk, puts his coat on and leaves.

The lights flash and a single apple falls from the sky and lands on Adam's desk.)

ADAM
(Suddenly waking.)

Jesus Christ!

(Lights quickly flash and the scene shifts to CHARLES living room, which has been converted into a makeshift Jewish temple with an Ark - an old armoire; Bimah - a lectern; and Ner Tamid - an old and really big half-melted Santa Claus candle on top of the armoire. Again, these are makeshift and should be Charles best attempt to recreate a synagogue without spending any actual money to recreate an actual synagogue. The bowl of fruit from the previous scene is on the Bimah.

When the lights shift CHARLES should be praying. While Charles retains a slight air of mystery, when he isn't the Almighty he no longer moves with the same purpose and ease - we now become aware that he is a sixty-seven year old man.

ADAM is impatiently standing behind him and still in his clothes from the night before. He is carrying a Bible.)

ADAM
This is silly dad.

CHARLES
Quiet.

ADAM
Is Joss okay with this?

CHARLES
Prayer is prayer.

ADAM
I'm not religious.

CHARLES

Neither am I.

ADAM

(Tossing the Bible to his father.)

You left this in my office. I can't have that thing at work. You'll get me fired.

CHARLES

You won't get fired for that.

ADAM

Why are you carrying it around anyway? It makes you look crazy.

CHARLES

What if I need it?

ADAM

What could you possibly need it for? What situation arises that you need to have a Bible handy?

CHARLES

You're breaking my kavanah.

ADAM

(Challenging.)

What does kavanah mean?

(No response.)

You're not Jewish dad.

CHARLES

What do you care?

ADAM

Because you're not Jewish, that's why I care. Look at this place. What if a real Jew saw this place? This is sacrilegious. You're using a Santa Claus candle.

CHARLES

I don't need Santa Claus anymore.

ADAM

I don't believe this.

CHARLES

You don't believe in anything you do. You lie for a living.
Do I complain?

ADAM

It was your company.

CHARLES

It was not my company.

ADAM

As much as it was mine.

CHARLES

Well, you've ruined this for me. I'll have to do it later.

ADAM

I don't lie.

CHARLES

Do you want something to eat?

(He gets up, picks an apple out of the bowl. There is something slightly different about Charles. He seems to command more attention. In short, he is God. He is eating an apple throughout.)

ADAM

I put things in a positive light.

GOD

Me too.

ADAM

You're not Jewish. It's embarrassing.

GOD

I don't think Judaism is embarrassing.

ADAM

Don't twist my words.

GOD

That's your job, I forgot.

ADAM

You make paint. What's so noble about that?

GOD

Paint that's sun resistant. Man's always fighting nature.
It makes it tough on me.

ADAM

I have to take them on.

GOD

I don't care who your clients are.

ADAM

Now that you aren't one.

GOD

I was just a scientist. I had no real power.

ADAM

I'll lose my job. I'll probably lose it anyway. The whole
idea just creeps me out. I mean, do people really believe
in that stuff?

GOD

Wanna bite?

ADAM

No thanks.

GOD

Really, take a bite.

ADAM

I'm not hungry. The skin makes my throat itch.

GOD

You should eat more fruit.

ADAM

Dad, stop pushing fruit on me. What are you like Snow White
or something?

GOD

You would be Snow White. I'd be the vain step mother trying
to kill you.

ADAM

Dad!

GOD

I'm just trying to help.

ADAM

Plus I never know what to do with the core.

GOD

You throw it away.

ADAM

It's not a personal business. I should just do it.

GOD

I don't know about that.

ADAM

Can you put in a good word for me with JAR? Talk to Brian?
Maybe get us back in the door?

GOD

I'm retired.

ADAM

You know people.

GOD

I was a mid level chemist.

ADAM

You helped me land them in the first place.

GOD

I don't know the people in power anymore.

ADAM

Dad. Your paint made them millions of dollars.

GOD

Stop chasing something you can't have. Focus on what's in
front of you.

ADAM

So you think I should take them on?

GOD

Everybody likes a personal relationship.

ADAM

Exactly. That's my job. Make the public feel a personal connection to my client. Make them feel good about their product.

GOD

It can be a challenge. People don't always buy what you're selling.

ADAM

That's just it, you got to get them to think you aren't selling it.

(GOD finishes his apple. He becomes Charles again.)

CHARLES

I need to pray.

ADAM

Fine. Go ahead. I'll just wait here in the corner. I just lost JAR Chemical - the seventh largest corporation in the world - lost millions of dollars - our company's biggest client - the company you worked for for forty years, that put your kids through college - and I'm probably going to be out of a job in six weeks even if I do take on these nut jobs because Ed's such a dipshit that he's sleeping with half the office and giving all of his girlfriend's giant bonuses and God knows what else he's doing to fritter away forty years worth of hard work. And now because I'm an idiot and let some stupid intern post "anonymous" blogs about some new magical hybrid corn seed that a four year old could tell were plants I've got to save the company by taking on this crazy right wing Christian group that is paying us millions of dollars - and God knows where they're getting the money - because they think the apocalypse is coming so they need to save the world. Don't pull out any old favors though Dad, I'll just wait while you pray to the armoire!

CHARLES

You could try talking to Hashem about your problems you know.

ADAM

You're Catholic.

CHARLES

Call Him what you will, but call Him.

ADAM

This is your solution? Tell it to the armoire?

CHARLES

It's an Ark.

ADAM

Doesn't look very buoyant to me.

CHARLES

Not that ark, more like the Ark of the Covenant. Like in Indiana Jones.

ADAM

You kind of beat God out of me as a kid.

CHARLES

I did no such thing. I took you to church all the time. Joss is a priest for Chr-. I did no such thing. And I know for a fact you saw the Indiana Jones movies.

ADAM

I'm not broken up about it. Look, put on whatever clothes the great armoire tells you to wear and stop by the office when you're done. I've got to pick up Luke from hockey practice and change my clothes before my meeting with Anita Bryant. Good talk Dad.

(The lights shift. JOSS, an Episcopal priest, enters and stands behind CHARLES's Bimah. It is the Sunday before a local election. It is her last sermon before she moves back home to Tucson to take over her own congregation.)

JOSS

I want to thank you all for the past two years. I have learned a great deal from all of you. I have come to know many of you and cherish that time. I know that I will miss you, although I won't miss you that much when it's seventy

degrees in Tucson and Boston's buried in six feet of snow. But before I go, I want to ask you what you believe.

What do we believe? People ask us all the time. Who are you voting for? What do you think of the Red Sox this year? What do you want on your pizza? What is ethical? What is moral? What is right. What we believe is what makes us who we are. What do you believe?

It is so important that people like to tell us what we believe. Tell us who we are. Turn on the television and watch the ads for the election. There are whole industries whose sole function is to tell us what we believe, to manufacture and manipulate belief. Some people say that's what the church does. Do we believe them? Do they tell us what we want to believe? What we want to be? What do we believe? Who are we?

I know that a lot of you are here because you don't believe. You don't believe what others have told you. That you can't be X or Y and still be a Christian. As though being a Christian is an either or thing. You are either gay or a Christian. You are either a scientist or a Christian. You are either a liberal or a Christian. Human beings are both and people. I am both a daughter and a sister. I am both a believer and a doubter. I am both a woman and a priest.

We forget sometimes that beliefs can change. They don't have to, but they can. We once believed the earth was flat, that the sun revolved around the earth, that slavery was a necessary evil. That the Red Sox were cursed.

I know that some of you are here because you believe, and I know that a lot of you are here because you don't.

But belief is only part of it. I can believe in world peace, but what do I do about it? I can believe in Barack Obama or John McCain, but what do I do about it? Did more people believe in Barack? Is that why he won? Who will we believe in this Tuesday? I can believe in God, but what do I do about it.

Faith is so much more than a passive belief. Faith is so much more than simply saying "I don't know." Have I talked to God? Have I seen Him? Do I live with Him? Do I know He exists? Do you? We all take it on faith. If I told you that

I had talked to Him would you believe me? And why? Do you have faith in me? Faith is so much more than accepting what you are told. It's so much more than what we feel. Faith is all encompassing. Faith is doubt. Faith is certainty. Faith is questioning. Faith is abandoning your faith. Faith is coming back to your faith. Faith is believing and knowing that what we believe can change.

(Lights fade out.)

CHAPTER II
FLESH FROM MY FLESH

(Scene shifts to ADAM and EVE's home. She is cleaning up from dinner, which Adam missed.)

ADAM

I know, I know. But I have to go back.

EVE

Go back? You haven't been home for five minutes.

ADAM

It's crisis mode. I'll explain later. I have to go.

EVE

I told you this would happen.

ADAM

Eve.

EVE

I told you not to take them on. They're poisoning the world.

ADAM

Can we not get into this—

EVE

I told you there would be a backlash.

ADAM

And now I'm dealing with it. Look, I don't like it anymore than you. But I have to go.

EVE

So I guess I'll go to Luke's hockey game and Mary's recital.

ADAM

Fuck.

EVE

Go ahead. I'll just have to take Isaac with me - no need to worry about getting his shoes on since he refuses to take them off—

ADAM

How is that my fault? The kid likes shoes. It's a phase.

EVE

He wants attention. Go figure.

ADAM

Eve—

EVE

—and leave at intermission to spend ten minutes at Mary's recital, then pack her up and hope I make it back by the end of Luke's game so he doesn't notice.

ADAM

I have to go. The whole company is at stake. I might lose my job. We might lose the house.

EVE

Then I'll go back to work. The hospital always needs nurses. I could use—

ADAM

No. I just need to take care of this.

EVE

I'm just assuming you forgot the eggs I asked you to pick up. That I'll have to do it myself now — somehow find the time to go shopping in-between everything else so I can make cupcakes for school tomorrow.

ADAM

Why are you making cupcakes?

EVE

Why are you missing the point?

ADAM

Evelyn—

EVE

Fine. Go.

ADAM

Evelyn—

EVE

What?

ADAM

I have to do this. Everyone is counting on me.

EVE

I know.

ADAM

I've just got to put out this fire and then things will be back to normal.

EVE

Oh good.

ADAM

When this is over we'll take a trip. Just you and me. Or we can bring the kids and go to San Francisco or New York or wherever you want to go. I just need a little bit of time. I'll make it up to you.

EVE

Stop. Don't spin me. Do not spin me. If you have to go. Go. I've got a PTA meeting tomorrow night so if you could spare two hours at home I'd appreciate it.

(Scene shifts back to Charles living room. JOSS has just moved back in.)

CHARLES

The couch is over there.

(Referring to the armoire, which also acts as an entertainment center.)

You can watch TV whenever you want. As long as I'm not praying. This hallway leads to the kitchen.

JOSS

Dad, I know where everything is.

CHARLES

Sorry. I'm just a little nervous.

JOSS

It's okay. You don't have to be nervous. It's just me.

CHARLES

I've never lived with the cloth before.

JOSS

I'm the same person that lived here before.

CHARLES

It's good to have you home.

JOSS

You growing a beard?

CHARLES

Make me look younger?

JOSS

Yeah. What's with the shrine?

CHARLES

I don't like going to temple so I pray here. Is that going to be a problem?

JOSS

Prayer is prayer.

CHARLES

My rabbi thinks I'm afraid of dying.

JOSS

Why wouldn't you be?

CHARLES

Do I look that bad?

JOSS

It's natural to think about it.

CHARLES

Adam comes by Wednesday nights for dinner.

JOSS

He still lying to the public?

CHARLES

He asked me the same question about you.

JOSS

At least we don't pass our stuff on as fact.

CHARLES

We usually have tacos. Beef tacos. Do you still like tacos?

JOSS

Dad, I'm not any different.

CHARLES

I know.

JOSS

I can send you to Hell now, but other than that - same person.

CHARLES

I don't know if Jews believe in Hell.

JOSS

They believe in an afterlife.

CHARLES

Do you have a boyfriend?

JOSS

Hell makes you think of my love life?

CHARLES

I just want to know.

JOSS

Not right now.

CHARLES

Nobody dying to be with the priest who lives at home?

JOSS

Plenty of people are dying to be with a priest.

CHARLES

Especially on their deathbeds.

JOSS

I'm looking. The collar is a bit of a turn off for some guys.

CHARLES

What about that guy you were dating from your church out east?

JOSS

It was a bit too much of a turn on for him. He just wanted to sleep with a priest. Not many guys can say that you know?

CHARLES

I don't know.

JOSS

I don't think he really thought it through.

CHARLES

I...uh...

JOSS

Sorry. I'll let you know before I bring any guys home.

CHARLES

Me too. I have a minyan on Thursdays with a few guys from temple and Adam comes over Wednesdays for dinner. Tacos usually. Sometimes Eve and the kids come too. I don't think she likes me.

JOSS

Give her a break. She lives with Adam.

CHARLES

I don't know.

JOSS

How could she not like you?

CHARLES

I don't know.

JOSS

How's Adam? And the kids?

CHARLES

Fine, I guess.

JOSS

I still haven't met Isaac yet. What is he, three now?

CHARLES

Yeah, wears shoes all the time. He prays with me when they visit. I don't think he knows what's happening. Cute little kid.

JOSS

Hard to believe he came from Adam.

CHARLES

You came from me.

(Lights fade out.)

Chapter III
SLIER THAN EVERY BEAST OF THE FIELD

(Scene shifts back to Adam's office. Unlike the top of the play, it now feels very cold and sterile. CHARLES/GOD enters, leading EMMA on stage. She is not in a trance, but she is clearly being led by CHARLES/GOD. He straightens up the desk a bit, drops off a fruit basket and then positions EMMA next to the ficus tree. He places her hand on a dead leaf. He then goes into Adam's desk and pulls out a bottle of gin and some tonic water. He makes a gin and tonic. He takes a lemon from the basket - the only non-apple - cuts a slice and puts it in the drink. He takes a sip, hands it to Emma and then leaves. As soon as He exits EMMA springs back to life and pulls the leaf off the tree and sits on Adam's desk. She is examining the leaf when ADAM enters.)

ADAM

Oh.

EMMA

(Referring to the ficus leaf.)

You don't see too many real ones.

ADAM

Delivered the day I started. A gift from my father.

EMMA

Your secretary let me in. Hope you don't mind. I fixed myself a drink.

ADAM

I forgot I had that in here.

EMMA

I'm sure you did.

I prefer vodka. But gin will do.

ADAM
(Crossing to introduce himself.)

Adam—

EMMA
I know who you are. You're the reason I'm here.
Emma Wedgewood. The Seventh Day Society.

ADAM
A pleasure.
(Picks up the remaining piece of lemon
and tosses it in the trash.)
Would you like some fruit? My father keeps sending me fruit
baskets. I'm up to my neck in apples. I don't care for the
crunch.

EMMA
You don't remember me?

ADAM
I'm sorry—

EMMA
You've aged well.

ADAM
Have we met?

EMMA
So what can you do for us?

ADAM
So I take it that the small talk and drinks are over.
Should I cancel the appetizers?

EMMA
I could go for a little calamari.

ADAM
I'll see what I can do.

EMMA
Pull some seafood out of the desert and I'll start to
believe the stories about you.

ADAM

Stories?

EMMA

Modesty doesn't suit you.
Well the good ones anyway. I know why you're taking us on.

ADAM

I'm—

EMMA

I know that you messed up with JAR Chemical and your daddy can't fix it. Your boss can't keep his fly zipped and you guys are two seconds from being out of business, so I know why we're here. So let's stop pretending.

ADAM

I'm not—

EMMA

Do you know how long we've been trying to work with Hinkle?

ADAM

Ed doesn't—

EMMA

Six years - feels like centuries. For six years there wasn't available staff, there were client conflicts blah blah blah. Now you're up against it and you need our money. So don't think that we aren't going to get our money's worth. Because if we don't, we'll leave. And you'll be out of a job.

ADAM

Well that's why I'm handling your account personally.

EMMA

I don't want any junior execs on this.
(She crosses to him, with an air of
authority and seduction.)

I want you.

ADAM

You've got me. I don't like to hand off projects.

EMMA

Me either.

ADAM

(Breaking away.)

Well then, staffing is not our concern.

EMMA

What is our concern?

ADAM

That's a great question. What is our concern?

EMMA

We're trying to change our public image.

ADAM

I figured that part out.

EMMA

People think we're this radical right wing religious cult.
That's kind of becoming a problem for us.

ADAM

Really?

EMMA

Surprising isn't it?

ADAM

So what are you?

EMMA

We're a group that believes in God.

ADAM

(Chant/singing as though he is a
Catholic priest giving Eucharist.)

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith. Amen.

The mystery of faith.

I was raised Catholic. My Dad thinks he's Jewish now. I
don't really practice.

EMMA

We don't have a particular denomination. Everyone is
welcome.

ADAM

My sister is an Episcopal priest.

(He takes out the gin and tonic water and starts to make himself a drink.)
People like to act like she's never done anything wrong, you know, but like for twenty-some years she wasn't a priest. She's done lots of stuff, but slap on the collar and now she's all high and mighty.

EMMA

Well I'm sure that your family history is thrilling—

ADAM

That's part of your problem.

EMMA

I'm not opposed to women priests.

ADAM

Piousness. People don't like it. It makes them uncomfortable. Why do you think people don't go to church anymore?

EMMA

I go to church.

ADAM

But most people don't. And why? Because they want to feel good. Church makes people sad. It makes them feel guilty. It makes them feel like bad people. People have jobs to make them feel worthless. Families to make them feel guilty. I'm convinced God created mother's specifically to make us feel guilty. I haven't seen my kids awake for more than two hours in weeks. You think I want to go to church and feel bad about it? I already feel bad about it.

EMMA

We aren't trying to get people to go to church.

ADAM

Listen—

EMMA

We aren't trying to get people to disown evolution. We just want people to consider creationism.

ADAM

That's all well and good—

EMMA

No witness was present as life 'evolved.' Evolution is a historical science - man's interpretation, based on his world view, of unobservable, unrepeatable events.

ADAM

Dogma. People don't want dogma shoved down their throats.

EMMA

Evolution is as much of a religion as Christianity, promoted, not because of scientific fact, nor from overwhelming proof, but because it satisfies man's desires. If all life evolved through random chance or necessity, then man is the highest of all evolved creatures. He is God, and there is no higher authority.

ADAM

See? I stopped paying attention half way through-

EMMA

Isn't evolution just the same thing as creationism with a little different window dressing? They're both faiths? You have to believe. Why do people insist on pitting science and creation against each other? Can't you see that they are one? That beings evolve and souls evolve and the universe is an ever changing place where science and creation come together in man. Is there really a difference between the two?

ADAM

Totally zoned out.

EMMA

This is what I'm paying you for?

ADAM

It's all about perception. Right now people think you're crazy. I'm sorry to say it. You seem like a reasonable human being, but you have a perception problem. The church already lost the war to science. You can't keep fighting that battle.

EMMA

Wait, you mean the sun doesn't revolve around the earth? Thank you sir, but I'm leaving.

ADAM

People want faith, they want spirituality. It's still there, the need is still there, the desire is still there. People still believe.

EMMA

I know.

ADAM

You're familiar with John Adams?

EMMA

Not intimately.

ADAM

You're familiar with the Boston Massacre?

EMMA

Is there a test coming?

ADAM

It wasn't always the Boston Massacre. The Americans gave it that name. You hear Boston Massacre and it's hard to sympathize with the British. It was a skirmish where a mob provoked British soldiers, shots were fired in confusion, a few poor souls kicked it and suddenly it's a massacre. The Brits name it first or win the war and we never hear about it. Now, we think the Redcoats lined up a bunch of poor helpless colonists and slaughtered them.

EMMA

Thank you for the lesson. But—

ADAM

I'm getting there. So John Adams takes the case. Nobody in the colony will do it, but he sees that the law is on the British side. Are they guilty? Of course. But do they deserve to be hanged? No, they don't. And Adams knows this and he makes that case. Does he downplay the incident? Does he deny wrongdoing? Does he sympathize with the British?

EMMA

I'm sorry I stopped paying attention half way through.

ADAM

No. He follows the law. And he wins. But the British lose the spin war. They lost the second it was named the Boston Massacre. The trial didn't matter. Adams won, but he lost.

EMMA

So you're suggesting we hire John Adams to be our spokesperson?

ADAM

Arguably nobody did as much to help found this country than Adams. Adams won, but he lost. Do you see? In nearly every argument between him and Jefferson, Adams was right. Ally ourselves with the British or French? Adams was right, but he lost the spin war. People love Jefferson. He's a national hero.

EMMA

Totally zoning out.

ADAM

Most people don't know that Adams even existed. Because he lost the spin wars. He didn't care about image, he didn't care about public opinion - well he did but not in the right ways. He put his message out there and let the people decide. It was insanity. You have to tell people what the message is. Do you see? You have to tell them what to think without them thinking you're telling them what to think. You have to play the game if you want to win.

EMMA

That's why we're here. We want to play.

(Scene shifts to Adam and Eve's.
EVE has just returned from her PTA meeting.)

EVE

Rooms are seventy-five a night.

ADAM

Very funny.

EVE

Check out is at eleven.

ADAM

I'm here. Don't get on me for things I can't control.

EVE

Three children live here. They aren't used to having men around so they might be a little weird around you.

ADAM

Eve.

EVE

There's breakfast in the morning if you want. The last guy who stayed here never ate breakfast.

ADAM

He must have been very busy.

EVE

He seemed to think so.

ADAM

Maybe his company was about to go under and he was doing everything he could to keep his job so that his family was safe.

EVE

Maybe he should have listened to his wife and not taken on the most unpopular company in the world. She told him this would happen.

ADAM

Maybe—

EVE

Maybe he could let her live her own life and go back to work.

ADAM

Maybe she's forgetting that she wanted to quit because she was tired of working nights and holidays and wanted to be with her children.

EVE

Maybe he's forgetting that he wanted her to quit so he could have the perfect little life he always dreamed of. So he could have the mother—

ADAM

Maybe she's forgetting that she can go back whenever she wants.

EVE

Maybe he's forgetting about the kids.

ADAM

Maybe she's forgetting that he's under a lot of pressure right now and doesn't have time—

EVE

He always had a knack for making time for his own things. This other guy.

ADAM

Like what?

EVE

Oh you know, I've got to take this client out for drinks. I've got to meet this client for dinner. I've got to leave my kid's birthday party to meet this client. You know, stuff like that.

ADAM

That's not really making time for his own things.

EVE

Yes it is.
Do you want coffee? There are fresh towels upstairs. If you need anything just call. The maid turns out the sheets in the morning.

ADAM

Okay, I get it.

EVE

Isaac, he's the little one, he wears shoes twenty four hours a day. It's his own little protest.

ADAM

What do you want me to—

EVE

Luke - he's the oldest one, you'd like him - scored a goal. He plays hockey. Must think the ice is cool.

ADAM

Don't make me feel guilty.

EVE

I'm telling you what happened. Don't paint me as some nag.
I thought you'd want to know.

ADAM

I had to go.

EVE

I had to buy cupcakes for Luke's class. Addison's mom made
sure to make mention of it. You don't know what these women
are like.
Now I'm nagging you.

ADAM

What do you want me to say? I had a meeting.

EVE

And you're meeting couldn't wait?

ADAM

Could yours?

(There is a slight pause as Adam
settles in.)

He's doing it again.

EVE

(Weary.)

Who?

ADAM

Bailey. Two rows in this time.

EVE

James?

ADAM

He's mowing our lawn.

EVE

This is what you're worried about? Somebody's got to do it.
I told you to just get the turf. Everybody's got turf or
stones. Grass can't grow here.

ADAM

I'm not getting turf. The grass is fine.

EVE

It's totally brown and dead. I don't know why either of you mow it.

ADAM

It's just regenerating. It'll be lush and green again in no time.

I'm not getting turf.

EVE

Then you wouldn't have to worry about James mowing it.

ADAM

Why does he even have a lawn mower?

EVE

I don't know.

ADAM

He thinks that crab-apple tree is on his lot.

EVE

I wish it was.

ADAM

He's trying to mow his way into our lot.

EVE

No he's not.

ADAM

It's a very attractive tree.

EVE

It's messy.

ADAM

Do you know how rare it is to have a crab apple tree in this neighborhood? We're the only house in three miles that has grass, let alone a crab apple tree. That thing's the talk of the block. It's a miracle. It's like those people that have pictures of Jesus crying on the side of their house or on their garden hoses - people come from miles.

EVE

What people?

ADAM

He's not taking it.

EVE

Give the guy a break. He's all alone.

ADAM

People drive by and they think it's his tree because he's mowed around it. He's trying to make it look like turf.

EVE

So go mow the lawn.

ADAM

He thinks he can squat our lot. Keep moving in deeper and deeper. We pay taxes on that tree. The flowers are beautiful in spring!
I'm hiring a lawyer.
He's not taking my fucking tree.

EVE

I'm running for the open school board spot.

ADAM

What?

EVE

There's an open spot and I'm running for it.

(She pauses for a moment and starts to lose the confidence in her decision, mainly because she can't quite articulate why she wants to run.)

Some right wing religious nut is running and I couldn't let her run unopposed. God, they're infiltrating everything. Probably wants a giant crucifix in front of the school.

ADAM

I don't think that's a good idea.

EVE

Oh, well I didn't know that we were running decisions by each other. I thought we just did whatever we wanted. In that case, I don't think it's such a good idea for you to run off to work every chance you get. I don't think it's

such a good idea for you to never see your children. I don't think—

ADAM

Eve, stop.

EVE

You don't get to tell me what to do. I gave up my life to raise the kids and now I want it back.

ADAM

You didn't give up your life. You quit your job. I wish I could quit.

EVE

I wish you could too. But I guess it's my fault now that you can't. If I had a job you wouldn't have so much pressure, huh? You have to do it all alone, right Adam? Let's not forget who asked who to stay home.

ADAM

I didn't have a gun to your head.

EVE

Stop twisting everything. I can't be her. I can't be this vision that you have.

ADAM

That's not fair.

EVE

I know. Who could live up to that? This picture in your head of the perfect mother—

ADAM

I'm not asking you to.

EVE

You asked me to quit. I loved nursing. I made that choice. I didn't want to but I did. That's what happened. I wouldn't trade a day with the kids. But now I want to do something for myself.

ADAM

Why are you even running?

EVE

Typical.

Christ, Adam! Hello!

Nurse. Nurture. Nourish. Nurse nurture nourish. Nothing.
Now nothing.

The board, the future, our children's education. Religion
in the schools! Science in the schools! Parents in the
schools! Teachers in the schools! Ideology in the
schools!?! Store bought cupcakes in the schools. No. Not
now.

Fucking crab apple tree!?! Turf? Grass? Stones?
Purpose. Direction. Drive. Darwin. Change. Action.
Adrenaline. Ambition. Adaptation.

Nothing. Nothing. Nothing. PTA? Newsletters? Cupcakes?
Halloween costumes? Ladies lunch? Playgrounds, play-yards,
play-dates. Enough. Insanity. Mom-nesia. Baby brain. Small
talk, small town, small thinking. Lake Wobegone? No thanks.
Clarence Darrow? Scopes Monkey Trial? The Butler Act?
Again? Eighty years? The Ten Commandments? The Pledge of
Allegiance? The Bible?

Your mother. Not me. Her.

No. Not now.

Nourishment. Now.

ADAM

Don't blame me. This is not my fault. Do not blame me for
your unhappiness. You think my life is easy? What the hell
is wrong with you?

EVE

I want something for me.

ADAM

Whatever. I'm tired. Do what you want.

EVE

Whatever?

ADAM

He's not taking that tree.

(The scene shifts to Charles
house. It is the next night - taco
night. CHARLES, JOSS and ADAM are
gathered and gathering tacos.)

CHARLES

(To Joss)

Do you still eat meat?

JOSS

Yes.

ADAM

You don't have to pick Jesus or meat?

CHARLES

(To Adam)

Do you still eat meat?

ADAM

Dad.

CHARLES

Sorry, I'm nervous. I haven't had you two together for a long time.

JOSS

Enough with the guilt trip Dad.

ADAM

Leave the guilt to the priest.

JOSS

And the lies to the PR man.

CHARLES

Enough. Let's pray.

(There is a slight pause. Neither Adam or Joss know if Charles is silently praying or waiting for one of them to say something. Joss starts to speak but is cut off by Charles, who has the prayer seemingly jump out of him. In other words, he isn't stopping Joss on purpose, the prayer just sort of happens to him.)

*Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ha-o-lam,
she-ha-kol ni-h'yeh bid-va-ro.*

JOSS
What was that?

ADAM
Hebrew you idiot.

JOSS
No, Dad-

CHARLES
There. Let's eat.

(Only Charles eats. Joss is studying her father very closely. She senses something important has just happened but cannot say what it is exactly. Adam suddenly has lost his appetite and pulls out his blackberry - or some such device - and begins working.)

JOSS
Where did you learn that?

CHARLES
I knew a few Mexicans at the plant. They brought these - I think they're called *carnitas* - for lunch every Friday. They gave me a few recipes.

JOSS
No. Where did you learn to speak like that?

CHARLES
Like what?

ADAM
Like a Jew.

CHARLES
I'm Jewish.

JOSS
No, but it was so...

CHARLES
Ah, I forgot the fruit.
(He exits.)

ADAM

Does Dad offer you fruit all the time?

JOSS

No.

ADAM

He's not like pushing apples on you or anything?

JOSS

Why would he be pushing fruit?

ADAM

I don't know.

JOSS

You're so self absorbed.

ADAM

And you're not? You're no Mother Teresa.

JOSS

I never said I was.

ADAM

Don't sit there judging me.

JOSS

I'm not.

ADAM

Don't pretend that you're not. I know your history.

JOSS

What does that mean?

ADAM

I know you pre-priest. I see through the collar.

JOSS

I'm not wearing a collar.

ADAM

Exactly.

JOSS

You are such an idiot.

ADAM

Your piousness doesn't fool me.

JOSS

Piousness? What are you talking about?

ADAM

I do this for a living.

(CHARLES enters.)

CHARLES

(He is carrying his bowl of fruit. Prays. This time it is very awkward and jerky. He sounds more like someone speaking a foreign language for the second time - he's practiced once before but still has no clue.)

*Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ha-o-lam,
bo-rei p'ri ha-eitz.*

I've been doing lessons on the computer. Pretty good huh?

JOSS

Yeah. You sound authentic.

CHARLES

Since I retired I have a bit of extra time so I figured why not. I'm starting Arabic in the fall. Adam, you want an apple?

ADAM

Hey, listen, I'm going to have to call it a night early.

CHARLES

I thought you said you still eat meat?

JOSS

You've got to get to Luke's hockey game. Oh wait, that was yesterday. Well at least you can still make it to Mary's recital. Oh man, was that yesterday too? It's hard work keeping up with all the things you're missing.

CHARLES

Sometimes a man has to do what a man has to do. He might not always like it.

JOSS

You were always there for us Dad, and you were doing it on your own.

(Slight pause.)

CHARLES

So I had to be.
Do you have to go?

ADAM

I do. I'm just getting a lot of guff from Eve and I should probably head home.

JOSS

That woman is a saint.

ADAM

Yeah, well.

JOSS

I mean it. I can't believe she's still married to you.

ADAM

Thanks Joss.

JOSS

She's such a good person.

ADAM

And I'm not?

JOSS

I'm not judging.

(CHARLES picks up an apple. He examines it and puts it back in the bowl. He then speaks, he is Charles and God at the same time. He speaks to no one and everyone at the same time. Adam and Joss immediately stop their argument.)

CHARLES

Most people don't believe me, but I've met every single US President that's been alive during my lifetime. And all that and I've never been to the White House. I met Ike in 1957. I had just gone to see The Ten Commandments at the

Rivoli Cinema in downtown Des Moines and as I'm walking out he's just standing there. Nobody around him, he's just looking at the marquee. Like he was waiting for me. Nobody else seemed to notice him standing there, but there he was. I walked right up to him and said "don't worry about Sputnik." Didn't say hi or anything. This thirteen year old kid. He smiled and said "I'm not now." Now. Like he had been before but I'd saved the day. Probably just an old politicians trick or something, make you feel like you're more important than you are. Priests make you feel less important and politicians make you feel more important than you are. No wonder people like Ike more than God.

(There is a long silence. Charles continues eating, not expecting anyone to comment. Adam and Joss just stare at each other.)

JOSS

Are you feeling okay?

CHARLES

Yes. Why? Do I look sick? Good thing there's a priest living here.

ADAM

No. Yeah, good thing.

JOSS

Dad?

CHARLES

Yes?

JOSS

Did you really meet Dwight Eisenhower?

ADAM

Why would he lie about it?

JOSS

Were you not listening?

ADAM

Presidents meet lots of people. So one of them was Dad. Do either of you know any good real estate lawyers?

JOSS

Why?

ADAM

My neighbor's trying to steal my tree.

JOSS

Adam!

ADAM

What?

CHARLES

I don't know why you don't just put in turf.

ADAM

I'm not putting in-

JOSS

And John Kennedy? Nixon? Ford? Carter? Reagan. Bush. Clinton. Bush. Obama?

ADAM

And Hoover and FDR, Truman. How long did Coolidge live?

CHARLES

Have you met any presidents?

JOSS

No.

CHARLES

That's too bad. Interesting lot.
Anybody need a refill?

(He exits to the kitchen.)

JOSS

What the...hell...was that?

ADAM

What?

JOSS

That! Dad! Is he losing it? Why didn't you tell me?

ADAM

I didn't notice anything.

JOSS

Uggh - God! Adam! Our father has Alzheimer's.

ADAM

No he doesn't.

JOSS

He just told us that he talked to Dwight Eisenhower.

ADAM

And won the Cold War.

JOSS

And that doesn't concern you?

ADAM

No. He's always been like that. So what, maybe he did maybe he didn't meet Ike.

JOSS

So what? Okay, fine. He met Ike. And every other president? Probably met all the prime ministers of the world too. On a first name basis with world dictators. Hello? Adam? This is sanity calling.

ADAM

It's a scientist thing. You know, God complex.

JOSS

I don't think Dad has a God complex. I think he has a mental disorder. He's probably got some tumor from working at that plant for so many years. But they do lots of charitable giving, right Adam?

ADAM

Why are you blaming me?

JOSS

You don't get it.

ADAM

Who do you think paid for you to become so pious?

JOSS
Do you think you owe them?

ADAM
It doesn't matter now.

JOSS
Yes it does.

ADAM
He's fine. He's learning new languages. That's supposed to stave off Alzheimer's.

JOSS
What does Eve think?

ADAM
I don't know. That I'm not home enough.

JOSS
About Dad?

ADAM
That I'm not home enough.

JOSS
How old are you?

ADAM
How old are you? You better get a move on if you want kids.

JOSS
Am I the only one in this family worried about Dad?

ADAM
He's going through a phase. He's getting older. Mom took a lot out of him.

JOSS
Don't.

ADAM
What?

JOSS
Don't you blame me.
I can't believe you'd do that.

It's not fair and it's cruel.

ADAM

I didn't say anything.

JOSS

It's not what you say.

(JOSS gets up, waits for a moment for Adam to apologize, which he doesn't. She then exits. Adam picks up the same apple that his father had and examines it. Before he takes a bite he is struck by an idea.)

(Scene shifts back to Adam's office. He is delivering his pitch for The Seventh Day Society. Emma is seated.)

ADAM

It's not what you say. It's what they hear. Right now people aren't hearing what you want. This is the entire philosophy of the Republican Party.

EMMA

I'm not a Republican.

ADAM

I didn't realize it was an insult.

EMMA

I voted for Gore, Kerry and Obama.

ADAM

Third time's the charm.

EMMA

Met my ex on the Kerry campaign as a matter of fact. Doing campaign calls.

ADAM

I don't vote. Probably because of those calls. But this is exactly what I'm talking about. People hear what they want.

EMMA

I'm listening.

ADAM

Message control. We need people to hear what we want them to hear. This is how our entire government works. That's why they give everything those stupid names - Patriot Act, American Recovery Act, The New Deal, The Great Society, blah blah blah. They can't say 'The Stripping Your Civil Liberties Act' or 'Your Tax Dollars are Going to Sidewalk Repairs Act.' They are controlling the message.

The same thing happened to religion. People still believe. The terminology's just been renamed. Miracles became fate. Divine intervention became coincidences. The idea is still there, we just hear it differently.

EMMA

You have any more gin in there?

ADAM

(He takes out a bottle of vodka and tonic water and mixes two drinks during his speech.)

So, you might be asking yourself where does that leave The Seventh Day Society?

EMMA

I might.

ADAM

You are offering people freedom of thought. Intellectual pluralism. You are promoting diversity of ideas. Stop ramming ideology down people's throats, stop arguing about the merits of a scientific theory and start preaching about the freedom of ideas. An intellectual marketplace. Why can't students be exposed to both evolution and creationism? Why can't they make their own choice? If we believe in the scientific method then won't students come to evolution on their own? Isn't it the perfect test of the method in action? Why then can't they also be given another idea? Why go to school if you aren't going to be exposed to new ideas. The library doesn't discriminate its books, why do schools discriminate against the free exchange of ideas?

EMMA

You didn't mention what we do at all.

Vodka, hm?

ADAM

I listen.

EMMA

Apparently.

ADAM

We don't want to talk about what you do. We want people to support you. And we do that through freedom. People will do anything for freedom. We get the people on your side and then we slip in the rest.

EMMA

I don't want to trick people. We think people will want—

ADAM

Exactly, they will want to join and support you. Once they hear the message in the right way. Now they think you are just Bible thumpers and so they tune you out - soon they'll think you're a patriot and they'll listen.

EMMA

How did you know I was running for the school board?

ADAM

I listen.

EMMA

Well you certainly make it sound very appetizing.

ADAM

I usually recommend a spokesperson to make the rounds, but I think you should do it. You've got a great face for the camera, a certain likeability. We set up a few events, a charity drive, sponsor a little league team - anything really and just start attaching your name and your face and people will start hearing what we want them to hear.

EMMA

Cheers!

ADAM

Slainte.

(Scene shifts to Adam and Eve's. JOSS and EVE have just finished prepping for the big school board debate.)

EVE

You think that'll work?

JOSS

Absolutely.

EVE

I just don't want to be too pushy. Parents don't like pushy.

JOSS

You have to stand up for what you believe in. Just be firm. Confident.

EVE

I can't believe I'm really doing this. It's so exciting.

JOSS

Well I hope for everyone's sake that you win.

EVE

(Noticing that Joss is sweating profusely.)

Are you okay?

JOSS

Yeah. I just forgot how hot it is here.

EVE

Spoiled by New England winters huh?

JOSS

I thought it was supposed to be the other way around.

EVE

You want some water or something? Charles brought over a fruit basket. Aren't oranges supposed to be good for dehydration?

JOSS

I'm fine.

(Joking.)

Suffering's kind of my thing.

EVE

Let me get you some water.

(She exits and returns with a glass of water.)

Just have to readjust to living where God never intended people to live.

JOSS

I don't think people intend to live in Tucson. It just sort of happens to you.

EVE

What a great slogan: Tucson - it just sort of happens to you.

JOSS

Thanks for the water.

EVE

Thanks for your help. I didn't want to give Adam the satisfaction.

JOSS

Believe me, I know. He'll take all the credit and pretend like you had nothing to do with it.

EVE

I know.

JOSS

What an ass.

EVE

Are you going to be there?

JOSS

The debate?

EVE

No, the other thing we just spent five hours prepping for.

JOSS

I've got a date.

EVE
Hang on.

JOSS
What?

EVE
Details. With who?

JOSS
Some guy from church.

EVE
Are you allowed to do that?

JOSS
Where else am I going to meet men?

EVE
Um, the other ninety-nine point nine percent of the world.

JOSS
It's hard to meet men. You're lucky that you've already got one. Even if it is Adam. It's vicious out there. Especially if you're a priest.

EVE
I'm not judging.

JOSS
Do you know any single father's?

EVE
A couple. Come to the debate and I'll introduce you to Dennis.

JOSS
Dennis? People are actually named Dennis?

EVE
I know, but he's real nice.

JOSS
Oh.

EVE
What?

JOSS

Nothing.

For some reason people think I like ugly guys. Like I take pity on the meek. And the ugly.

EVE

Okay, come to the meeting and I'll introduce you to James.

JOSS

Yeah?

EVE

Oh yeah. He's in his early thirties, stays in shape. I think he works for the city or something. He's good looking.

JOSS

For real good looking?

EVE

For real.

JOSS

Cause I can take off the collar and doll myself up pretty good.

EVE

You're gorgeous.

JOSS

So I want somebody in my league.

EVE

James is definitely in your league.

JOSS

Why do you say it like that? 'Definitely in your league.' You make it sound like I'm not in his league.

EVE

Are your sermons this convoluted?

JOSS

Only on holidays.

Wait, James from next door James?

EVE

What?

JOSS

Nothing. He is good looking.

EVE

Even if he's trying to steal Adam's precious crab apple tree.

JOSS

At least we know he's capable of caring about something other than himself.

EVE

Too bad it's a tree.

JOSS

God works in mysterious ways.

EVE

Yeah, whatever, look, it would mean a lot to have you there. We've missed having you around the past couple of years. I'm going insane talking mommy-talk with all the women around here. I need somebody to live vicariously through. Wow, how sad is that? I want to live vicariously through a priest.

JOSS

Lot's of Irish and Italian old ladies want to too if that helps.

EVE

No Joss, it doesn't.

JOSS

It was a joke.

EVE

God, I just need someone who won't tell me boring stories about their kids. Who, by the way, aren't nearly as smart, funny, cute, creative, whatever as their mommies seem to think.

JOSS

You can live vicariously through Jesus.

EVE

Jo-

JOSS

I'm kidding.

EVE

You can tell Jesus jokes?

JOSS

Sure. That way I have something to say in confessional.

(The lights go black and suddenly CHARLES appears in a single light.)

CHARLES

It was my 20th birthday. Christmas of course. And I don't think I've ever seen it rain on Christmas. Well not in Des Moines anyway. I guess it could rain in Tucson, but it never does - we just get sand monsoons. But not in Iowa. I had to see it. So I went outside and there's nothing around for miles except snow. Our old barn and our old house and that was it. Just this tempest. I kind of felt like Lear, just standing there letting the rain pound me. I'm standing in a foot of snow in the middle of a thunderstorm. And then everything stopped. I looked up and I saw it coming right at me, I knew it was going to hit me. I had time to move, it took a few minutes for it to actually hit me, but I didn't. I just stood there. I wanted it. Knocked my butt to the ground. And I just lay there in the rain and mud and snow. Didn't feel a thing. Didn't have a mark on me. I eventually went back inside and I was totally dry. There was just a penny sitting on the table and I read it-

(Scene shifts to a school board meeting. EMMA and EVE are in a debate.)

EMMA

- "In God We Trust." I thought that was what this country stood for.

EVE

This isn't about God.

EMMA

You're right. It's about intellectual pluralism.

EVE

It's about control.

EMMA

Exactly. We've let other people control the schools for far too long. The government tells us what we can and can't have in school - why can't we decide? Why can't we let students make their own decisions about matters that aren't cut and dry? Does two plus two equal four? Of course. That's not debatable. Is creationism unprovable? Can you deny that it exists? No. Just like you can't prove or disprove evolution. So why do we only teach the one? Why can't we have a marketplace of ideas? Isn't that what school is supposed to be?

EVE

Because school isn't church.

EMMA

I could point to a thousand ways that Christianity is in the schools - nine hundred and ninety nine of which you approve. Take this middle school biology text book for example.

(The scene shifts to an office building. ADAM is in a meeting with CHARLES.)

CHARLES

"The butterfly is but one example of God's greatest masterpiece, nature."

ADAM

What? Is that like some kind of Jewish prayer?

CHARLES

It's a pitch.

ADAM

For what? I've got a lot to do. One of our client just decided that selling lead toys was a good idea and I've got to spin it so they don't lose a few billion dollars. I don't have time for butterflies.

(CHARLES picks up an apple from the desk.)

Could you stop sending me these? I've got more fruit than I know what to do with.

GOD

An apple a day.

ADAM

I don't need forty a day.

GOD

Maybe you do.

You don't know what is on the other side. It doesn't know that it was an egg, or a caterpillar or a chrysalis. It only knows that it's a butterfly.

ADAM

That's sweet dad. But seriously-

GOD

So we don't know what's going to happen. Do you follow me here? You cannot see beyond what you know? For all you know you could have started out as a hippopotamus. And you might turn into a pterodactyl.

ADAM

That's it!

GOD

You see?

ADAM

(He pulls out a napkin that he jots ideas on and writes as he speaks.)

We pulled the toys in an effort to bring clarity. We don't know the after-effects-

(Scene shifts to JOSS's church.)

JOSS

We don't know the after effects. Life's great mystery is death. How we come to it we don't know, what will happen after is a mystery. If we hold to our faith, whatever that faith may be there is an answer. I believe that I will go to Heaven. Others believe they will be reincarnated. Still others believe that there is nothing after death. Of course

we can never know for sure who is right - which must really anger some of us - so we must believe. We don't always have control over life and rarely have control over death, despite all of our medical and scientific advances.

It's one of those things that you feel bad about but had no control over. I guess it taught me right away about the hand of God. Some things just happen and there's nothing you can do about it. What was I supposed to do? Be born slower? Faster? Should I have weighed less, been shorter? Would any of it mattered? Maybe. Do I get mad about it? Of course I do. Do I hate God because of it? Of course I do. But I'm also comforted by the fact that I know it's part of His plan. That it happened for a reason. Maybe someday He'll tell me that reason, but I know that there is one. My brother blamed me, maybe he still does.

As Mr. Darwin once wrote:

(Quoting from The Origin of Species.)

"...each at some period of its life, during some season of the year, during each generation or at intervals, has to struggle for life, and to suffer great destruction. When we reflect on this struggle, we may console ourselves with the full belief, that the war of nature is not incessant, that no fear is felt, that death is generally prompt, and that the vigorous, the healthy, and the happy survive and multiply."

(Scene shifts to Adam and Eve's home. She is making dinner and taking notes from The Origin of Species.)

ADAM

Kind of depressing actually.
I thought the meek inherited the earth.

EVE

It's like science has no meaning for them. Science and religion are equal. Not everything is equal.

ADAM

You're right. But people think everything's equal. Every side has an equal and opposite position.

EVE

Even the Holocaust?

ADAM

Look I'm just saying that you can find anyone to argue anything. We give equal weight in this country. Turn on the television, one guy's arguing that funding schools is a good idea; the other guy says money is the problem. One side says people should eat more fruits and vegetables; the other says they cause cancer. One guy says Obama is Hitler; one guy says he's Stalin. It actually makes my job a little easier.

EVE

How do you sleep at night?

ADAM

Next to you.

EVE

How do you just lie to people.

ADAM

It's not lying. I work for someone and I try to present them in a positive light.

EVE

You're not helping her are you?

ADAM

She's my client. That's it.

EVE

Adam. She sounded awfully polished.

ADAM

No. I'm helping you.
What are you writing?

EVE

PTA letter. I can't let this woman do this.

(Scene shifts. ADAM moves between Eve and Emma. EMMA is in the office reading from the letter. EVE stays on stage writing the letter. They are both talking to Adam.)

EMMA

I don't think it's fair to call me a fear mongerer. If anything she's the one scaring people. I'm asking for more openness.

ADAM

Just keep pushing the pluralism. People love inclusion. Well, when skin color's not involved. There is evidence for both. Neither can be proven; neither can be disproved.

EMMA

I have been.

EVE

She's camouflaging her message. Is it too much to call her a Trojan horse?

ADAM

She's just pushing a universal idea in support of a specific idea.

EVE

What does that mean?

ADAM

Whatever you do leave the Bible out of it. Make it about freedom. People will do anything for freedom.

EVE

Neither can be proven? Um, can you prove that tigers never had the ability to juggle? This is ridiculous. I can't put into words how ridiculous this is. She's scaring people, she's shifting the conversation.

ADAM

I don't think tigers can juggle.

EMMA

Why do you treat the Bible like it's some sort of weapon?

ADAM

Because that's exactly what it is.

EVE

Do you think she's attractive? A couple of the men on the board were just drooling over her.

ADAM
She's aggressive.

EMMA
It's a guide.

EVE
So am I.

ADAM
I know.

EVE
Promise me you aren't helping her.

ADAM
She's my client.

EMMA
Maybe you should read it before you discount it.

ADAM
Believe me, I have.

EVE
Do you think she's attractive?

ADAM
I'm not helping her on purpose.

EVE
(She hands him the letter.)
A penny for your thoughts.

(Scene shifts back to CHARLES.)

CHARLES
Something about life and death makes you curious about yourself and your heritage. After Mary...I wanted to take Adam to see my childhood home. I left Joss with the neighbors, she wasn't even a year old yet - Mrs. Wolfe, after Mary...she would have done anything for me back then. And me and Adam hopped in the car and drove halfway across the country - from Tucson to Des Moines. If there's a more depressing trip than starting in Tucson and ending in Des Moines I'd like to hear it. It took us a couple of days to

get there, we stopped in Albuquerque, Dalhart, Wichita and about forty five other little towns in the middle of nowhere. When we finally got to Des Moines and my parents' farm - it looked exactly the same. I still technically owned the land. Can't remember now if I didn't want to sell it or couldn't sell it, but it was mine. The house, the barn, everything pretty much looked the same. Adam couldn't have cared less. He disappeared for a few hours to go explore and do what eleven year olds do and when I found him he was lying on the ground, asleep. Probably looking at clouds or something. He was lying where I had been struck by lightning.

(CHALRES has a twinge of pain in his left arm and lets out a slight noise. Suddenly there is a bright flash of light and Charles collapses. An apple falls from the sky. There is another flash of light and then a blackout.)

END OF ACT I

ACT II
CHAPTER IV
FOR ON THE DAY YOU EAT OF IT, YOU SHALL SURELY DIE

(There is a casket resting on Adam's desk. CHARLES enters carrying a bowl of fruit and a Bible. He takes a bite from the apple and flips through the Bible for a moment. He then sets the apple on top of the Bible. He checks the ficus tree one last time and then climbs into the casket. Charles is dead.)

The lights subtly shift and we are now in a funeral home. EVE and JOSS enter and take their places near the casket to greet visitors. The apple and Bible should be visible on the desk, but should not look as though they were purposefully displayed.)

EVE

Somebody should write an etiquette book for funerals.

JOSS

That's kind of what we do.

EVE

I'm not talking about the grieving, I'm talking about not telling someone whose dead father is three feet away all about your plans for your rock garden.

JOSS

It did sound kind of neat.

EVE

For the first seven minutes.

JOSS

It wasn't that long.

EVE

You're too used to listening to people regardless of if they have anything to actually say.

JOSS

Maybe. Sometimes you have to be listening.

EVE

And sometimes you have to pretend.

JOSS

Here.

(Joss offers some hand sanitizer to
EVE.)

Old priests trick. You don't know where all of those hands
have been.

EVE

Thanks. Where do you keep it?

JOSS

In my pocket.

EVE

No, like, when you're being a priest?

JOSS

I'm always being a priest.

EVE

You know what I mean.

JOSS

I still have pockets. Even in church. Jesus is okay with
that.

EVE

Yeah, I guess.

Is it wrong to eat some of that fruit? I'm starving.

JOSS

Here.

(She hands Eve a box of raisins.)

EVE

How many pockets do you have?

JOSS

Two. One on each side.

EVE
Thanks. You want some?

JOSS
No, I'm not hungry.

EVE
Take a couple.

JOSS
I'm fine.

EVE
I'll feel less self conscious if we're both eating.

JOSS
Nobody's looking.

EVE
You're blood.
Just take one.

JOSS
I don't want any.

EVE
(Trying to shove some into Joss's hand.
The following doesn't get heated, but
obviously Eve wants Joss to eat some
raisins.)

Take 'em.

JOSS
What are you doing?

EVE
Will you just-

JOSS
Eve-

EVE
You're making a scene. I don't want to eat alone.

JOSS
Nobody was looking.

EVE

They're delicious. Take some.

JOSS

I know they're delicious that's why I offered.

EVE

Then why won't you have some?

JOSS

Because I gave them to you.

EVE

Stop being a priest and take some fucking raisins.

JOSS

Fine.

(They quietly eat raisins for a moment.)

EVE

These are good.

JOSS

I told you.

(A couple comes by to pay their respects. We don't see the couple.)

EVE

(Still chewing.)

Fank you so mulch.

JOSS

(Still chewing.)

It meams alop. Fank you far comin.

(The couple leaves and they finish their raisins.)

JOSS

Maybe I'll put in a rock garden at dad's.

EVE

I know a guy who could lend you a hand. Kind of a windbag though.

JOSS

Who was he?

EVE

I have no idea. I thought you knew him.

JOSS

Maybe he's one of Adam's friends.

EVE

Adam doesn't have friends. And there's no way that guy is in PR.

JOSS

Weird.

EVE

Yes! I got you to judge someone.

JOSS

What?

EVE

Nothing. I just wanted to see if I could get you to judge someone. You know, besides Adam.

JOSS

Real nice Eve.

EVE

You're doing it again.

JOSS

I wonder why.

EVE

Oh give me a break. I'm just kidding around. Taking a break.

How you doin'? You need a break?

JOSS

Shouldn't I be asking you that?

EVE

Even the holy have parents.

JOSS

I'm fine. Wish I had been here the last few years.

EVE

Don't beat yourself up. He wanted you to go.

JOSS

I don't think he wanted me to come back.

EVE

Of course he did.

JOSS

I don't know if I wanted to come back.

EVE

Why would you?

JOSS

Exactly.

I can't believe Adam is the head of the family now.

EVE

That just seems wrong.

JOSS

A flock without a shepherd.

EVE

We're all screwed.

JOSS

I can't believe he's helping that woman.

EVE

He's not.

JOSS

Yes he is.

EVE

He told me he's not.

JOSS

Eve, her notes were on Hinkle letter-head.

EVE

She probably—

(On cue, ADAM arrives. He is frazzled and hurried.)

JOSS

Speak of the devil.

EVE

Nice of you to show up.

ADAM

I'm—

JOSS

Look who decided to pop in for a visit?

ADAM

Can I have two minutes to explain?

EVE

Explain what?

JOSS

What is there to explain?

ADAM

Just let me explain.

EVE

Explain? Please. I don't want to hear it. Your father doesn't deserve it. There can be nothing to explain.

ADAM

Look—

(To Joss.)

Can we have a minute?

JOSS

I think you're less likely to say something stupid if I'm here.

ADAM

I'll take my chances.

JOSS

Are you sure? You say some pretty stupid—

ADAM

Joss.

JOSS

You do a lot of stupid stuff too.

Okay.

Suit yourself.

(She exits.)

EVE

Unbelievable.

ADAM

Eve.

EVE

It's your father's funeral.

ADAM

I was at the synagogue.

EVE

The synagogue?

ADAM

I thought the service was at the synagogue.

EVE

Why would it be at the synagogue?

ADAM

Because dad thought he was Jewish. I don't know, I thought that's where ex-Catholic non-religious Jews were buried. Look I had to listen to a lot of anecdotes to get out of there, so will you please just listen—

EVE

I'm leaving.

ADAM

I just got here.

EVE

I know. I don't know when I'll see you again. I'm leaving.

ADAM
Leaving? Where are you going?

EVE
I'm leaving.

ADAM
Wait, leaving leaving?

EVE
Leaving.

ADAM
Why?

EVE
You're two hours late to your father's funeral. You're never home, the kids probably won't recognize you the next time they see you - your youngest won't take off his shoes in some sort of protest against you, and you're kind of my opponent's campaign manager. Do I really need to answer why?

ADAM
You can't leave.

EVE
I need some time.

ADAM
She's a client. We need the money.

EVE
I'm your wife.

ADAM
I'll help you too. I just told her-

EVE
I know what you told her Adam. She told me and the entire board all of your talking points at the first debate. Nice of you to show your face.

ADAM
You didn't tell me when it was.

EVE

I shouldn't have to tell you. You should know. I'm your wife.

ADAM

I'm sorry. I'll be at the next one. Could we not do this here?

EVE

You think I want to do this now?

ADAM

You're doing it.

EVE

I don't know when I'll see you.

ADAM

Stop being so dramatic. Look, we'll put in the turf.

EVE

You think this is about grass?

ADAM

No, I'm just—

EVE

What's the big deal? It'll be just like it is now except you'll sleep somewhere else.

ADAM

I don't want to sleep somewhere else. I want—

EVE

Someone's coming. In case you forgot your father just died.

(Scene shifts to the end of the funeral. ADAM is now alone. It is just him, the casket, the ficus, the Bible with the bitten apple, and the fruit bowl. He takes several moments just sitting on the floor beneath the casket taking everything in. He notices the Bible on the desk and picks it up. The apple falls to the floor. He notices it, picks it up and

puts it back on the table. He
flips through the pages.
Eventually he reads.)

ADAM

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons."

ADAM

(Normal.)

Aprons? They made aprons?

ADAM

(Reading.)

"And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him-

ADAM/CHARLES

(Simultaneously. Adam is still reading, but he says this pretending to be God. Charles speaks from the casket. He should not move - he is not rising from the dead.)

"Where art thou?"

(ADAM freezes. He drops the book and looks at the casket. He takes a few moments, stands up, puts the Bible down

then thinks better of it and picks it back up. He then peeks inside.)

ADAM

Dad?
God?

(To the room.)

Is there a janitor in here?

(To nothing in particular.)

Dad?

(He resumes reading in an attempt to get another response.)

"And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

(Tentatively.)

And He said...

(Waiting for God to respond. Eventually Adam reads on.)

Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

(He hesitates, and then puts the fruit basket into the casket.)

And the LORD God said unto the woman...What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."

(Normal.)

Shit. Eve.

(Scene shifts to Charles makeshift temple. JOSS is hosting a minyan for some of Charles friends.)

JOSS

Well, I guess you all have heard by now. And yet you're still here. My father would have been touched. I'm not really sure how a minyan works or what it really is—

(Responding to one of the men.)

I meant that more rhetorically, but thank you Herschel. No, really, I don't need you to tell me—

(There is a long pause as a minyan is explained by one of the participants. We don't hear anything, we only see Joss patiently listening.)

Thank you Saul. That was very detailed.

I'm not sure what death is. I'm not sure where my father is. I guess I didn't really know where he was most of my life, so perhaps death shouldn't be so different. And yet it is. We know what death means. But what do we believe about death? Is he in heaven? Is he being reincarnated as a bagel—

(The men talk.)

No, I didn't mean that he was in the bagels.

(The men talk.)

You can eat the bagels. The bagels are safe. Don't worry about the bagels.

(Slight pause. The men talk.)

Or the orange juice. All the food is fine. I didn't mean that my father—

(The men talk.)

Forget about the food for a moment.

I made a deal with God when I was a little girl. My mother died in childbirth. I never knew her. I came into the world amongst great sorrow, and great uncertainty. My parents didn't think they could have more kids after my brother Adam—

(The men talk.)

I know, he's a little bit of a con-artist, but as Ishmael points out he is a good dancer. Although I'm not sure what that has to do with anything.

(Realizing she gave them an opening she quickly moves on.)

I was a bit of a miracle. If you still believe in miracles. And my mother died. I killed my mother. For me to live she had to die. That is quite a burden to carry. How could my father love that baby?

(The men talk.)

No, this isn't a Job story. Okay, how about this, if I want you to say something I'll point at you? Okay?

(The men talk.)

I didn't point Sid.

Okay.

And it was a burden that got heavier as I got older. I wanted to justify that sacrifice. I wanted to make it up to my father. I wanted to prove to my brother that I was worth it. I studied all night, I played five sports and three musical instruments. I did everything I could. And nothing could bring her back. Nothing made the sadness in my father's eyes go away.

So I made a deal with God. I told him that since he took away my mother he couldn't take away my father. How cruel that was. All he ever wanted was to be with her. And here was his young daughter, slowly turning into the very image of his lost wife, praying that he would never die, praying that he'd never get the chance to see her again. But I needed him. And deep down, even though I knew it wasn't possible, I believed it. I believed that God and I had a deal. A small part of me believed it up until Monday. And now he's gone.

Where do we go now? Who do we turn to when our parents are gone? God? Sure, we can turn to God. Tell him our problems. But who here on Earth can we turn to when we need them?

I don't know.

(Scene shifts to Adam and Eve's. The stage is empty. After a moment ADAM enters. He looks around but can tell that the house has been empty for a few days. He then turns to leave.)

(Scene shifts to Joss's church. Joss is taking confession. ADAM enters.)

ADAM

Um, hello?

JOSS

Hello.

ADAM

Um, could you say something else?

JOSS

This is your time to speak.

ADAM

Oh thank God.

JOSS

Yes. Thank God.

ADAM

I've been running all over town popping into these things. You have no idea how many Hail Mary's I've got to say.

JOSS

Adam?

ADAM

Seriously, when did Tucson get so many churches?

JOSS

You just weren't looking.

ADAM

Church isn't my thing.

JOSS

That's a cop-out.

ADAM

Look, you believe in whatever spirits and fairies you want to. I've got problems here on Earth I need to deal with.

JOSS

So why are you in a church looking for answers?

ADAM

I've been looking for you.

JOSS

You could call. Or come by the house. You missed taco night.

ADAM

I can't go there. It's too creepy.

JOSS

And you couldn't call?

ADAM

No.

JOSS

Adam—

ADAM

I don't have your new number in my phone yet. Eve has all those numbers stored in some book somewhere.

JOSS

Those numbers?

ADAM

You know.

JOSS

No Adam, I don't know.

ADAM

Don't make me say it.

JOSS

It's confession. That's kind of the idea.

ADAM

Come on.

JOSS

And you didn't know dad's number?

ADAM

It felt weird calling the house.

EVE

And you don't know where I work?

ADAM

I do now.

JOSS

There are three Episcopal churches here. And only one in this area.

ADAM

There are too many religions in this family for me to keep everything straight.

JOSS

Isn't listening and observing a big part of your job?

ADAM

Isn't it part of yours?

JOSS

So why are you here?

ADAM

I need to talk to you.

JOSS

What about all the people whose phone numbers you actually know?

ADAM

Don't make me beg. I'm trying to make things right.

JOSS

You're a real piece of work.

ADAM

Are you always this judgmental?

JOSS

We can go to my office if you prefer.

ADAM

No, this is probably better. When I see people I'm inclined to give them what they want.

JOSS

Unless they are a part of your family. You're an attention prostitute. You know that right? You only pay attention if someone is paying you.

ADAM

That's not true.

JOSS

Why is Eve running for school board?

ADAM

Joss.

JOSS

See? You probably don't even know my middle name.

ADAM

Mary.

JOSS

Congratulations, you passed the four year old equivalency exam.

(Short pause.)

ADAM

I thought you guys didn't believe in confession. Isn't that why you aren't Catholics?

JOSS

All may. Some should. None must.

ADAM

What is that? Like some sort of pitch for confession?

JOSS

It isn't required. But strongly encouraged. Especially for people like you.

ADAM

I think I'm actually still Catholic, so you don't have any power over my soul.

JOSS

I think we know who owns your soul.

ADAM

Very funny.

JOSS

I was talking about money. Who were you talking about?

ADAM

Are you going to listen to me or berate me? Cause I can go back to any of the twenty other churches I went to and get a guilt trip.

JOSS

What do you want?

ADAM

I want my life back.

JOSS

Who says you lost it?

ADAM

Um, let's see...I'm about to lose my job, I've sold out whatever principles I had to keep that job. And if I lose that job we'll probably lose our house, which I'm not allowed in at the moment. So there's that. I don't ever see my kids, I don't know my sister's phone number, and I think my father might have been God-

JOSS

What?

ADAM (Con't)

And my wife left me...at my father's funeral.

JOSS

Our actions have consequences.

ADAM

Is this the kind of crap you tell people? You think I don't know that? I'm looking for some help here.

JOSS

Help isn't always easy.

ADAM

I need to get my life back. I need my wife back. Stop talking to me in parables.

JOSS

Do you know what a parable is?

ADAM

Yes. Yes I do.

JOSS

Because I'm not speaking in parables.

ADAM

Look, give me some advice. As a priest and as my sister.

JOSS

You think dad was God?

ADAM

No. I don't know. He was acting really weird lately and he was always offering me fruit.

JOSS

Supermarkets offer you fruit too.

ADAM

Look, dad's status as God is really the least of my problems.

JOSS

That actually seems like the root of your problem. Well, aside from your total lack of morality.

ADAM

I don't lack morality. I signed up to be an assistant coach. I can't even skate.

JOSS

That's a start.

ADAM

Don't I get a little credit for that?

JOSS

Once you actually do it.

ADAM

What do you want me to do?

JOSS

Can I tell you a story?

ADAM

No.
Someone's waiting.

JOSS

No one's waiting.

ADAM

I don't want to hear a story.

JOSS

It's an old Jewish parable.

ADAM

I think I hear someone knocking.

JOSS

Once upon a time there was a farmer who had a son. On the son's thirteenth birthday he went mad and came to believe that he was a rooster. He began to live under the kitchen table.

ADAM

Is this about Isaac's shoes?

EVE

All day long he would sit, naked, clucking and crowing and pecking for food placed on the floor. When the father tried talking to him the son would only reply with "Cock-a-doodle-do!" The farmer was at a loss. He couldn't figure out why God would turn his son into a rooster. Days passed. Weeks passed. He was losing his son. He prayed and thought and prayed and couldn't figure out why God would do such a thing. So he went into town to look for help.

ADAM

This is ridiculous. There's somebody waiting whose kid is a duck so they might want to hear-

JOSS

The farmer searched the town but nobody could help him. He returned home, distraught that his only son was a rooster. He prayed to God for a sign. 'Why was my son a rooster?' But still no answer. The farmer, still loving his son began to accept his fate until one day a venerable old rabbi knocked on their door. Totally out of the blue. The farmer couldn't believe his luck. No one had knocked on their door in seven years, and here was this rabbi standing at their stoop claiming he could cure the son. On one condition: the farmer would not interfere with the treatment for six months.

ADAM

I don't have six months.

JOSS

The farmer agreed.

ADAM

Am I the farmer or the son? Or the rabbi? Isn't there a king in this story?

JOSS

The farmer prayed to God and thanked God for sending the rabbi to cure his son. But to the farmer's horror, the old rabbi undressed, sat under the table and began to cluck, crow and peck. The farmer couldn't believe his luck. Before he had had a son under the table thinking he was a rooster - now he had a mysterious rabbi under his table clucking away as well. How could this be a part of God's plan, he thought. But the farmer was a man of his word-

ADAM

Are you saying that I'm not? Is that what this story is about?

JOSS

He had promised not to interfere for six months, and being a man of his word, he did not interfere. For months the rabbi did nothing but sit naked under the table with the son, clucking and crowing and pecking at food.

ADAM

Wait, I'm the chicken?

JOSS

The farmer prayed every day, still looking for a sign. He visited the rabbi and his son every morning, but true to his word he said nothing, he did nothing. Then one morning, the rabbi asked the farmer for a pair of pants. 'Wait!' said the son, 'you can't wear pants. You're a rooster!'

'Well,' the rabbi replied, 'I want to know who says a rooster can't wear pants. They're nice and warm, and very comfortable. Why should man be the only one to enjoy the comfort of pants? Surely a rooster is worthy of the luxury of pants? It makes as much sense for a rooster to wear pants as a man, no?'

The son thought about this and agreed, so the rabbi called for another pair of pants and the son put them on.

ADAM

You want me to wear pants? Where are they going to the bathroom? There are a lot of holes in this-

JOSS

The next day the rabbi called for a clean shirt. He put it on and the son again said, 'Roosters don't wear shirts!' To

which the rabbi replied, 'If a shirt fits, why shouldn't a rooster wear it? After all a shirt can be quite useful, especially with the winter approaching. It makes as much sense for a rooster to wear a shirt as a man, no?'

The son thought about this and agreed, so the rabbi called for another shirt and the son put it on.

Bit by bit the rabbi added items of clothing. Then added in behaviors like sitting at the table, reading a book, sleeping in a bed, and calling himself a man. By the end of the six months the farmer had his son back.

(Pause.)

ADAM

That's it? That's what you're going to tell me?

JOSS

You need to listen.

ADAM

I come to you - and you can't imagine how much this is killing me to be coming to you - and you tell me a story about a rooster kid?

JOSS

The story is about the farmer.

ADAM

So I should just accept losing my job, I should just pray to God since Eve left me. Because one day a naked rabbi will show up at my door and fix everything.

JOSS

He had on clothes when he came.

ADAM

Unbelievable. You know, I was hoping you could give me a feel for what Eve was thinking, what she wanted. Instead I get the naked rabbi story. Great.

JOSS

Stop searching for answers. They are right in front of your nose.

ADAM

Thanks Joss. Real helpful.

JOSS

And next time your wife is running for the school board it might be a good idea not to be the campaign manager for her opponent.

ADAM

Eve doesn't listen to me.

JOSS

You tell yourself that.

ADAM

She's my client. I'm not telling her how to run.

JOSS

Cluck, cluck, cluck.

ADAM

You're horrible at this, you know? You are like the worst priest in the history of priests. And that's a pretty crappy history, so congratulations on being the worst of the worst.

JOSS

I'm not your problem.

ADAM

Thanks Joss.
Look, if you see her tell her to stop running against Emma and to start running for something. Once people know her and what she wants she can't lose.

JOSS

Maybe.

ADAM

Do you know why the Constitution passed? Because the Federalists were running for something. The Anti-Federalists were just running against the Federalists. People always vote for action and ideas.

JOSS

Somebody's waiting. I think I hear knocking.

ADAM

Thanks Joss.

(Scene shifts to Adam and Eve's. The stage is empty. After a moment EVE enters. She looks around but can tell that the house has been empty for a few days. She lingers and picks up the phone.)

EVE

Hi, it's Eve. Listen James, can you do me a favor? Can you mow our lawn tomorrow...I know, we're putting in turf soon ...Yeah, he's out of town and I'm at my mother's. Thanks.

(Scene shifts to the final school board debate between EVE and EMMA.)

EMMA

I'm not the one who keeps bringing it up.

EVE

I'm not-

EMMA

It's all you're talking about.

EVE

No it's not-

EMMA

There are so many other pressing issues that we should be discussing.

EVE

I agree-

EMMA

You're very good at talking about what you don't want, which simply seems to be God. But I haven't heard much of what you do want.

EVE

That's because I'm worried about losing all of those things once you start trying to cram your ideology down our throats.

EMMA

Again, what are you proposing? I'm proposing reform.

EVE

By using biblical science books?

EMMA

We need newer and better technology. The few computers we do have in this school are out of date. Because we've been afraid to raise taxes, find new revenue streams and demand smarter spending we are in danger of having to cut arts programs and after school activities. We don't have enough teachers as it is and we are facing budget and staff cuts. I'm much more concerned with the problems facing these students than what you perceive to be-

EVE

I'm just as concerned. That's why I'm running. I'm the president of the PTA, I've been a room mother for six years. I've dedicated myself and my life to this school. My children go to this school so of course I care.

EMMA

I don't doubt that you care. But you seem much more concerned about my religious beliefs than about debating the very real issues that are facing this school. You've been in charge of the PTA while this school was deteriorating. Where were the cries for new computers? For increased extra-curricular funding? For better lab equipment?

EVE

What do you think we were saying-

EMMA

Why should we put you on the board when you've already had your chance?

EVE

She's a creationist. Doesn't that bother anybody?

EMMA

(Sarcastically, but with a tinge of a jab.)

She's a stay at home mom. Doesn't that bother anybody?

EVE

She thinks God made man from nothing. That we just all of a sudden showed up one day. She believes in Adam and Eve. Doesn't it bother you that she thinks science doesn't exist?

EMMA

I believe in science. And I think we need to invest much more money into math and science. We are falling gravely behind in those areas in state and national testing. Creating a more innovative curriculum seems like a good idea to me.

EVE

Innovative? That's what you're calling it now?

EMMA

Our students need to be able to compete to get into good colleges so they'll have the skills necessary to flourish in the global economy. I think the origin of man is an interesting question, but one that is best debated at another time.

EVE

She's lying to you. All she cares about is getting God into the schools.

EMMA

It seems all you care about is keeping God out of the schools.

EVE

The First Amendment states that 'Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion.'

EMMA

'Or prohibiting the free expression thereof.'

EVE

It doesn't belong in the schools.

EMMA

Yes, I believe in God. But I also believe in increased funding, smarter spending, increasing extra-curricular activities. More teachers who are better prepared and fully supported. I support continuing education and training for our teachers. I support an aide in every classroom. I

support the arts. I support an increased focus on math and science. I support extending early childhood education and I think school choice is something we should definitely consider. Most importantly I support making this school a place where our students are given the opportunity to succeed.

(Scene shifts to Charles make shift temple. ADAM enters and seemingly despite his better judgment kneels before the armoire.)

ADAM

Um, great armoire. Santa. I need your help. I've tried talking to my father's body that I thought might be God and my sister the priest is more interested in chickens, so here I am. It's come to this.

(He sits in silence for a moment before breaking down. As he regains composure the armoire bursts open and Adam is buried by apples pouring out of it.)

(Scene shifts to a 'Singles for Jesus' event. JOSS is drinking punch, swaying to the music and generally being incredibly awkward. EMMA enters and stands next to Joss.)

EMMA

Don't any normal guys like Jesus?

JOSS

The one with the seeing eye dog seemed nice.

EMMA

I'm allergic to dogs.
And I think he's married. Got a ring on his finger.

JOSS

He's the only guy here.

EMMA

I think he's the building manager.

JOSS

Oh.

EMMA

And he's married. Go figure.

JOSS

I thought it would be a good idea.

EMMA

Oh.

Wait.

You're Reverend—

JOSS

You can just call me Joss.

EMMA

I'm sorry. I didn't mean anything. I wouldn't be here—

JOSS

It's okay. It's totally lame.

EMMA

Look at all these pathetic women.

JOSS

Are we a part of this?

EMMA

I'd like to think not, but yes. Yes we are.

JOSS

Maybe we should've spiked the punch.

EMMA

So desperate for love. For companionship. For a pulse.

JOSS

The right man will come along at the right time.

EMMA

You have to believe that though. What about the rest of us that live in the actual world.

JOSS

I don't have to believe anything.

EMMA

I believe it too. I'm just too embarrassed to say it out loud.

JOSS

If we don't speak, how will anyone know what we want?

EMMA

I want a decent man. With a decent job. Who thinks I'm great. There.

JOSS

I want a man who doesn't see a priest.

EMMA

There. Now we are set.

JOSS

Cheers.

(They each take a sip of their punch.)

EMMA

I'm divorced.

JOSS

That's okay.

EMMA

Sorry. I just feel like I've got to tell you all of my sins.

JOSS

Falling in love with the wrong person isn't a sin.

EMMA

Divorcing them is. You don't have to sugar coat it.

JOSS

You don't have to tell me your sins. In fact, I'd really appreciate it if you didn't. I don't want to know everyone's problems.

EMMA

Good for you.

JOSS

I just want a man. Is that so wrong? I don't need him to support me or complete me or any of that. I just want someone to share my life with. Is that so wrong?

EMMA

I met my ex at a Kerry campaign rally. I should've known he'd have no backbone.

JOSS

My last boyfriend was mad at me because I wouldn't go all the way.

EMMA

Why not?
Oh. Right.

JOSS

Right.

EMMA

Wait. So you're a virgin?

JOSS

I'd really rather not discuss it.

EMMA

God, I wish I was.

JOSS

Is this orange or peach punch?

EMMA

How great would it be to give yourself to one person?

JOSS

It starts off as orange, but then there is a bit of a peach after taste. Maybe mango.

EMMA

I'm sorry. I'm jealous is all.

JOSS

My sister-in-law is trying to set me up with her neighbor so she can have a vicarious affair.

EMMA

And so goes love.

JOSS

My brother thinks the neighbor is trying to steal his tree.

EMMA

Sounds like he's on to something.

JOSS

The right man will come along at the right time.

EMMA

Even if it's as a tree thief.

JOSS

God works in mysterious ways.

EMMA

How often do you say that?

JOSS

What?

EMMA

God works in mysterious ways. Is that like part of your repertoire or are you joking?

JOSS

I don't know. Every once in awhile I guess. Depends on the situation.

EMMA

So you were joking?

JOSS

Sort of. I guess.

EMMA

I wanted to laugh, but I didn't want to laugh at you. Bad karma to laugh at a priest.

JOSS

It's okay to laugh.

EMMA

(As a toast.)

Singles for Jesus.

JOSS

Singles for Jesus.

EMMA

Next time we should call it something else. Like 'Ladies Night' or something. To get some guys to come.

JOSS

Ladies night?

EMMA

I don't know. I know a guy in PR, I'll ask him. He'll come up with something.

JOSS

My brother works in PR.

EMMA

Oh yeah? What's his name? Maybe my guy knows your guy?

JOSS

Adam.

EMMA

Does he work at Hinkle?

JOSS

Yes.

EMMA

That's my guy. You're brother's my guy.

JOSS

You're...the creationist?

EMMA

I prefer Emma.

JOSS

Sorry, no. Wow. This is weird.

EMMA

Yeah.

JOSS

Okay.

EMMA

Okay.

JOSS

You seem like a very nice person, but I'm kind of not allowed to be friends with you. Since you're kind of breaking up his marriage.

EMMA

What?

JOSS

The whole school board thing.

EMMA

I'm—

JOSS

I don't want to know. I can't get involved.

EMMA

Aren't you supposed to be objective?

JOSS

Probably. That's why I don't want to know. My brother is running your campaign against his wife. I'm running her campaign against you. I can't get involved.

EMMA

Sounds like you are involved.

JOSS

Well, I can't get any further involved.

EMMA

The election is tomorrow.

JOSS

We can be friends on Wednesday then.

EMMA

Fair enough.

JOSS

Until then, to finding Mr. Right?

EMMA

Cheers.

(They drink.)

(Scene shifts. ADAM enters with a lawn mower. He is mowing his lawn and then continues on, mowing his neighbor's turf-lawn as well. He crosses back and forth a few times before exiting. While he is mowing we see EVE enter her home carrying a giant "Eveyn Anderson for School Board" sign. She tosses it and fixes herself a drink, before exiting off to bed.)

(Scene shifts to Adam's office. It is election night. The office has a bit of the ethereal feel from the top of the play, but also retains its reality. There is still a flicker of daylight coming through the window. Adam tosses a pillow onto his desk and sits in a bit of a fog. An apple drops. Lights fade out.)

CHAPTER V
AND THE EYES OF THE TWO OF THEM WERE OPENED

(Later that night. ADAM is asleep with his head on the desk. Suddenly there is a knock on the door and EMMA enters. Adam is clearly expecting another woman whose name starts with E.)

EMMA

We did it.

ADAM

Hmm?

EMMA

You're looking at the newest member of the school board.

ADAM

Oh. Congrats.

EMMA

To you too. Looks like we saved your job.

ADAM

Hooray.

EMMA

And I owe it all to you.

ADAM

I don't think so.

EMMA

I love what you've done with the place.

ADAM

Who knew I had so much riding on a school board election?

EMMA

How about a drink?

(She crosses to his desk, pulls out a bottle of tonic water and a bottle of gin. She starts making drinks.)

Back to old reliable I see.

ADAM

I don't really think it's such a good idea for you to be here.

EMMA

I wanted to celebrate. Cheer up.

(She finishes making the drinks and hands him one. As a toast.)

To victory.

ADAM

(He says nothing and downs his drink in one gulp.)

I'm not putting in turf. It looks stupid and it'll kill the tree.

EMMA

Um, okay.

ADAM

She wants me to put in turf.

EMMA

You could do stones.

ADAM

A yard should have grass.

EMMA

Not here. The sun kills everything.

ADAM

My dad made paint resistant to the sun. This grass is resistant to the sun.

EMMA

Okay.

ADAM

She hates the tree.

EMMA

Forget about the tree.

ADAM

And he thinks he's going to take it. But it's my tree. My grass.

EMMA
Okay.

ADAM
Why are you here?

EMMA
To celebrate.

ADAM
How did you even get in the building?

EMMA
Don't worry about it.

ADAM
Can I ask you a question? Why are you a creationist? You seem so...intelligent. You're a Democrat. You're attractive. I mean, the pieces don't fit.

EMMA
It's what I believe in. I'm independent. You of all people should know that.

ADAM
You have to go.

EMMA
Because I believe in God?

ADAM
I love my wife.

EMMA
Okay?

ADAM
You can't be here. I can't do this. I can't work for you anymore.

EMMA
You need our business.

ADAM
I'll find something else. I need to do something I believe in.

EMMA

We have a contract.

ADAM

Then work with someone else.

EMMA

We want you. Your name is in the contract. I want you.

ADAM

I'm married to Eve now.

EMMA

Adam—

ADAM

I can't do it. I'm done.
I'm the farmer.

(As he finishes there is a flash of light and everything freezes. CHARLES as GOD enters. He is carrying a fruit bowl and places it on the desk. He escorts EMMA off stage - she can unfreeze to move, but should clearly be out of sorts. He returns, grabs a drink and takes a sip. He takes an apple from the bowl and puts it in Adam's hand. He tosses the pillow onto the floor and then retreats to the ficus tree out of Adam's sight. He isn't hiding but Adam shouldn't see him.

(There is a long moment where Adam slowly comes to. He seems as though it is completely normal that he is sitting at his desk holding an apple that wasn't there moments before. Adam looks at the apple and puts it down. We hear a loud sigh from Charles/God. Adam gets his pillow and Charles/God places an apple on the vacated chair. Adam places the pillow back on the desk and sits down. Again, he finds it a little odd that there is an apple on his chair, but he doesn't take it as any sort of

sign or abnormality. Again, it goes into the bowl. Finally Charles/God makes himself known, walking in front of the desk.)

ADAM

Dad?

(Before he can go on an apple falls from the sky into Charles/God hand. He takes the apple and places it in Adam's hand.)

CHARLES/GOD

You look hungry.

(Charles/God exits. After a moment Adam takes a bite from the apple. Nothing happens. He continues eating. Nothing. He finishes the apple. Nothing. He tosses the apple into the trash.)

ADAM

God, do I have to eat all of those—

(Before he can finish his sentence there is another flash of light. ADAM 'passes out' and returns to his position from the beginning of the play, with his head down on the desk. GOD re-enters, this time dressed as Dwight D. Eisenhower - played by the same actor who plays Charles. He is carrying a Bible and EVE, who is 'frozen' and in her underwear. She is wearing an apron (please do not ever make it a Michelangelo's 'The Creation of Adam' apron). God sits her center stage and sets the Bible on the desk. He goes to Adam, sits him next to his wife and begins to undress Adam. There is nothing sexual to it, he simply is stripping Adam of his clothing. Once Adam is in his underwear, God places an apron on him. God then moves the ficus tree behind them so that they are sitting beneath it. He places the bowl

of fruit at their feet, surveys the scene, picks a leaf off the ficus and exits.)

(After a moment, Adam and Eve come to.)

ADAM

I don't remember falling asleep.

EVE

Do you ever?

ADAM

Eve?

EVE

Adam.

ADAM

God, my side is killing me.

EVE

Adam, where are we?

ADAM

I don't know.

EVE

Where are our clothes?

ADAM

I don't know.

EVE

Why are we wearing aprons?

ADAM

Do you see this grass? This is why we can't put in turf.

EVE

I don't care about turf.

ADAM

Can you believe this tree's been here since I moved into this office nine years ago.

So? EVE

That's a long time for a ficus tree. ADAM

Aren't ficus trees fake? EVE

This one's real. ADAM

Adam? EVE

What? ADAM

You know what. EVE

I'm trying my best. ADAM

How could you do that to me? EVE

I was trying to take care of you. I thought you'd win. I didn't want to lose my job. We're just getting by as it is- ADAM

I don't care about the election. I thought you were on my side. EVE

I am on your side. ADAM

You're on your side. EVE

That's not true. ADAM

Then what are we doing here? EVE

ADAM

I have no idea.
I think my father might have been God.

EVE

Well what now then?

ADAM

I don't know.
He might be Dwight D. Eisenhower.

EVE

God or your dad?

ADAM

Both of them? Maybe the interstates are a road to heaven?

EVE

I don't think it matters.

ADAM

I'm sorry.

EVE

I don't want the kids growing up without a father.

ADAM

I don't want them growing up with James.

EVE

James?

ADAM

The crab apple tree thief. I know you like him.

EVE

I love you.

ADAM

Yeah, but you like him.

EVE

I don't care about James. I care about you missing out on your life. I care about you missing your son's hockey games, your daughter's recitals. I care that our son won't take off his shoes because he wants your attention. This is

exactly what you don't want. You're trying to make me be her and you're making it happen to your kids.

ADAM

I did what I had to do.
I'm an assistant coach.

EVE

You don't have to do it anymore. You never did. Why don't you get that? It isn't you versus the world. You weren't meant to beat the world by yourself.

ADAM

I'm not trying to.

EVE

Yes you are. Sometimes you have to turn yourself over. You've got to believe.

ADAM

I—

EVE

I'm going back to work.

ADAM

Okay.
I'd quit but this is kind of my home right now.

EVE

Adam.
I'm not your mother. I can't be the mother you never had and the wife you think exists. I can't do it.

ADAM

I know.

EVE

She's gone. He's gone. It's just you and me.

ADAM

I know.

(There is a moment between them. Eve begins to forgive Adam.)

ADAM

Do you think...?

EVE

I don't know.

ADAM

The pieces all kind of fit.

EVE

I don't know. We both had parents.

ADAM

Right, and I think my dad is God. Or Eisenhower. So, you know.

EVE

Does that mean...? Was she right?

ADAM

I don't know. Maybe.

EVE

She can't be. I can't live with that.

ADAM

Maybe.

EVE

You're still taking her side?

ADAM

I'm not taking sides.

EVE

That's taking her side. Take my side.

ADAM

I am. I'm the son of a monkey.
People are already alive. We can't be responsible.

EVE

But we might be.

ADAM

How come—

EVE

Because.

ADAM

It does kind of make sense. In that it makes no sense at all.

EVE

Maybe. This place is...

ADAM

My office? With really luxurious grass.

EVE

Or...

ADAM

I know. Good thing I didn't throw away the tree.

EVE

I guess we better stick together. For humanity's sake.

ADAM

I'd hate to deprive everyone of life. So if we split, does like the world end?

EVE

So I've got you by the balls, huh? You need to make it up to me. Ending life would be awfully selfish.

ADAM

Only if you believe. If not then it doesn't matter. We're just two people. In aprons. In a lush office.

EVE

Or...

ADAM

Right. Or we're responsible for human life.

EVE

I don't not believe.

ADAM

Me either.

EVE

How can she be right? How can I be her?

ADAM

How can I be him?

(There is a moment as they contemplate
who they may or may not be.)

ADAM

I messed up. I was only trying to protect you.

EVE

From what?

ADAM

I don't know.

EVE

Prove it to me.

ADAM

How?

EVE

You'll know.

I could get used to this. I think I'll need a better bra
though.

ADAM

Why not lose it all together?

EVE

At least a better apron. This color makes me look pale.

ADAM

I'll ask my dad.

(CHARLES/GOD/IKE enters.)

EVE

Whoa.

ADAM

See? I told you.

EVE

Say something to him.

ADAM

I don't know what to say.

EVE

I don't know.

ADAM

I could ask him about your bra?

EVE

You have the chance to talk to God and you're going to ask for a more comfortable bra?

ADAM

I could ask about the apron?

EVE

Asking him if, you know. We're them.

ADAM

(He approaches Charles/God/Ike.)

Um.

Dad.

God?

Mr. President?

(Charles/God/Ike does not respond. He doesn't not respond either though.)

Um, okay. This is going to sound weird. Are you really God? And am I...? And is she...? And are we, like responsible for life?

(Charles/God/Ike does not respond. He doesn't not respond either though.)

What's the deal with the aprons?

CHARLES/GOD/IKE

How far can you go without destroying from within what you are trying to defend from without?

ADAM

Um...

EVE

We're sorry. We didn't know.

ADAM

I'm an idiot. What can I do to make up for it? I'm an assistant coach now. I signed up for skating lessons. Pairs.

(No response.)

So are you, um...Him?

IKE

An atheist is a man who watches a Notre Dame - Southern Methodist University game and doesn't care who wins.

EVE

What does that mean?

ADAM

It's a football joke.

EVE

So who wins?

IKE

Don't join the book burners. Do not think you are going to conceal thoughts by concealing evidence that they ever existed.

EVE

Are you taking her side?

ADAM

Eve.

EVE

What? He's a creationist too?

ADAM

You think?

EVE

Oh. Right. Well I'm not a book burner.

IKE

I would rather try to persuade a man to go along, because once I have persuaded him, he will stick. If I scare him, he will stay just as long as he is scared, and then he is gone. Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.

ADAM

Sounds like PR.

IKE

A people that values its privileges above its principles soon loses both.

EVE

(Calling him out.)

Adam.

ADAM

What?

IKE

Things are more like they are now than they ever were before.

(Charles/God/Ike goes to the fruit basket, picks up an apple and hands it to Eve.)

ADAM

Take a bite. It's got all the answers.

EVE

Didn't the apple like get them booted from Eden?

ADAM

God just gave you an apple.

EVE

You eat it.

ADAM

He gave it to you.

EVE

I don't want to carry around that burden for the rest of my life.

ADAM

You think I want to be responsible for ruining Eden? It's not like that. The apple tells you stuff.

EVE

I'm not doing it. You do it.

ADAM

Fine. But we're even.

(Adam takes the apple and cautiously examines it. He looks to Charles/God/Ike. He looks to Eve. Neither seems to be really encouraging or discouraging him. He smells the apple. Basically he does whatever he can to avoid taking a bite.)

EVE

Just do it.

ADAM

Here goes.

(He takes a bite and there is a sudden flash of light and then complete darkness. Adam and Eve have been kicked out of Eden.)

(Scene shifts to Adam and Eve's house. Joss enters and is in the kitchen cleaning up after breakfast, of course wearing an apron with an "I Like Ike" button attached (if you must, she can be wearing Michelangelo's famous apron...if you must).

JOSS

Don't worry. The kids'll be fine. We had eggs and Jesus shaped pancakes. I've been looking for an excuse to use these cookie cutters. Kind of came out like a gingerbread man. Luke and Mary are already off to school so it's only Isaac really and I already got his shoes off.

(ADAM enters, fully dressed. Followed a moment later by EVE, dressed in nursing scrubs.)

EVE

You got his shoes off?

JOSS

You two are going to be late.

EVE

(Noticing that she's in scrubs.)

Oh. Right. For work.

JOSS

Yeah, for work. You've got lives to save.

ADAM

Right.

JOSS

And you've got a meeting with Father Upton at ten to discuss the singles event.

ADAM

Right. Father Upton. Who is...my boss?

JOSS

Mine too. So don't screw up. It took a lot of convincing to get them to hire you, even if it is free, so you better come through. I don't want to get sent to Alaska.

ADAM

Yeah.

JOSS

How did you convince Ed to do this pro bono?

ADAM

The least I could do. I'm the farmer - got six months to go. Hey, it's either me or a naked rabbi.

EVE

What?

JOSS

And you've got the kids tonight. They're showing a special screening of The Ten Commandments at The Rivoli and James is taking me. What a romantic.

ADAM

(He looks out the window.)

Whoa.

EVE

(Joining him.)

That's a lot of crab apples.

JOSS

I can make a pie later. I used to cook all the time at my last church.

EVE

That would be great.

ADAM

Yeah. I'd like that.

JOSS

What's with you guys?

EVE

Nothing. Didn't sleep that well.

ADAM

Yeah. Long night.

(Lights fade out.)

THE END