

EXT. ABBOTT ELEMENTARY - MORNING

It's a cold, autumn morning in Philadelphia, and all the children are lined up in their little coats in a single file line leading to a YELLOW SCHOOLBUS. JANINE (30s, black, buzzes like an energizer bunny) takes a headcount of the children alongside BARBARA (50s, seasoned, motherly, woman of god). Janine takes the attendance as the children head into the bus, one by one. Barbara stands beside her, keeping an eye on the boy standing before them now, a 2nd grader named OWEN.

JANINE

Thanks for your permission slip,
Owen! You're all good to head on
the bus.

Owen smiles and begins to make his way up on the stairs when Barbara's head suddenly stops him.

BARBARA

Not so fast, Janine. Owen, would
you please open that first flap of
your backpack?

Owen's smile drops suddenly to a resigned expression as she does what she says. Owen retrieves his iPad he was planning to smuggle and hands it to Janine. Barbara chides Janine with a glance. Janine looks into the camera incredulously as Owen stomps onto the bus.

JANINE TALKING HEAD

JANINE

Yay! Today is field trip day!
Which, for some reason, is the one
day where students think they're in
the clear to sneak in items that
are against the rules.

We watch as the teachers confiscate various items from students. iPads, Phones, Remote control cars, cans of silly string, you name it. MELISSA (50s, a realist, South Philly Italian incarnate, knows a guy who knows a guy) pulls an entire NERF GUN out of a child's backpack.

MELISSA

How did this even fit in here? You
may have a calling as a magician,
kiddo.

MELISSA TALKING HEAD

Melissa rifles through her huge tote bag for all the confiscated items.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

So far, I've taken a Nerf Gun, a lightsaber, three phones, two iPads, and busted what seemed to be an underground Beyblade circuit. Every other day of the year, I'm a teacher. On field trip day, I'm a TSA Agent.

JANINE TALKING HEAD

Janine stands behind the bus as she talks to the camera.

JANINE

But no amount of 2nd grade contraband is going to put a damper on this exciting day! We have been planning this trip for God knows how long, and it's finally here! After pleading with the school board for weeks and weeks on end, they finally gave us the greenlight to go to...Drumroll please...

Janine audibly makes the drumroll noise with her mouth as she pulls a hat out of her bag and a stuffed Hershey Kiss. When she puts on the hat, it reads *HersheyPark* in jaunty lettering.

BARBARA TALKING HEAD

BARBARA

Janine has been trying to get this HersheyPark trip going for lord knows how long. Why she wants so badly to look after over a hundred kids bouncing off the walls because of the copious chocolate in their system beats me.

JACOB TALKING HEAD

JACOB

I'm happy for Janine, but chocolate was like, my only effective bargaining chip with my students. Which means until their Hershey chocolate runs out, I'm essentially in a hostage situation.

JANINE TALKING HEAD

JANINE

I'm so excited that everything worked out! Today, these children are going to make some special memories that they'll cherish forever! As for the kids smuggling in items, we won't have to worry much about that. Nothing gets past me and Barbara.

The camera zooms in on a window in the back of the bus, where a child plays his NINTENDO SWITCH in his seat, unbeknownst to Janine.

CUT TO:

TITLE CARD: ABBOTT ELEMENTARY

EXT. RURAL PENNSYLVANIA - DAY

We're miles out from Philadelphia, and there's farmland as far as the eye can see. A YELLOW SCHOOLBUS cuts through the pastoral landscape, and we can hear the sounds of rowdy Abbott schoolchildren as the bus barrels down the highway.

CUT TO:

INT. ABBOTT SCHOOL BUS - DAY

MR. JOHNSON is driving the bus. JANINE, BARBARA, and JACOB sit in front of rows and rows of rambunctious children. The teachers look are agony at the volume, rubbing their temples and nursing their headaches.

BARBARA

What's going on with them today?! Usually I can get ahold on them pretty quick, but we've told them to lower the volume at least three times now and they won't listen!

JANINE

They're just excited, that's all. I mean, it's a field trip to Hershey Park! It's literally the sweetest place on Earth. A whole park dedicated to chocolate? That's kid heaven.

JACOB
It's like if Hollywood opened up an
Ozempicland.

CUT TO:

INT. ABBOTT SCHOOL BUS #2 - DAY

On a different school bus, AVA, MELISSA, and GREGORY sit before a rows of equally uproarious schoolchildren. Gregory reads a Hershey Park brochure.

GREGORY
Am I the only one who thinks that
sounds like too much sugar?
Chocolatetown? Candymonium? Don't
they serve anything that isn't
chocolate? I just don't see the
appeal.

AVA
I thought you'd enjoy it Gregory,
since you're my little chocolate
drop...

GREGORY
(ignoring)
Boy, aren't these kids loud? Can't
seem to hear a thing...

AVA
I SAID YOU'RE MY SEXY MOCHA DARK
CHOCOLATE--

Gregory faces the camera, we see his fearful expression as he braces for Ava to finish. Before she can, Melissa stands up and shouts.

MELISSA
1, 2, 3, EYES ON ME!

The children whip their heads around and finish the call and response:

CHILDREN
1, 2, EYES ON YOU!

MELISSA
If it gets loud like that again, no
one is getting *any* candy!

The kids are almost silent after that, barely talking over a whisper. Melissa sighs and sits down, the other teachers look grateful.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Now! If there aren't any other interruptions, I'll be returning to...

A loud, discordant noise echoes from the front of the bus as it comes to an abrupt stop. The teachers and students scream as they're lurched forward.

CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL PENNSYLVANIA - DAY

Gregory, Melissa, and Ava peer out the bus to see Janine, Barbara, and Jacob already gathered outside. The six teachers reconvene.

GREGORY

What's going on? Why'd both the buses stop?

JANINE

I don't know! Mr. Johnson is trying to figure that out now.

Mr. Johnson, who's underneath the hood of the bus, pops his head out and walks over to the group.

MR. JOHNSON

It's just as I suspected. The engine's totally busted. Y'all won't be on the road until you find a mechanic.

JANINE, JACOB, GREGORY

What?!

JANINE

No! Mr. Johnson, could you please try and fix it?

MR. JOHNSON

No can do. I just drive the bus, I'm not a mechanic. And besides, you see that thing? Looks like it hasn't been inspected in years, it might combust any minute. No way am I touching that, especially not with mercury in retrograde.

AVA

You follow astrology? What's your sign?

MR. JOHNSON

I'm a Gemini. You?

AVA

Oooh, I love Geminis! I'm a Leo, obviously.

MR. JOHNSON

Leos disgust me.

AVA

You're about to lose your job, you flip-floppy water sign ass bi--

JANINE

Okay, there has to be something we can do about this! Melissa, don't you know a guy who can help us out here?

MELISSA

I know a couple of mechanics, but they won't be able to get them down here until the work day ends, after 5.

JANINE

After five?! The park will be closed by the time we get there!

Janine begins pacing, racking her thoughts and murmuring to herself.

BARBARA

(consoling)

Look, Janine. I know it's going to be tough on them, but we should just break the news to the children now and see what we can do about getting back to Philadelphia.

Janine turns to the students, who have all crowded against the windows facing the teachers. They harbor confused and saddened expressions. We watch as Janine's face falls, immediately empathetic to the children's disappointment. She turns around to face the teachers with a new idea.

JANINE

How about me, Barbara, and Jacob take the kids into Lancaster!

(MORE)

JANINE (CONT'D)

It's just up the road there. They could stretch their legs a bit, explore, and in the meantime, you three can find us a mechanic in town! By the time we get back, we'll be ready to head back on the road again!

MELISSA

Um, that's a great idea and all, Janine, but Lancaster is Amish Country.

AVA

Who's Amish? Is he the mayor here or something?

GREGORY

It's *The Amish*. They're a rural sect of Christianity that outlaws technology and modern living. They basically live like it's the 1800s.

AVA

Oh, they're like vampires! I know all about the Amish then. Can't go out in the daytime, can't look in mirrors, can't eat garlic...

JANINE

Guys, please. I really, really want to give these kids a fun trip. Some of these kids never get to travel outside the city except on field trip days--I want today to be magical for them. These will be memories--

MELISSA, BARBARA, AVA

That they'll cherish forever, we know.

JANINE

Fine. We can just stay on the bus and wait, then.

Janine falls silent, resigned. As much as the other teachers feign to be annoyed or jaded by Janine's incessant optimism, we see how quickly guilt and sympathy creeps onto their expressions when it disappears. First Gregory, then Jacob, Melissa not long after that. Finally, She perks up ever so slightly when Barbara sighs.

BARBARA

Alright, alright. The three of us take the kids into town.

JACOB

(visibly unsure)

Great, sure. Cool. Sounds good to me.

GREGORY

I'll tag along with Melissa to see if we can find a mechanic.

JANINE

Great!! Thank you guys so much, we'll be back on the road in no time!

Janine, Barbara, and Jacob pile back onto the bus to round up the kids, as Melissa and Gregory make their way into town. Ava visibly doesn't want to do either, though she sighs and ends up catching up to Gregory and Melissa.

Mr. Johnson, left alone as the group split off on their own adventures, decides to start walking aimlessly in the direction of the town. He isn't quite sure yet what he's looking for.

CUT TO:

EXT. LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA - DAY

A small collection of colonial style buildings and houses in a vast, verdant valley. Janine, Jacob, and Barbara lead a crowd of Abbott schoolchildren into the town through an unpaved road. Janine acts as an eager tour guide for the children. Jacob appears apprehensive, and Barbara quietly skeptical. As they walk, they see a YOUNG AMISH WOMAN churning butter.

JANINE

(to children)

Back at home, you would get a stick of butter from an ACME or any other old supermarket. But the Amish churn their own butter from cow's milk! Everything is made from scratch, isn't that neat?

The children murmur and watch the woman, intrigued. The woman glares distrustingly at the teachers. Janine fails to catch it, but Jacob doesn't.

JACOB

Did...did you just see that?

JANINE

(failing to hear him)

And kids, look over there! You won't find any cars at all in town, anyone who wants to get around uses a horse-drawn carriage, just like that one!

A horse and buggy trots it's way down the road, an AMISH HUSBAND clutching the reins and HIS WIFE sitting beside him. They both gawk disbelievingly at the Abbott crowd. They gossip to each other when they believe they're out of earshot, yet Jacob manages to catch their whispers. He turns to the camera, deeply concerned.

JACOB TALKING HEAD

Jacob talks to the camera. Unbeknownst to him as he talks, he's being watched by an old bearded Amish man on his porch in the back of the camera frame.

JACOB

Look, as much as I am one for culturally immersive experiences, I feel like we might be imposing on a closed religious community here. Hardcore religious types too, the bible-thumping, fire and brimstone, thou shalt not lie with a man because some mistranslated 3000 year old book said so types. I think it would be best to cut our losses and head back to Philly...

CAMERA MAN

(from behind the frame)

That guy's been staring at you since we've started filming.

JACOB

What?

Jacob turns around. The Amish man looks away and starts whistling to appear innocuous.

JACOB (CONT'D)

How...how long has he been there?

CUT TO:

EXT. LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA - DAY

Barbara and Jacob sped up their pace to catch up to Janine, the two of them approaching her on either side.

JACOB

Look, Janine, this is nice and all that you're giving the children this immersive experience, but I don't exactly think we're entirely welcome here.

BARBARA

I agree. Janine, we should head back to the bus and have the students take their lunch there. Have you seen the faces they've been making it us?

JANINE

Oh come on, guys, they're just curious because we're from out of town. We'll stay for a little bit and if they say we're not welcome-- which they haven't--then we'll be out of here in no time. Besides, Barbara, the Amish are people of faith, I thought you would be excited to meet them!

BARBARA

Maybe if they seemed at all excited to meet us. Janine, I may not know a lot about the Amish, but I know when I'm not welcome.

JANINE

Trust me, we have nothing to worry about.

Suddenly, Janine's eyes widen with delight when she notices a schoolhouse down the road. It appears to be recess time for the school, as a crowd of Amish children laugh and play under the supervision of an AMISH SCHOOLTEACHER.

JANINE (CONT'D)

Look! They look around the same age as our kids. Maybe we could introduce ourselves and have them meet the Amish children! That would be so much fun, right? They could meet each other, play together, learn about each other's cultures...

JACOB

I don't really know how I feel about this, Janine. This just feels really alien.

JANINE

They're not from another planet, Jacob. It's central Pennsylvania.

JACOB

We're from Philly! Central Pennsylvania *is* another planet!

Janine begins to walk determinedly toward the schoolhouse, leaving Jacob and Barbara behind with the kids.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Janine? Janine! Where are you going?!

BARBARA

Lord help us all.

CUT TO:

EXT. LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA - DAY

Trailing a few hundred feet behind Janine, Barbara, Jacob and the kids, Gregory, Melissa, and Ava walk through the town, in search of someone to help fix the school bus. Gregory spots two Amish women, MARTHA and MARY, knitting on a bench.

GREGORY

Excuse me?

The woman gawks openly at first, though quickly assumes a more polite expression.

MARTHA

Welcome to Lancaster! What can I do for you?

GREGORY

Thank you! My name is Gregory, me and my other colleagues here teach at a school in Philadelphia. Our bus broke down here on the way to Hershey, and we were wondering if there was anybody who could help us get back on the road?

MARTHA

I know someone who could help. He knows a bit about cars. Hasn't done a full days work since his rumspringa, though.

MARY

Oh, that slothful Jebediah!

The two Amish woman are thrown into a fit of giggles. Gregory exchanges glances with the other two teachers, who also fail to see the joke. Gregory fakes a laugh nonetheless.

MELISSA

Great, so you'll help us?

MARTHA

Of course, as it is written in the Lord's book, Acts 20:35, "We must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" If you go up the main road and make a left, his house is right beside the orchard. I can take ya.

GREGORY

Thanks so much for your help!

The three teachers turn around and begin walking again, Ava turns into the camera with an incredulous look.

AVA TALKING HEAD

AVA

It's like an entire population of Barbaras.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL HOUSE LAWN - DAY

A small, one story schoolhouse in a large, open meadow. Amish children play in the fields as an AMISH SCHOOLTEACHER (30s, staid, plainly dressed) keeps an eye on them from a bench beside the school. Janine makes her way over to her.

JANINE

Hi! My name's Janine, it's so nice to meet another fellow teacher!

SCHOOLTEACHER

(reticent, yet polite)

The pleasure's all mine. My name is Sister Gertrude, what brings you to Lancaster?

JANINE

Well, actually, our bus ended up breaking down on our way to Hershey and we ended up stranded in town. My kids are really bummed about not reaching Hershey, so I thought it would be a great idea for the kids to make some new friends! It's entirely up to you, but would it be possible for my kids and your kids to play together? Just for recess and lunch!

GERTRUDE

Well, it's not typical for the young ones to interact with so many outside of the community...but I suppose it could be a good experience for them.

JANINE

Yes! Thank you so much.

Janine beams and gestures to the other teachers that they can bring the Abbott children over. Jacob and Barbara lead the kids over to the schoolhouse as Sister Gertrude rallies her class of Amish students.

GERTRUDE

Class, say hello to Ms. Janine and her students. They're visiting from the big city, Philadelphia.

The Amish children look fascinated, they seem the more excited toward meeting the Abbott crew than the Amish adults.

AMISH KIDS

Hi!

BARBARA

Abbott students, what do we say?

ABBOTT KIDS

Hello!

JANINE

Alright guys, everyone is going to spend recess together, how does that sound? Have fun, play nice, and make some new friends!

The children immediately begin chattering and playing once they get the go ahead, leaving the four teachers to watch the students. Jacob appears much warmer to the idea after seeing the enthusiasm of each group of children, though Barbara still appears somewhat skeptical.

CUT TO:

INT. SLOTHFUL JEBEDIAH'S HOUSE - DAY

The Amish woman leads Gregory, Melissa, and Ava to a ramshackle house on the edge of town. The lawn is overgrown, and the exterior is dilapidated and peeling paint. The Amish woman knocks on the door.

AMISH WOMAN

Brother Jebidiah, you have visitors! These worldly English folk require your help!

JEBEDIAH (plainly dressed, long scraggly beard, insists on going barefoot) opens the door.

JEBEDIAH

Sister Martha. I must apologize, I wasn't expecting any guests.

MARTHA

Nonsense, Jebediah, it shouldn't take long. Our worldly friends here simply have a favor to ask of you.

JEBEDIAH

Go on.

GREGORY

Our bus broke down on the way to a field trip, and we need some help getting back on the road. We asked Martha here and she said that you have a bit of experience as a mechanic...?

JEBEDIAH

Ah, yes! I can take a look. Back in my rumspringa days, I apprenticed at an auto parts shop and picked up quite a lot. I still have the ol' box of tools in my shed, and I still know my way around an engine, so let me see what I can do.

The teachers sigh with relief.

GREGORY

I really can't thank you enough.

JEBEDIAH

That is...if you could help *me* with something.

The teachers exchange hesitant and skeptical glances. Nonetheless, Gregory returns Jebediah's polite smile.

GREGORY

Course, seems fair. What could we do for you?

JEBEDIAH

I need help finishing some of my yard work, and I'm so old and tired it would take all day to do it alone. If you would help clean my stables while I save my energy, I'd definitely be able to fix your bus.

AVA and MELISSA are disgusted.

GREGORY

We'll see what we can do.

AVA appears even more incredulous.

AVA TALKING HEAD

AVA

Am I the only one that sees how bullshit this Jebediah guy is? As a firm procrastinator myself, this dude is totally lying his ass off! Game recognize game, Jebediah. Game recognize game.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL HOUSE LAWN - DAY

The children are happily playing together and talking amongst each other. They are fascinated with each other's differences, comparing lunches and clothes. The teachers are gathered together, watching the children play from afar. It's a bit awkward, as they don't have much in common.

BARBARA

So, Gertrude, what do you like to do for fun?

GERTRUDE

Fun is the devil's mistress. Though I'm partial to basketweaving, candlemaking, preparing supper.

BARBARA

Ah.

They go back to watching the children in silence.

CUT TO:

INT. JEBEDIAH'S STABLES - DAY

Gregory, Melissa, and Ava enter into an old wooden stable, brandishing huge brushes to sweep with. There's a path that goes down the middle, and rooms for the horses on either side. It's pretty dim, same for the light peeking through the wood.

AVA

This is ridiculous. This is inhumane! I can't believe you agreed to have us shovel horse shit!!

GREGORY

Look, I'm not enthused to be in some damp, shitty stable either. This will help get us back on the road.

AVA

Do I look like I shovel horse shit? Do you think Louis Vuitton designed my heels with a *stablehand* in mind?!

One of the horses, PEANUT, reacts negatively to Ava's shouting, it huffs frustratedly in her face. Ava screams with horror.

AVA (CONT'D)

Did you see that! It just tried to kill me! I'm leaving!

MELISSA

Oh come on, Ava, where's your connection to nature? How often do you see a horse everyday?

Melissa pets a Peanut's mane.

AVA

Never! And that's how I like it! There isn't some horse quota I'm required to fulfill.

Gregory can be seen picking up a huge pile of hay.

GREGORY

You know, it's much quicker to just pick up the hay and move it rather than sweeping it all. At my rate, we should be wrapped up in no time.

MELISSA

You know they piss in that, right?

GREGORY

What?

MELISSA

The horses. They don't eat all the hay they're given, sometimes it's where they sleep or piss.

Gregory sniffs the hay and drops it, wincing and shivering with disgust.

CUT TO:

EXT. SLOTHFUL JEBIDIAH'S HOUSE - LATER

Hours have past. Gregory, Ava, and Melissa stand on Jebediah's doorstep, covered in soot and hay and visibly exhausted. Jebediah comes up from behind them, beaming with excitement.

JEBEDIAH

Thanks for all the good work, fellas! I'd be happy to get y'all on the road to Hershey again.

GREGORY

Really, that's great! We'll take you.

MELISSA

Thank god. I was supposed to be on my third chocolate bar by now, I can feel my blood sugar plummeting every second I'm here.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL HOUSE LAWN - DAY

From across the field, we see some students gathered around an ABBOTT BOY and an AMISH BOY as they play MARIOKART on the SMUGGLED NINTENDO SWITCH. The two boys look invested, especially the Amish boy.

AMISH BOY

I'm winning! I'm winning! By jove, I'm going to win it!

Suddenly, the Abbott boy throws a BLUE SHELL, which crashes into the Amish Boy's car in first place. The Abbott boy takes first place, while the Amish boy ends up placing third.

AMISH BOY (CONT'D)

Impossible! I was just in first! How did you do that?!

ABBOTT BOY

Chill out, guy. It's a blue shell, it goes straight to first place. No big deal, you can play another round after Abraham.

AMISH BOY

Nonsense! I won't play another round of this ungodly game! Witchcraft! Witch! Witch!

ABBOTT BOY

I said chill out, dude!

A fight breaks out between the two students, and the children surrounding them only encourage the fighting. From across the field, the other teachers hear the commotion first and immediately rushes toward the students.

BARBARA

Alright, break it up! Break it up! What happened you two?

GERTRUDE

What in the Lord's name could have caused this?!

AMISH BOY

He started it! It was him who brought the devilish game! I saw hell itself, we rode on electric motorcycles through Satan's liar!

ABBOTT BOY

It was just Bowser's Castle.

JANINE

Kevin! What are the rules about sneaking in technology?!

ABBOTT BOY

I'm sorry, okay!

GERTRUDE

Sorry simply does not cut it young man! How dare you knowingly corrupt my student, entice him with demonic castles and electric vehicles!

(turning to Janine)

And you! Ushering in the evils of technology, can't you see how poisonous it is?!

JANINE

Look, I am so sorry. I had no idea that my student had brought this with him, but he had no intention of "corrupting" your kids. He was just trying to make friends--

GERTRUDE

Friends?! FRIENDS? Technology does not foster friendship! It is the promotion of sin, violence, and hatred! We Amish bring up our children with values of pacifism and community--it is only when your students came along that Abraham grew the urge to partake in such loathsome violence! Children! Come with me to the schoolhouse. Your recess is over.

The children groan and wave goodbye to the Abbott schoolchildren. They line up, single-file, and traverse back into the schoolhouse. Barbara and Jacob both slowly turn to face Janine.

JACOB
That was horrifying.

JANINE
Okay, I think it could have gone worse!

BARBARA
There is absolutely no way any of this could get worse.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

Gregory, Melissa, and Ava arrive at the school bus with Brother Jebediah.

GREGORY
Okay! Here's the bus. Our driver said there was an issue with the engine, so if you should definitely start there.

JEBEDIAH
Got it.

Jebediah pops the hood and studies the engine, eyebrows furrowed in pensive introspection. After a bout of silence, he nods and turns to Gregory.

JEBEDIAH (CONT'D)
Yeah, I can't fix this.

MELISSA
What?!

AVA
I knew it.

GREGORY
But you just said...

JEBEDIAH
I said I'd *take a look*. My rumspringa was almost 40 years ago now, cars have changed a lot since the 1980s.

GREGORY
The Eighties! You haven't fixed a car since the Eighties?!

Jebediah does a few pointless maneuvers with a wrench before shrugging his shoulders and turning to the others.

JEBEDIAH

Did all that I could with these.
What I can do for you though is
lead you all in prayer...

Gregory turns to the camera, exasperated. Ava fails to contain laughter.

JEBEDIAH (CONT'D)

Lord, I'm reaching out on the
behalf of my worldly city folk
friends to guide their wayward bus
back to the highway, Lord...

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL HOUSE LAWN - DAY

Janine, Barbara, and Jacob sit preoccupied watching the kids. Sister Gertrude returns from the schoolhouse, this time without any children, instead a small crowd of sour-faced Amish adults.

JACOB

Janine, is that...Sister Gertrude?

JANINE

Hey, Gerty! Can I call you Gerty?

BARBARA

You definitely should not call her
Gerty.

GERTRUDE

Ms. Janine, there are very
important matters that must be
discussed with the rest of the
tribunal. Corrupting the youth is a
very grievous sin in our community,
and it must be addressed.

JANINE

Sure! I've been meaning to clear
some things up for you guys. Just
take me to where I need to go and
I'd be happy to explain.

Sister Gertrude and the crowd begin to usher her toward the church.

BARBARA

Janine? Janine, where are they taking you?!

JANINE

(simultaneously reassuring and scared)

Don't worry about it, just keep an eye on the kids. I should be back in no time!

Barbara and Jacob exchange deeply worried glances.

CUT TO:

INT. DUTCH VALLEY BAKERY - DAY

Gregory, Melissa, and Ava sit inside an Amish bakery, finishing up some DONUTS AND CIDER. What exasperation they felt before had been nulled by the taste of delicious donuts.

MELISSA

I can't believe we expected anything from a guy named Slothful Jebediah.

AVA

Everybody in this weird, spooky vampire town is crazy. They can make a mean apple fritter though.

Gregory eats and looks out the window in silence, too annoyed from their encounter with Jebediah to speak. Suddenly, we see his expression change drastically as he sees Janine and the AMISH CROWD behind her.

GREGORY

Is that Janine? Where are they taking her?

Melissa and Ava crowd up to the window.

MELISSA

I don't know, but they don't look too pleased.

GREGORY

We have to do something!

AVA

Do we have to? If the vampires are going to eat someone, it might as well be Janine...

Gregory leaps into action, rushing out of the donut shop.
Melissa follows shortly after.

AVA (CONT'D)

Is there any way I could get a to-go box for these?

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH HOUSE - DAY

The Amish crowd pours into the rows of pews in this plain, modest church hall. Janine is sat before a committee of elders--old, crotchety Amish people in white, colonial judge wigs. FATHER AMOS (60s, man of the cloth), the spiritual leader of the town, sits in the middle of the committee. Sister Gertrude stands before Janine and the tribunal, ready to testify.

GERTRUDE

I saw it all with my own two eyes,
Father Amos. The Abbott children
were playing with my kids, when I
see a horrible altercation break
out. I rush to see what was
happening, and I was shocked to see
that one of her students corrupting
my student with sinful modern
technology! My delightful Abraham,
usually a pleasure to have in
class, had been goaded into sinful
aggression by the demonic
influences of the device!

The Amish crowd breaks into a shocked, hushed murmur.

FATHER AMOS

These are very serious accusations,
Janine. How do you respond?

Janine appears very nervous, yet she wills herself to talk.

JANINE

(beat)

Yes, it was my idea for the Abbott
schoolchildren to play with your
kids. I'm a schoolteacher from
Philadelphia, and our bus broke
down a little bit outside of town
on our way to HersheyPark. The kids
were heartbroken and I just wanted
them to feel like their trip wasn't
ruined.

(MORE)

JANINE (CONT'D)

They just seemed so fascinated by your way of life and culture, and I thought...I thought...

Janine closes her eyes, takes a deep breath, and plows on.

JANINE (CONT'D)

(firmer, more sure of herself)

And I thought that it would be important for all the children, mine and yours, to experience different perspectives, different life experiences. None of my students meant to do you any harm, all they wanted was to learn about their new friends. I thought their differences would bring them together, not tear them apart. But, if you could just bear with me until we find a way to get our bus up and running, we'll leave town as soon as we can.

The tribunal murmur and exchange glances. They seem moved by her genuine dedication to her students.

FATHER AMOS

Well, Janine, as noble as your cause may be, there is still evidence of corruption. And we must protect the innocence of our children--

Janine looks out the window and gasps, causing Father Amos to stop his speech. He and the crowd turn to follow her gaze, where they see the Abbott schoolchildren and the Amish children PLAYING TOGETHER AGAIN. Janine beams, whilst Father Amos, Gertrude, and the other Amish seem to shift from defensive to more open-minded.

JANINE

See? Children are the same no matter their differences. They're curious and bright and loving wherever they are.

FATHER AMOS appears fully moved. He slams his gavel.

FATHER AMOS

Janine, you have a humble and kind heart. We'll do our best as a community to ensure you make it back to Philadelphia.

JANINE
Really?! Thank you!

Just when everyone seems to be getting along again, Gregory, Melissa, and Ava burst through the church doors. Gregory is in full "hero mode", rushing over to Janine to see if she's okay.

GREGORY
Janine! Are you okay?! Did they hurt you at all?

JANINE
What? What are you talking about, they're pacifists--

Melissa pulls out THE NERF GUN she'd previously confiscated.

MELISSA
If anybody tries any funny business, I'll spray this whole place!

The Amish crowd breaks into screams and gasps of horror, ducking beneath their pews. They believe it's a real gun.

JANINE
Woah! Woah! Woah! Okay, guys, they agreed to help us get out of here! I'm completely unharmed and they're totally nice, see?
(turning to the Amish)
It's a toy gun, guys, you can come out.

The Amish rise from behind their pews, regaining their composure.

GREGORY
Oh. Great.

AVA
So they didn't want to drink Janine's blood? Agh, let's get out of here already.

JANINE
Drink my *what*?

MELISSA
We should meet up with the other teachers and get the hell out of dodge already.

FATHER AMOS

Not so fast. We have one condition.
We will help you, but we must
observe our religious obligations
against modern technology.

GREGORY

So...no bus then?

FATHER AMOS

Not exactly.

CUT TO:

EXT. PENNSYLVANIA I-95 - DAY

The Abbott Schoolchildren and their teachers are spread out amongst four horse and buggies, making their way down the highway alongside the cars. While it's too far to make it to Hershey Park at this rate, the children seem to be content with going home. This could largely be in part to CHOCOLATE DONUTS they are scarfing down from the DUTCH VALLEY BAKERY from earlier.

JACOB

I'm glad everything worked out,
Janine.

MELISSA

Yeah, if we keep up at the pace
we're at, we should make it back
before sundown. Still going to have
to find a way to tell their parents
we ended up stranded in Amish
country instead of HersheyPark.

JANINE

Maybe we should make a tradition
out of this! Take the Abbott kids
to Lancaster each year...

EVERY OTHER TEACHER

NO!

JANINE

(smiling knowingly)
...only kidding.

The teachers snort and snicker before falling into a comfortable silence. Suddenly, realization sweeps over Jacob's face.

JACOB
Wait...where's Mr. Johnson?

CUT TO:

TAG

EXT. LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA - EVENING

A montage of Mr. Johnson doing various tasks in an Amish get up: churning butter, quilting, sitting on Slothful Jebediah's porch.

MR. JOHNSON TALKING HEAD

MR. JOHNSON
I've decided to pledge myself to a life of simplicity. No longer will I spend my days making margaritas in the janitor's closet...my calling is to churn butter and quilt.

Mr. Johnson appears enraptured by a sermon from Father Amos. He is invited up to the front of the church and is baptized in front of the crowd.

MR. JOHNSON (CONT'D)
I hadn't realized how empty I was until I came to Lancaster. The Amish path has brought me more peace than I ever imagined...

Mr. Johnson is in Jebediah's stables petting Peanut's mane. He nearly weeps at the majesty of the creature, of the beauty of the moment.

MR. JOHNSON (CONT'D)
I'm finally free.

END OF EPISODE.