

**OH GOD.**

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Warning: Contains sacrilege.

## SCENE 1: EMERGENCY SESSION

Conference room. There is a conference table and a large white board, at least. Throughout the scene, it is ok to use the white board to take notes or write down idea.

The HOLY SPIRIT sits in a chair at the conference table, noticeably irritated.

GOD leans on a chair. The silence is uncomfortably long. JESUS enters.

GOD. How about a joke?

HOLY SPIRIT. That's ok.

GOD. No, it's a good one.

HOLY SPIRIT. Fine.

GOD. Why is it a bad idea to fart in church?

HOLY SPIRIT. I don't know, why?

GOD. You have to sit in your own pew.

JESUS. Sorry I'm late.

HOLY SPIRIT. And not a moment too soon.

GOD. Thank you both for coming on such short notice. I want you to know that I appreciate your time, regardless of the fact that we have—literally—eternity to figure this out.

JESUS. Cool, but let's make this short, bro. I've got to meet my buddy, Jonah. It's whale season and we wanna get out there before all the good ones are gone.

GOD. That's Father, or dad, not "bro". (Sarcastically) And I'm so sorry. I don't want to keep you here against your will.

JESUS. I'm sorry, it's a problem when things are against YOUR will, but against my will, and who cares, right? What is it we even do here at this point?

HOLY SPIRIT. Here we go.

GOD. Do not engage. Do not engage. 2056 (in 2023) years old and he doesn't act a day over 900.

HOLY SPIRIT. Maybe it would help if we got started.

GOD. Right. First thing's first. I'm not going to name names, but there have been some complaints from upper management about certain other members of upper management flagrantly violating the dress code.

JESUS. What are you trying to say?

HOLY SPIRIT. You're wearing *robes* to work every day. And sandals? Not every day can be casual Friday!

JESUS. You're just jealous!

HOLY SPIRIT. There's a reason we have a dress code! I shouldn't have to look at your feet!

JESUS. Spend some time washing feet, like I did all those times, and you'll get used to it. Besides. You should feel lucky to look at my feet. Do you know how much people pay to look at them on OnlyDisciples?

HOLY SPIRIT. You're a real pain in the ass, you know that?

JESUS. At least people know who I am. No one even knows what you do! They don't get you! Boo hoo! So misunderstood. (*Jesus continues making mocking faces at the Holy Spirit.*)

HOLY SPIRIT. You know someone really ought to crucify you. Again.

JESUS. Hey! Ho! Not cool!

HOLY SPIRIT. What's the matter? Too soon?

GOD. Okay, okay! That's enough. I took the liberty of printing out a copy of the dress code for everyone. Please review it, and if you have any questions or comments, we will address them at our next session.

JESUS. (*Staring at Holy Spirit*) You got it, boss. We'll discuss it next time.

*During the next speech, JESUS leans back in his chair and puts his feet on the conference table. HOLY SPIRIT mouths obscenities at him.*

GOD. Well, we've been having some issues at our main headquarters, Earth. Enrollment is down. I don't want to alarm anyone, but in a business based on good faith, if we don't get those numbers up...

HOLY SPIRIT. You don't mean...

JESUS. What?

GOD. I'm afraid so.

JESUS. What?

HOLY SPIRIT. We'll get Santa'ed.

JESUS. I'm sorry, Santa'ed?

GOD. Yes. You probably don't remember Uncle Nick? AKA Saint Nick. Such a nice dude. Anyway, he kept giving everyone gifts for your birthday. We thought it was weird, but in a nice way. And you were set to inherit the kingdom of heaven, so it's not like you needed anything else. Well, when people stopped believing in him, he faded into irrelevance. Ya know? He turned into a shell of himself. Now he just walks around mumbling to himself about the good old days. He drinks a lot. Doesn't bathe much. I don't think the dude's shaved in 50 years.

JESUS. Why doesn't anyone help him?

HOLY SPIRIT. It's not like we haven't tried, you jackass. Once people stop believing in you it's an endless spiral. And that's a hole I don't want to fall into.

GOD. And we had to ship all of our manufacturing jobs to China. Do you know what that's done to the unemployment rate at the North Pole? Bottom line-if we don't get more people believing in God, Jesus, The Holy Spirit, and Heaven, we're gonna get Santa'ed. I mean without faith, what do they have, really?

HOLY SPIRIT. And without the Holy Spirit, they will have no love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. It will be the utter undoing of humanity.

JESUS. *(sarcastically)* You do all that?

HOLY SPIRIT. Not all of us just get to be a poster child for Catholicism. The rest of us do a lot of fucking work.

GOD. OK! Ok. So how do we fix it?

HOLY SPIRIT. (staring at Jesus) I'm just spit-balling here, but what about a new prophet? We haven't had one in quite a while. I hear the kids really like Michelle Obama.

JESUS. I'm RIGHT HERE.

GOD. Jesus Christ.

JESUS. What?

GOD. No, it's a figure of speech.

JESUS. Then why would you name me that?

HOLY SPIRIT. What about a plague? Or a...a natural disaster? Ya know, just remind people that we're here.

GOD. I'm not sure that will work. I've already been sending a lot of once in a lifetime floods and hurricanes, and nothing. In fact, if anything, people believe less. They think I should be protecting them.

JESUS. (Honestly asking) Is that what you do?

HOLY SPIRIT. Are you gonna do anything helpful?

JESUS. Besides saving humanity the first time by just showing up? You know, Dad, we've been hyping up my return for a lot of years. Maybe it's time for a second coming?

GOD. You're not ready.

JESUS. No, you're not ready...

GOD. I said "no!" We've agreed in the past on your list of milestones for your development plan, and you're only hitting inconsistently effective.

HOLY SPIRIT. We could go old school. When's the last time we smited someone? Smited? Smote? It's been so long I can't remember.

GOD. More recently I got a reputation as a kind and loving God and, call me a softy, but I'd kind of like to keep that up.

HOLY SPIRIT. I warned you. I warned you having a kid would make you soft.

JESUS. Hey!

HOLY SPIRIT. Anyway. I hear more recently golden plates have been popular? Or I can burn a bush for you, no problem. Um...

GOD. That's a start. Holy Spirit, why don't you make that happen?

HOLY SPIRIT. Where should I go?

GOD. Somewhere interesting. Think snow.

HOLY SPIRIT. You got it.

*HOLY SPIRIT exits.*

GOD. Now that he's gone, Jesus, we need to talk. Your numbers specifically have been down for quite some time.

JESUS. What do you mean?

GOD. People are starting to talk. Do you believe they don't even think you're my son?

JESUS. What? That's crazy. I look so much like you.

GOD. And worse, they think your mother's a whore.

JESUS. Mom?

GOD. Yeah, people aren't buying the whole virgin birth thing. Look. Just focus on the task at hand. Bring people back to the church. I believe in you, even if no one else does. But also, we need everyone else to believe in you, so get to work.

HOLY SPIRIT RE-ENTERS.

HOLY SPIRIT. Ok, so here's the thing. With global warming, there's no snow, and all the bushes are burning, so no one even noticed.

GOD groans.

## **SCENE 2: MACKENZIE CONSULTING**

NATASHA stands at the head of the conference table, with FAUSTIAN and CONTRICIA sitting, facing the audience. There is an open seat between them at the conference table. (Think "Last Supper" style.) JESUS enters and takes the empty seat.

NATASHA. You must be Jesus.

JESUS. Yes. Natasha?

NATASHA. Correct. We are representatives from Mackenzie Consulting. This is my head consultant Faustian, and my most promising intern, Contricia.

They say their hellos.

JESUS. Contricia. Faustian. Natasha. Thank you for coming. Basically, my dad's company is losing faith and funding and we need to bring up our numbers. We've already tried getting our current clientele to make more meaningful contributions, and look, I love everyone, I'm a people person, but between you and me, our most loyal customers tend to be fucking loons. So let's have it. What have you got for me.

CONTRICIA. Right down to business. Ok. We've taken the liberty of generating a list of complaints that people have with your conglomerate. *(She hands him a giant stack of papers.)*

JESUS. Yikes. Hopefully you just used a really big font.

FAUSTIAN. We used the standard 11-point Wingdings font.

JESUS. *(Glancing through pages.)* Sure. Let's see. "Lent sucks." Well I suppose I can't argue with that. "Feels like God is gaslighting me. Why should I feel guilty about everything?" "Church feels a little preachy." Is this for real?

CONTRICIA. Let's take a step back. Part of your problem is your target demographic. In our research, we found that the largest percentage of people find you on their death bed. And while we think that it's better late than never, people are living a lot longer than they used to, so your belief percentages get lower all the time.

NATASHA. Basically, we've got to get them hooked on Jesus earlier.

FAUSTIAN. You need to shake things up. Make it fun. For starters, maybe we let the gays and lesbians in. Mass is now available on TikTok in 30 vines a week, which you can watch on the toilet at your convenience, and you can take football season off entirely.

CONTRICIA. What if we have other kinds of parties and life events? Why does church have to be for religious events, marriages, and funerals? What about a retirement party once in a while? Or a bachelorette?

NATASHA. And are we married to "The 10 Commandments?"

JESUS. I mean, they're kind of important.

NATASHA. But hear us out. What if there were like, 3. It's a magic number, right? And maybe they're not commandments, so much as suggestions. Commandments feels very forceful, and the demographic

we're going for does NOT like to be told what to do. So here. We'll go through in no particular order here. "Honor thy father and mother?" That can go. "Keep holy the sabbath day?" Well, people do still hate working on Sunday. We'll put that into the maybes.

JESUS. They're all important!

FAUSTIAN. All we're saying is that if George Carlin can narrow it down to two, you should be fine with three. And you can pick the three. It's about give and take.

JESUS. I've had about enough of Carlin. He's making quite the ruckus up here. The Ten Commandments stay. What else have you got?

NATASHA. Okay. While we're discussing reinventing our client base, what if we focus on mergers and acquisitions?

JESUS. Meaning?

NATASHA. We talk to other failing religions and see if they're interested in buddying up. You get people working together on the same goal, and-

JESUS. Now that could work. Actually, that's a great idea. Who did you have in mind?

CONTRICIA. The Southern Baptists?

JESUS. I do love those Baptists, but that feels a little self-serving. We'd really have to negotiate that out, and I'm not sure we have the time right now. We're on a bit of a crunch, ya know?

NATASHA. What about merging with the Mormons?

JESUS. Are you even taking this seriously? (pause) What about, like, the Scientologists?

*NATASHA, FAUSTIAN, and CONTRICIA all start coughing.*

FAUSTIAN. Okay, we've got one more idea, and this one, we're really excited about. What if we released a new book?

JESUS. You've got my attention...

FAUSTIAN. Think about it. Why is Apple so popular?

JESUS. Because they're forbidden and you just told me people don't like to be told what to do.

CONTRICIA. I believe he means Apple the technology company.

JESUS. Oh yeah. I knew that.

FAUSTIAN. People love apple because you can get a new Iphone, like, every year. People love new things. But here, you've been driving the same document for thousands of years, bro, and as we've discussed, it's not user friendly.

JESUS. But people love traditions.

FAUSTIAN. People love traditions where they can eat and get drunk, you mean.

JESUS. We already give them bread and wine.

FAUSTIAN. But it's not enough. And the Bible isn't enough either. You need an update.

NATASHA. We need the Bible 2: The sequel.

FAUSTIAN. People love a sequel.

NATASHA. They love a sequel.

JESUS. There's already a part two. The New Testament. That's, uh, kinda my biography. Not to brag but it was kind of a best seller.

NATASHA. Part three.

FAUSTIAN. A trilogy.

CONTRICIA. No, a thrilllogy. It's gonna be that awesome.

JESUS. I'm not much of a writer, though. I'm more of a doer.

NATASHA. Oh, that's no problem. We'll get a ghost writer. Or 40.

FAUSTIAN. We'll get some stories together that appeal to today's audiences, we say you wrote it...

CONTRICIA. ...we hide it in some location where no one would normally go...

NATASHA. ...like a backyard in Cleveland...

CONTRICIA. ...and then someone *will* go there and find it. And since now one will know exactly where it came from and it will be shrouded in mystery...

NATASHA. They'll declare it gospel. The person who finds it will be a new prophet.

FAUSTIAN. Bada bing, bada bang, bada Bible part 3. It'll get people talking. That's for sure.

NATASHA. We'll throw in some cool color photos, ya know, for the kids. And then, get this--we put ads right there in the stories. Like, they think they're seeing an ad to go ziplining, but they're ziplining a little closer to Jesus. Or they see an ad for a rock wall, but what's at the top of that rock wall? A burning cross.

JESUS. Burning cross?

NATASHA. A regular cross.

FAUSTIAN. People won't even know they're seeing ads for religion!

CONTRICIA. And then, we sit back and wait for them to come back.

JESUS. Ok, uh, great. So what do you need me to do? Heal some COVID patients with my touch? Turn water into wine? I know I've done it before, but I feel like people used to really like that one. Where's the best place to do a book signing these days?

ALL stare at JESUS.

JESUS. What?

CONTRICIA. I'm so sorry if this wasn't clear before, but the stories aren't about you this time.

JESUS. How do you know that? They aren't even written yet.

FAUSTIAN. But aren't they?

CONTRICIA. It's just that you haven't been to Earth in quite some time, and I'm sorry to say, you're not really relatable anymore.

NATASHA. You've been what, hanging around heaven for the last how many years? Sitting around in your perfect kingdom, doing your perfect hair, washing your perfect feet. Perfect is boring. No one wants to read that.

JESUS. Well, what are the stories about then?

FAUSTIAN. There's a story about a simple man from Georgia that battles the devil that we'd like to adapt.

JESUS. He battles the devil with like a cool sword, or an axe?

FAUSTIAN. It's more of a contest than a battle, I suppose.

JESUS. So like a race? Or more of a battle of wits?

FAUSTIAN. More of a fiddle contest.

JESUS. I feel like I've heard that one.

CONTRICIA. I'm sorry for being unclear, but in the new version, they connect to each other accidentally on a game console playing Fortnite and battle it out that way.

JESUS. And that's more exciting than time I rose from the dead?

NATASHA. That story's already been written. We need something new. Something snappy. Something sexy.

JESUS. What about a prequel? There's this whole big gap from the time I was 10 to the time I was 30, and there are some things from that time that I'd love to share. Like, you wanna talk miracles? When

CONTRICIA. I'm sorry to interrupt, but I think we've got enough to go forward with this project.

JESUS. But I didn't even approve anything!

NATASHA. That's alright. We're actually meeting with the Episcopalians later, so we're just gonna see what they say.

JESUS. But you can't do that!

FAUSTIAN. Well, there is one more thing we need to discuss.

JESUS. What's that?

FAUSTIAN. Our fee.

**SCENE 3: FIN**

HOLY SPIRIT. Isn't he the one who called this meeting? Ya know, you had the dress code talk with him. I think it's time you bring up his tardiness.

GOD. You've got an awful lot of opinions lately.

HOLY SPIRIT. I'm just saying, maybe it's time to be a parent.

GOD. It's *apparent* you're not happy with how things are running around here.

HOLY SPIRIT. And enough with the dad jokes!

JESUS enters. He is dressed in a suit, but is still wearing his flip flops.

JESUS. Thank you all for coming to our follow up.

HOLY SPIRIT. Well, it's about time you decided to show up.

JESUS. I can see why you're upset, but, per your last email, I was out there, trying to find myself.

HOLY SPIRIT. I believe my exact words were "shove an uncircumcised phallus in your rectum," but tomato, to-mah-to. Still didn't read that dress code, though, eh?

JESUS. Look. I know that in the last thousand years or so you haven't thought much of me, but after meeting with Mackenzie Consulting—

HOLY SPIRIT. You *what*?

JESUS. No, no, listen. I thought that maybe they'd give me something useful.

GOD. And?

JESUS. Well, they told me people don't like organized religion anymore.

HOLY SPIRIT. Hope you didn't pay too much for that.

JESUS. They suggested dismantling the religion piece by piece, starting with the 10 Commandments.

GOD. They're too important!

JESUS. That's what I said. But then they started saying some things that made a lot of sense, like we should release a third part to the Bible.

GOD. That's a great idea. I always did like to dictate. And who doesn't love a thrillology?

JESUS. For sure. For sure. But I thought a lot about it, and I don't think we need a sequel, we need a revival.

HOLY SPIRIT. What is that supposed to mean?

JESUS. Hold on. I'll show you.

JESUS exits and returns with NICK, who is clean, tidy, and clean shaven, and wearing red.

HOLY SPIRIT. Who are you? You can't be in here.

GOD. Please, relax. Hello, Nick.

HOLY SPIRIT. Holy crap! Nick! What's going on, man? You look fantastic.

NICK. I feel good. Ya know? I hit a low point and I wasn't doing great for a while. I was hitting the eggnog pretty hard. I was pelting the elves with, well, let's just say lemon snowballs, Mrs. Claus left me.

GOD. I heard that. I'm sorry. I should have reached out more, but things have been...

HOLY SPIRIT. ...busy...

GOD. So busy.

NICK. Yeah, well, anyway, my favorite nephew came to see me, and I can't even really explain it, but I want to try again. I want to go back to being the best version of me.

HOLY SPIRIT. *You* did this?

JESUS. When the consultants said that the three-quel wasn't going to be about me, I was a little taken aback. I dare say I was borderline disconcerted. But then I remembered, it never was about me. It was about them.

HOLY SPIRIT. Who?

JESUS. The people. I was supposed to be the example. Ya know? I was supposed to treat them like I wanted to be treated. But then I let all the notoriety go to my head. I lost my way a little bit. Like Nick. So we talked for a very, very long time. And that's when I figured it out.

GOD. Figured what out?

JESUS. This whole thing. It's been a test. The type of test you give someone who's been training for a job for the last two thousand years, give or take.

HOLY SPIRIT. There was no test, you Nimrod.

JESUS. Mackenzie Consulting? Contricia? Meaning you're sorry. Faustian? Selling souls. Natasha? Ah, Satan backwards?

GOD and HOLY SPIRIT glance at each other. GOD writes "AH SATAN" and "NATASHA" on the white board to confirm.

GOD. What do you know.

HOLY SPIRIT. But what exactly do you think we're training you for?

JESUS. The second coming. What else?

HOLY SPIRIT. You Nimrod.

GOD. I told you, you're not ready.

NICK. No, you don't get it. We're back, baby. And with all our worldly and heavenly lessons we have learned, we're gonna help people. So many people. And if that doesn't bring them back, I don't know what will.

GOD. I'm so glad to hear that. What are you going to do?

NICK. We're starting a true crime podcast.

JESUS. But not regular crimes. Crimes against morality and the human condition.

NICK. Crimes against your mental health.

JESUS. Yes! I love that.

GOD. What are you gonna call your podcast?

JESUS. Well, we didn't get that far. We just came up with the podcast idea on the way here.

NICK. We can call it "Stairway to Heaven."

JESUS. Or like, "Express Elevator to Heaven."

NICK. Maybe we should have a vlog.

JESUS. Yes! There's a guy in Toledo in his mom's basement that said we could use his camera. Let's get started while we still have so many good ideas.

NICK. You go ahead. I'll be right there.

JESUS exits.

NICK. That's a good kid you've got there. He's gonna help a lot of people.

As NICK goes to leave, he stops at the white board and rearranges the letters in Natasha to say Ha!  
Santa!

NICK. I feel really good about this.

NICK exits.

HOLY SPIRIT. I always knew that kid of yours was gonna turn out ok.

GOD. It's a miracle.