

ABBOTT ELEMENTARY

"Snowed In"

written by

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based on

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COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE- EARLY MORNING

JACOB, MELISSA, BARBARA, and AVA are all huddled around the TV.

JANINE and GREGORY stand against the kitchen counter in the back.

"Action News" is playing on the TV that Jacob, Melissa, and Ava are anxiously watching.

UKEE WASHINGTON (V.O.)
Schools in the Upper Darby area
have been closed due to the storm.
Chester County only has a two hour
delay.

JACOB
Okay, this is good. If Upper Darby
is closed then we should be off
too, right?

MELISSA
If Chester County won't close,
other schools won't either.

BARBARA
First, no Jim Gardener, now this?
Mm. "Action News" just isn't what
it used to be.

Without breaking eye contact from the TV, Jacob and Melissa nod.

JACOB
You know, I bet the Superintendent
is pushing to open on time. I mean
that's the only explanation, right?

AVA
Damn Janine, what was the point of
having you spy on the district if
you couldn't get us anything juicy?

JANINE
For the last time, I was not a
mole!

GREGORY

Maybe the bigger point here is that we shouldn't be blackmailing anyone.

Ava brushes Gregory off and turns back to the TV.

MELISSA

These commercials feel longer than normal. Are these commercials longer than normal?

A PHONE DINGS and interrupts Melissa's spiral. The others freeze while Jacob picks up his phone. Could this be the call?

JACOB

It's a weather alert.

The others slump back, disappointed.

JACOB (CONT'D)

It says we're supposed to get four to eight inches of snow now. And! The storm is now supposed to hit us at one.

Ava and Melissa high five.

AVA

Ain't no way we're having school. I'm gonna go pack my things.

With a flip of her hair, Ava leaves.

BARBARA

Shh. Sh. It's back on.

The teachers inch closer to the TV.

UKEE WASHINGTON (V.O.)

Schools in the Upper Philadelphia area will be opening on time this morning.

Melissa collapses onto the couch, defeated.

JACOB

No. No. This can't be.
(gesturing to his phone)
Four to eight inches! Four to eight!

BARBARA

Jim Gardener wouldn't have done
this to us. May he rest in peace.

JANINE

Barb. You realize Jim Gardener
isn't dead, right?

MELISSA

Yeah well, he's as good as dead to
me now too.

MR. JOHNSON walks by the doorway of the Teacher's Lounge,
whistling. He is wheeling his janitor cart, which is piled
high with plastic lunch trays.

The teachers sulk in silence.

JANINE

Someone should probably go tell Ava
before she leaves.

There is a loud bang from the hallway followed by Ava's
screams. The teachers startle.

GREGORY

Something tells me she already
knows.

CUT TO:

MAIN TITLES

ACT ONE

INT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE- MORNING

Janine and Jacob stand by the doors welcoming the bundled up kids. Jacob is obsessively refreshing his phone.

JANINE

Good morning Janelle and Marcus.
Make sure to wipe your shoes on the
mat before heading in.

JANELLE and MARCUS barely wipe their shoes before tracking snow and water on the floors.

JANINE (CONT'D)

(calling after them)
Wait! What did I just say about
tracking water in...

They don't turn around. Janine looks at the camera: they probably didn't hear her, right?

JACOB

Look.

He shows Janine his phone.

JACOB (CONT'D)

We're in the red zone with winds up
to twenty miles per hour.

JANINE

Jacob, I think you might have to
give this up. The students are
already here, there's nothing we
can do.

Janine and Jacob start walking down the hallway. Jacob is still absorbed with his phone.

JACOB

Psh. The Superintendent can't just
ignore my emails.

Janine glances at the camera.

JANINE

Emails?

JACOB

This is a matter of safety. Someone could slip on the ice outside and sue the school.

Janine suddenly slips on the water tracked in and falls on her back. Jacob has yet to look up from his phone and continues walking down the hall.

JANINE

Ow. Jacob can you...

Janine looks up to see that Jacob has already turned the corner. She looks to the camera, shocked.

JANINE (CONT'D)

Shouldn't there be a wet floor sign?

As if summoned by the words "wet floor sign", Mr. Johnson appears and gestures to the small traffic cone sitting on the front desk.

JANINE (CONT'D)

The traffic cone?

MR. JOHNSON

Wet floor signs cost money. Money that the school district does not have.

Janine gets to her feet, clearly sore, and begins to walk down the hall.

MR. JOHNSON (CONT'D)

(calling after her)

And don't get any ideas about suing. Ain't no money for that either.

Janine waves her hand to acknowledge him without turning around.

CUT TO:

JANINE TALKING HEAD

JANINE

Yes. I did slip on the water that the students tracked in. Am I glad that it was me that got hurt instead of a student? Of course.

(MORE)

JANINE (CONT'D)

But, at the same time, it feels
like it's always me.

Janine turns and walks away from the camera, still limping.

CUT TO:

INT. AVA'S OFFICE- DAY

Melissa walks into Ava's office. Ava is tossing mini
marshmallows into her mug.

AVA

Kobe!

She misses the shot.

AVA (CONT'D)

Damn.

MELISSA

First of all, if you're going to
call "Kobe!" you better make the
shot. Have some respect. Second of
all, do you know where the DVD of
Home Alone is?

AVA

Do I look like a Blockbuster in the
90s to you?

MELISSA

Ava, come on. I know you know where
the DVDs are kept.

Ava rolls her eyes and goes over to a cabinet and unlocks it.
DVDs are revealed, but the spines are all taped over with pun
titles involving Ava's name.

Ava pulls out the DVD labeled Home Ava-lone with a cut out of
Ava's head taped over Macaulay Culkin's face.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

What the hell is Home Ava-lone?

AVA

It's my version of Home Alone but
instead of robbing the place, the
burglars fall in love with me.

Ava flips her hair, proud of her film.

MELISSA

I can't show this to my kids.

AVA

Why not? Who would want to watch Macaulay Culkin when they could watch moi?

MELISSA

Home Alone is a holiday classic where you get to watch little Kevin get a taste for blood and hunt down those jebronis. Not some spoof about your love life.

AVA

Mm. Your loss.

Melissa storms out of the office.

CUT TO:

INT. JANINE'S CLASSROOM- DAY

The students are loudly talking amongst themselves, ignoring Janine in the front of the room.

JANINE

Guys. Hey!

The students continue shouting.

JANINE (CONT'D)

Try to focus here.

Nothing.

Janine stands on her chair.

JANINE (CONT'D)

HEY!

The students finally quiet down.

JANINE (CONT'D)

Thank you.

Janine goes to step off the chair, stumbles a little, but recovers. She gives the camera a look, reliving her tumble earlier.

JANINE (CONT'D)

Look, I know the storm is crazy and it's really hard to focus. But, if you guys just try to be good for a little while then we can make our own fun.

The students grumble.

JANINE (CONT'D)

Great! Now, who can tell me what ten minus four is?

No one raises their hand and a few students put their heads down on their desks.

JANINE (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Oh boy.

CUT TO:

INT. JACOB'S CLASSROOM- DAY

Jacob stands in the front of his class, leaning on his desk. KEITH (male student) raises his hand.

KEITH

But Mr. C., if the storm is so big then why do we still have school?

JACOB

Keith. I am so glad you asked.

Jacob, who's clearly been waiting for this moment, pulls the string on the map hanging in front of the white board causing it to retract up.

The white board is revealed to have a meteorologist map hand-drawn on it in Philly Phanatic colors.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Well.

Jacob stands in front of the board giving a makeshift meteorologist spiel.

JACOB (CONT'D)

As you can see, the storm is brewing just off the east coast. It made landfall in Atlantic City and the eye of the storm is headed straight for us.

He waves his hand in front of the "storm" indicating its path of travel.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Because the warm air is moving above the cold air, it has caused the storm to intensify. This is why we are already getting so much snow when the blizzard hasn't even hit us yet.

Jacob mic drops a white board marker, clearly impressed with himself and slightly out of breath.

He waits for an applause from the students.

Nothing.

Some students tilt their heads to the side, noticing that the way Jacob drew the weather storm on the board resembles the Philly Phanatic.

CUT TO:

JACOB TALKING HEAD

JACOB

(faking modesty)

What? All that? Psh. It was just something silly I put together last minute. I just like to dabble.

Jacob leans towards the camera like he's telling them a secret.

JACOB (CONT'D)

You know, some people say I am a less talented version of Brittney Shipp from *Action News*.

CUT TO:

AS WE WERE

Keith unsurely raises his hand.

JACOB

Yah!

KEITH

So why do we have school?

Jacob pauses for a moment to catch his breath.

JACOB
Yeah. No idea.

CUT TO:

INT. GREGORY'S CLASSROOM- DAY

Gregory stands in front of the room with a pointer stick pointing at random words on the board.

STUDENTS
(in unison)
Make.

Gregory points to the next word.

STUDENTS (CONT'D)
That.

Gregory points to the word "ask".

STUDENTS (CONT'D)
Ah-sk/ Aks

Gregory nods and puts down the pointer.

GREGORY
Good try, guys.

THE WIND SMACKS against the window and a few students jump.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
Don't worry. It's just the wind.
Nothing serious.

And as if Gregory tempted fate, the lights go out.

The students scream.

Gregory gives an "of course" look to the camera.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
Come on guys. It's just the dark.

MIKA (female 1st grader) dives under her desk.

MIKA
That's when the monsters get you!

GREGORY
No, no, no, n...

But Gregory is too late.

Some of the other students shriek and cover their heads.
Gregory rubs his face amidst the panic.

After a few moments of screaming, the lights pop back on.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
(under his breath)
Oh thank god.

Mika and a few other students come out from hiding and sit back at their desks.

GREGORY (CONT'D)
Now where were we--

The PA SYSTEM CLICKS.

AVA (O.S.)
Attention students and faculty of
Abbott Elementary.

CUT TO:

INT. JANINE'S CLASSROOM- DAY

AVA (O.S.)
I just received word from the
Superintendent that we will be
having an early dismissal at
eleven.

Janine is disappointed by this news. The students cheer.

CUT TO:

INT. JANINE'S CLASSROOM- 11:30 A.M.

The students are sitting at their desks with their large winter coats and gloves already on. They are all bouncing out of their chairs.

Janine sits at her desk and checks her watch.

STUDENT
Ms. Teagues, how much longer?

JANINE
I don't know, but I'm sure they'll
start calling buses any minute.

Janine sits there for a second before standing up and knocking on the wall her and Gregory share.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY- CONTINUOUS

Gregory opens his door. The pair talk from their individual doorways.

JANINE

Hey, do you know what's going on with the buses? My kids are starting to get antsy.

GREGORY

Yeah, mine too.

Janine checks her watch again.

JANINE

It's 11:32. Something's not right.

GREGORY

Maybe the buses got held up at another school?

JANINE

I don't know. I mean we are one of the only schools open right now. Where else would they be?

GREGORY

I'm sure there's nothing to worry about.

The PA SYSTEM CLICKS on.

AVA (O.S.)

Attention. May I please have the faculty come to my office immediately.

GREGORY

Oh, come on!

Janine gives Gregory a confused look.

AVA (O.S.)

I said immediately.

Janine looks around.

JANINE
 (quietly)
 Can she see us?

Before Gregory can answer, Melissa suddenly bursts out from her classroom down the hall. Her hair is a mess.

We can hear the children's screams coming from her room as the door slowly shuts.

GREGORY
 Oh!

JANINE
 Oh my god. Melissa, are you alright?

MELISSA
 Yep. Fine. No Home Alone. The buses are late. Living the dream.

CUT TO:

INT. AVA'S OFFICE- DAY

Ava sits at her desk and the teachers crowd around it.

AVA
 Thank you all for coming... some faster than others.

She gives a look to Janine.

BARBARA
 Ava, what do you want?

AVA
 The buses aren't coming.

ALL
 What?/ Huh?/ How?

AVA
 Calm down. They said something about how the roads are too dangerous and they need a plow to get the buses out.

GREGORY
 How long will that take?

AVA
 How am I supposed to know?

BARBARA

Ava!

JACOB

So, what do we do? We can't just shovel our way out.

MELISSA

I have a guy whose specialty is getting vehicles.

BARBARA

I have a few favors I can try to call in with the city. The mayor's assistant goes to my church.

JANINE

Ok, so we just need to keep the kids busy until then.

MELISSA

Are you kidding? We've already announced the early dismissal. There's no way any of 'em are gonna sit down and listen now.

JANINE

Come on. I'm sure if we did something fun with them, it won't be a problem. Right?

There is a weak response endorsing Janine's idea. The teachers leave, unenthused.

AVA

Ok, go team!

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. HALLWAY- DAY

Janine, Gregory, and Jacob stand outside Janine and Gregory's classrooms.

GREGORY

Alright. What's your guys' plan?

JANINE

I'm just going to continue my lesson. Nothing fills the time like education.

JACOB

Yeah that's never going to work.

JANINE

Alright, what's your plan, Jacob?

JACOB

I'm gonna be honest with my students. You see, I run my classroom on the pillar of mutual respect.

GREGORY

HA. Good luck man.

Gregory turns to enter his class, but Jacob awkwardly clasps Gregory on the shoulder.

JACOB

Yeah... You too, man.

Gregory awkwardly shrugs Jacob's hand off his shoulder before escaping to his class.

CUT TO:

INT. MELISSA'S CLASSROOM- DAY

The cartoon version of The Polar Express is playing on the old TV in the back of the room. Melissa watches it with a creeped out look on her face. The some students are enjoying the movie while others look disturbed.

JAYDEN (student) approaches Melissa humming an eerie, but familiar tune. It's "Dies Irae" from The Shining.

JAYDEN

Ms. Schemmenti, why is this movie so creepy? I thought we were gonna watch some jabronis get their butts kicked.

MELISSA

I know, I know. They got a little too close to the uncanny valley with this one. But it's the only movie Principal Coleman didn't ruin.

JAYDEN

Can I go to the bathroom?

Melissa nods towards the door.

MELISSA

Be quick.

Jayden continues humming the tune. Even as he gets further from Melissa, it is as if the tune is echoing right back to her.

CUT TO:

INT. JACOB'S CLASSROOM- DAY

Jacob sits at his desk trying to emanate cool teacher energy.

JACOB

And that's why the buses aren't here. I just wanted you guys to know what's going on since respect is such a pillar in this--

KEITH

WOAH MR. C! LOOK!

Keith springs out of his chair pointing at the window. Jacob looks at the window, not understanding what Keith is pointing out.

JACOB

Yeah. I mean... that's what happens when it snows.

Jacob glances at the camera trying to appear like he is confidently relating to his students... and not completely lost.

KEITH
It's beautiful.

Keith slowly walks to the window in a mesmerized trance.

KEITH (CONT'D)
Miraculous even.

JACOB
Yeah. I mean snow is a pretty crazy
part of the water cycle.

KEITH
It's the Philly Phanatic.

JACOB
What?

KEITH
(talking to the other
students)
Look! It's the Phanatic.

The students gather around, whispering about how the snow
pressed on the window loosely resembles the Philly Phanatic.

KEITH (CONT'D)
Mr. C, you drew the Phanatic on the
board this morning.

JACOB
I did?

KEITH
During your fake weather special.
You must have summoned him.

Keith looks at Jacob with such admiration and awe, but Jacob
is too insulted to notice.

JACOB
Well, I wouldn't say fake.

KEITH
It must be a sign. Right?
That the buses are going to come
soon.

The students all nod in agreement.

KEITH (CONT'D)
We should appreciate the gift that
this is.

Jacob is speechless.

Keith drops to his knees.

KEITH (CONT'D)
Praise the Phanatic. Praise the
Phanatic.

The other students follow his lead.

STUDENTS
(in unison)
Praise the Phanatic. Praise the
Phanatic.

CUT TO:

JACOB TALKING HEAD

JACOB
Honestly, I don't see it.

CUT TO:

INT. JACOB'S CLASSROOM- DAY

Jacob is standing in front of the Phanatic window. He is looking at it from extreme angles.

He tries looking at his weather map to see the Phanatic there, but nothing.

JACOB (V.O.)
I've tried to look at it from all directions. But it just looks like a blob to me.

Jacob turns to the camera and throws his hands up, accepting defeat.

CUT TO:

JACOB TALKING HEAD

JACOB
But, who am I to tell them that they can't worship the Snow Phanatic. It's actually kinda exciting.

(MORE)

JACOB (CONT'D)

Who else gets to say they got to witness the birth of a new religion?

CUT TO:

INT. JANINE'S CLASSROOM- DAY

Some of the students' winter coats are taken off and thrown on the floor. None of the students look engaged.

JANINE

While we wait for the buses, why don't we continue with our lesson?

No response from the students.

JANINE (CONT'D)

Ok. Uh. Janelle! Let's say you have seven winter coats, but you give five of them to Marcus. What is the result?

JANELLE

Boredom.

Janine gives a shocked look to the camera.

JANINE

What, Janelle! That's not appropriate.

MARCUS

Ms. Teagues, I wanna go home.

JANINE

I know, I know. Um...

Janine scans her desk trying to come up with something.

JANINE (CONT'D)

Oh! How about this?

Janine prances over to her desk and fishes out a stale box of candy canes from one of the drawers.

JANINE (CONT'D)

Whoever answers a question right, gets a candy cane...

Janine drags out the last word, trying to think of something to sweeten the deal.

JANINE (CONT'D)

That they get to eat while we wait
for the buses.

The students' heads snap up to attention and their hands fly into the air. Janine cheers the camera with the box of candy canes.

CUT TO:

JANINE TALKING HEAD

JANINE

Moments like these are very rewarding. Sometimes, you just have to incentivize the kids to do work instead of just letting them decide when they want to learn. I actually think the other teachers could learn a few things from me.

CUT TO:

AS WE WERE

Janine surveys the students with their hands up.

JANINE

Marcus! Go ahead.

MARCUS

You would have two coats left!

JANINE

Very good!

Janine tosses him a candy cane.

CUT TO:

INT. GREGORY'S CLASSROOM- DAY

Gregory is sitting at his desk with his feet up. His students are in the middle of playing Heads Up Seven Up.

GREGORY

Oh! I didn't think anyone was going to get Lewis out.

LEWIS (student) points at the student who guessed him.

LEWIS

She cheated! She looked at my shoes!

GREGORY

Come on Lewis. No one likes a bad sport.

Gregory nods his head to the desk and Lewis sulks back to his chair.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Nice try buddy.

(then, to the students up front)

Alright, looks like we've got a new group. Everyone ready?

The students nod.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Ok then. Heads down. Eyes closed.

And before the students can put their heads down and close their eyes, the power goes out.

And as first graders do... they scream bloody murder.

Gregory is startled by this and drops his feet from his desk.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Guys come on. You did this earlier. There's no need to be screaming.

The power flicks back on.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

The power is just going out because of the storm.

THE WIND SLAMS against the window. The students startle and scream more.

Gregory deadpans at the camera while the screams continue.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY- DAY

Barbara is standing in her doorway on the phone with someone. Melissa approaches.

BARBARA
I'm on hold with the transportation
department.

Melissa nods. Janine exits her classroom and sees the pair.

JANINE
Hey, any luck?

Melissa and Barbara shake their heads.

JANINE (CONT'D)
Wait, Melissa who's watching your
class?

MELISSA
Oh they're fine. I put the uncanny
valley version of The Polar Express
everyone is too creeped out to
move.

JANINE
Wait, Melissa I don't think that--

Jacob comes walking down the hall.

JACOB
Salutations good people.

Melissa rolls her eyes.

BARBARA
Any word from your guy?

MELISSA
Yeah. He said he's gonna make a few
calls and let me know.

Keith walks down the hallway and passes the teachers. He
stops at Jacob and bows.

KEITH
Praise the Phanatic.

Jacob returns the gesture.

JACOB
Praise the Phanatic.

Melissa, Barbara, and Janine give Jacob a concerning look as
Keith walks away.

JACOB (CONT'D)
My students have decided to break
from secular norms and-

MELISSA
Yeah, never mind.

JANINE
Well I don't want to brag, but my
students are happily learning right
now.

BARBARA
Oh sweetie, let me know how long
that lasts.

Melissa begins walking down the hallway, now humming "Dies
Irae".

CUT TO:

JACOB TALKING HEAD

JACOB
There's something about the song
Melissa's humming that sounds
really familiar.
(beat)
Ugh. That's going to bother me all
day.

CUT TO:

INT. MELISSA'S CLASSROOM- DAY

Melissa's students are still engrossed in the movie. Mr.
Johnson walks by with his cart and plastic lunch trays. He
peaks his head in the doorway.

MR. JOHNSON
Pst.

The kids don't hear him.

MR. JOHNSON (CONT'D)
PST.

Simon, who is sitting closest to the doorway and Mr. Johnson,
turns his head.

Mr. Johnson signals Simon to come with him. Simon slowly gets
up and follows Mr. Johnson out the door.

None of the other students even notice.

CUT TO:

INT. AVA'S OFFICE- DAY

Ava is sitting on the floor of her office with a sleep mask pushed up on her head. Sitting in a circle are four female students. Middle school sleepover esque.

Janine enters and looks taken aback at the scene on the floor.

JANINE

Oh! Uh. What's going on here?

AVA

What does it look like? We're having a slumber party.

JANINE

Ava, I don't think--

AVA

Sh. It's Naya's turn to tell us is if she would rather kiss Jackson or have feet for hands.

Ava looks at Naya to answer, but, before Naya can, Janine intervenes.

JANINE

No. Naya that won't be necessary. Ava, I was wondering if you had an update on the buses for us?

AVA

Have I given you an update on the buses?

JANINE

No?

AVA

Then I don't have one! Now if you're going to stay, you're going to have to answer the question. Kiss Jackson or feet hands?

JANINE

Ava! You can't just ask--

Gregory stands abruptly trying to get the hot coffee off of him. This is the final straw.

The screams continue until the light flick on.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Just because the lights go out does
not mean you should be screaming.
In fact, All this screaming is just
making you more afraid. Cause how
would you feel if I just
randomly...

Gregory inhales and lets out a high pitch shriek at the kids.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY- DAY

Janine is walking back from Ava's Office when she hears Gregory's shriek.

She follows the sound to his classroom.

CUT TO:

INT. GREGORY'S CLASSROOM- CONTINUOUS

Janine walks through the door right when Gregory's shriek stops.

GREGORY

See! You just can't do that because-

Gregory sees Janine in the doorway. He quickly composes himself, a bit embarrassed.

He walks over to Janine.

JANINE

What's going on in here?

GREGORY

Oh, you know... just some screaming
contests.

Janine gives him a look.

GREGORY (CONT'D)

Ok. Look, they just kept screaming
every time the lights went out and
it made me spill my coffee.

He shows her his stained shirt, like a toddler with his mother.

JANINE

You just have to find something that will keep the kids occupied and their minds off the storm.

GREGORY

Ok... Like?

Janine nods her head for him to follow her.

CUT TO:

INT. JANINE'S CLASSROOM- CONTINUOUS

Janine walks proudly into her room with Gregory only to find that absolute chaos has broken out.

The students are riled up, screaming, and their stuff thrown everywhere.

GREGORY

(teasing)

Ah, so something more like this?

Janine gives a look to the camera: what the hell happened?

JANINE

Hey! Guys! Woo! Up here!

The students quiet down.

JANINE (CONT'D)

What is going on in here? This is no way to behave. You know what? No more candy canes for you guys.

JANELLE

Good!

The students mumble in agreement. Janine looks taken aback.

JANINE

Wait, what?

JANELLE

We don't want your stale candy canes!

MARCUS

YEAH!

JANINE
What? Stale?

Janine goes over and picks the box up from her desk. She turns the box over looking for the expiration date. She looks up from the box to the camera. Her face covered in guilt.

CUT TO:

JANINE TALKING HEAD

JANINE
So apparently, dollar store clearance candy canes do expire. I did not know that.
(shameful beat)
And apparently they are also not FDA approved.

CUT TO:

INT. MELISSA'S CLASSROOM- DAY

Melissa walks into her classroom and stops. Her spidey sense is going off.

She walks over to where all the kids are sitting in front of the TV and begins counting.

She pauses and her eyes widen.

MELISSA
Hey guys? Has anyone seen Simon?

No response. Not even a head turn.

MELISSA (CONT'D)
(under her breath)
Crap.

Melissa storms out of the room.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY- CONTINUOUS

Melissa is speed walking down the halls looking for anyone to help. She sees Jacob and grabs his arm.

MELISSA
Hey! Jacob!

JACOB
Praise the Phana--

MELISSA
We don't have time for that! You gotta help me. I think one of my students is missing.

JACOB
Oh my gosh, ok. What can I do?

MELISSA
Can you go watch my class and make sure no one else slips away.

JACOB
Yeah, yeah, of course.

CUT TO:

INT. MELISSA'S CLASSROOM- CONTINUOUS

Melissa and Jacob enter the classroom and begin counting the students.

MELISSA
They have been watching The Polar Express all day and haven't moved.

JACOB
I got them don't worry.

As Melissa is about to leave, she stops. Something caught her eye... or someone.

Simon.

He's sitting back in his spot from earlier.

MELISSA
That can't be.

JACOB
What?

Melissa points to Simon.

MELISSA
He's the one that was missing.

JACOB
Ok. Well he's here, so that's all that matters.

Jacob gives her a concerned look before exiting.

CUT TO:

INT. JANINE'S CLASSROOM- DAY

JANINE

I hate it when Barbara and Melissa are right.

GREGORY

Your kids are just loud. Mine are trying to give me a heart attack.

JANINE

Don't worry. They grow out of that. They eventually realize that it's childish.

GREGORY

I'd rather have an out of control class than a screaming class.

JANINE

Yeah, well they were fine until they found out about the candy canes...

Janine's eyes light up.

JANINE (CONT'D)

Wait a minute. What if we combine our classes?

GREGORY

So they can be out of control and screaming?

JANINE

No listen. Your kids will feel embarrassed about screaming when they are with the older kids. And, my kids can have something else to focus on.

GREGORY

What are we going to do with them?

JANINE

Hmm... We could do like a trivia game. We pair up the first and second graders and whichever team wins gets something.

GREGORY
A non-stale prize?

JANINE
Yes. A non-stale, FDA approved,
prize.

Gregory's eyebrows raise at the "FDA approved" part of that sentence.

JANINE (CONT'D)
(whiney mutter)
Shut up.

CUT TO:

INT. BARBARA'S CLASSROOM- DAY

Barbara is sitting at her desk watching the movie with her students.

Jacob lightly knocks on her door. Barbara gets up and goes over to him.

JACOB
This might seem crazy, but hear me out.

BARBARA
This better be good.

JACOB
Do you remember that tune Melissa was humming earlier?

BARBARA
Let's just pretend that I do.

JACOB
Well, it sounded familiar and it was bothering me that I couldn't figure it out.

BARBARA
Jacob. Get to the point.

JACOB
Anyways, I ran into her a few minutes ago and she was freaking out cause she thought she lost a student. But, when I walked into her class, the student was there.

BARBARA

She is probably just stressed. Snow days are the hardest.

JACOB

That's what I thought. Until I realized where the song she was humming came from. It's from this really old movie called The Shining.

Barbara gives Jacob a look about the phrasing "really old movie".

BARBARA

Boy, you better watch yourself.

CUT TO:

INT. JANINE'S CLASSROOM- DAY

Janine and Gregory stand in front of their students who are now paired up. They are really, really into it.

JANINE

Rules of the Abbott Trivia Bowl are simple. One! You and your buddy must agree on the answer before you ring in.

GREGORY

Two! Anyone who yells or screams will lose all their points.

JANINE

And! The winner of the trivia bowl will get lunch of their choice from... drum roll please...

The students bang on their desks and Gregory on his thighs.

JANINE (CONT'D)

Wawa!

The kids all gasp and erupt with excitement.

JANINE (CONT'D)

Alright, question number one! What state of matter is snow?

Hands shoot up in the air.

Janine gives the camera a proud look.

GREGORY
Oop. I saw Mika's team first.

MIKA
Solid!

JANINE
That is... correct!

Janine goes to the board and draws one tally mark under Mika's team.

Mika's team squeals with delight.

GREGORY
Looks like everyone knows who to watch out for.

JANINE
Ok. Question number two, what is Mr. Eddie's favorite thing to eat for lunch?

The students are climbing out of their chairs and waving their hands trying to get called on.

MARCUS
That's SO easy!

Gregory looks offended.

GREGORY
Well, I wouldn't say that's an easy question.

JANINE
(muttering to Gregory)
Focus.

Gregory is scanning the wave of hands deciding who to call on.

GREGORY
I think, I saw--

The lights go out again. Gregory flinches and holds his breath, knowing what is about to happen.

But...

Nothing comes.

Gregory looks at Janine in shock and she gives him a proud smile.

They high five.

JANINE
 (to Gregory, teasing)
 I wouldn't call a boiled chicken
 sandwich a complex delicacy.

Gregory looks at her with his mouth open. He's insulted and by such an unlikely source.

JANINE (CONT'D)
 Who's ready for the next question?

While Janine continues with the game, Gregory's look of insult melts into grateful one.

CUT TO:

INT. MELISSA'S CLASSROOM- DAY

Melissa sits at her desk. Her students still have not moved.

Jacob and Barbara knock on her door. Melissa gets up and goes outside to talk to them.

The door closes and a faint CLICK OF THE LOCK is heard.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY- CONTINUOUS

MELISSA
 What's up?

BARBARA
 Jacob has brought it to my
 attention that you may have lost a
 child.

Melissa shoots daggers at Jacob, who cowers behind Barbara.

MELISSA
 Ok well did he also tell you that
 the student ended up being in my
 class? So technically, technically,
 I did not lose a student.

BARBARA
 (to Jacob)
 Well there you go.

JACOB

But the song you were humming is
from The Shining.

(to Melissa; whispering)

Be honest do you see twins at the
end of this hallway?

Jacob points to the end of the hallway. Melissa looks like
she could kill him.

Twin students, who are in their matching uniforms, are
standing right where Jacob is pointing.

Melissa is taken aback.

Jacob surveying her reaction, looks down the hall and sees
the twins.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Well, that's just poor timing.

A PHONE RINGS and cuts Jacob's line of questioning short.

MELISSA

That's probably my guy.

Melissa reaches in her pocket to get her phone... only to
realize it's not there.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

What the?

Melissa walks to her door and see her phone on her desk
through the window.

She reaches for the handle, but it won't budge.

Melissa jiggles it harder.

Nothing.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

No, no, no...

She peeks in the window again and sees her keys sitting on
the desk next to her phone.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

You've got to be kidding me.

Melissa bangs on the door to get the students' attention, but
they are too preoccupied with The Polar Express.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Kids! Hey! Open the door for Ms.
Schemmenti!

Nothing.

Melissa flies across the hallway and flings open the door to
the Janitor's Closet.

She returns a second later with a screw driver.

BARBARA

Melissa what are you--

Melissa jams the screw driver under the bottom of the window.

Jacob and Barbara flinch at the aggression. Barbara stands in
front of Jacob like a mother protecting her child.

MELISSA

Come on! Let me in!

There's a CRACK as Melissa pops a corner of the window out.
She moves to the top and gets that side off much easier.

Melissa pushes the window through the door causing all the
students to finally look away from the movie.

And in the scene we all know too well, Melissa puts her head
through the opening.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

Here's Ms. Schemmenti!!!

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Melissa reaches her hand through the window and opens the door from the inside.

The look on Barbara and Jacob's face is pure shock. They don't move, but Melissa rushes into her room.

CUT TO:

INT. MELISSA'S CLASSROOM- CONTINUOUS

Melissa grabs her phone that is somehow still ringing.

MELISSA

(on phone)

Hello, hello?

(beat)

You can? Really? That's amazing.

How soon will it be? Perfect.

Thanks man.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY- CONTINUOUS

Melissa dances out into the hallway. Her demeanor is a complete 180 from moments ago.

MELISSA

Guess what? My guy was able to find us a snowplow and he's on his way over now.

Jacob is still frozen in fear.

CUT TO:

JACOB TALKING HEAD

Jacob stares fearfully into the camera. He opens his mouth to speak but nothing comes out. He tries again.

JACOB

(whispering)

I don't know what I just witnessed.

(MORE)

JACOB (CONT'D)

But I'm pretty sure if I tell anyone, Melissa will chase me through a snow maze with an axe.

CUT TO:

BARBARA TALKING HEAD

BARBARA

Mm. Mm. Mmmm. It is none of my business. I'm just glad someone is coming to clear the snow.

CUT TO:

MELISSA TALKING HEAD

MELISSA

Oh that? That was nothing. Sometimes you gotta be a little crazy to get the job done. Besides, if I didn't pick up when my guy called, he would've put a hit out on the school.

Melissa shakes her head.

MELISSA (CONT'D)

He does not like snitches.
(contemplating beat)
Or being sent to voicemail.

Melissa shrugs-- what is she going to do about it?

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT- DAY

Mr. Johnson and the new group of students are sledding on the parking lot.

One of the students abruptly stops when they try to sled.

Mr. Johnson walks over to the spot to the pavement peaking through.

MR. JOHNSON

Alright kids. Time to go back in.
And remember, you were never here.

The students hand their lunch trays to Mr. Johnson before heading inside. The last female student stops and gives Mr. Johnson a slashed throat gesture.

Mr. Johnson returns the silent threat with an "I'm watching you" gesture.

CUT TO:

MR. JOHNSON TALKING HEAD

MR. JOHNSON

Best way to clear snow is by patting it down and pushing it around. I'm no genius, just a janitor.

(then)

But that little girl, she's not human.

CUT TO:

INT. JANINE'S CLASSROOM- DAY

The Abbott Trivia Bowl is in full swing. The white board is filled with marks under every team's name.

Janine and Gregory are wearing random props that they've found around the room.

JANINE

This question is worth double points!

The kids squeal.

JANINE (CONT'D)

How many jobs has Mr. Johnson--

The PA SYSTEM CLICKS on.

AVA

Attention all students and faculty. Due to having an amazing principal, a snow plow has just arrived to clear the roads and the parking lot. The buses will be arriving shortly.

(then)

But, for real this time.

The PA SYSTEM CLICKS off.

The students all cheer and begin gathering their things.

Janine and Gregory share a disappointed look.

JANINE

Wait, wait, wait. Guys, the Trivia Bowl isn't over. We still don't have a winner.

The kids don't care.

GREGORY

But what about Wawa? Huh?

The kids shrug. Gregory's students have already formed a line at the door.

Janine and Gregory sadly de-robe their props, bringing them back to reality.

JANINE

That was fun while it lasted, I guess.

GREGORY

Yeah, for sure. We really had them going.

JANINE

Yeah we did. We make a really good team.

Gregory smiles at her.

GREGORY

Yeah. I guess we do.

There's a tension as the two just smile at each other. Is it love? Or just friendship?

JANINE

Up top.

Gregory chuckles and then high fives Janine.

GREGORY

Alright guys, let's go.

Gregory and his students leave.

Janine goes to erase the board, but stops and smiles at it. She sees the camera is still there and quickly gets back to erasing it.

CUT TO:

INT. JACOB'S CLASSROOM- DAY

The students, all packed up, are putting on their coats. However, Keith is standing in front of the Phanatic. Jacob joins him.

KEITH

I told you Mr. C. I told you this was a sign.

JACOB

It sure is something alright.

Keith turns to Jacob and bows again.

KEITH

Praise the Phanatic.

Jacob sentimentally bows back.

JACOB

Praise the Phanatic.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT- DAY

Janine, Gregory, Jacob, Barbara, and Melissa are watching the students get on their buses.

Mr. Johnson is salting the ramp.

MELISSA'S GUY approaches.

MELISSA'S GUY

You know, I'm kinda surprised you needed me for this.

MELISSA

What do you mean?

MELISSA'S GUY

The snow was only like 2 or 3 inches thick and all patted down. That's not really the type of snow that prevents buses from coming.

Mr. Johnson smiles knowingly into the camera, before going back to salting the ramp.

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

EXT. PARKING LOT- DAY

The teachers watch the last bus pull out of the parking lot and let out a massive sigh of relief.

MELISSA

Alright, let's go inside. I'm freezing.

BARBARA

I can't wait to go home.

Melissa and Barbara head in first.

Janine walks up to Jacob and nudges him.

JANINE

And how did you manage today?

JACOB

It was an interesting day... to say the least.

Janine gives me a confused look. Jacob turns and heads up the stairs to go inside.

JANINE

Well, at least we did it.

GREGORY

You did it. All I did was scream at my students.

JANINE

Well. You can't win them all.

GREGORY

Come on, let's get inside.

Janine and Gregory climb the stairs.

JANINE

It was quite the scream though.

GREGORY

(through chuckles)
Alright, alright.

At the top of the stairs, Janine hits a patch of ice and slips.

However, Gregory is there behind her. He catches her by putting a hand on her back.

JANINE

OH!

(realizes)

Oh. Thank you.

There's that tension again. Whatever is it, everyone can feel it.

GREGORY

Yeah. Any time.

Gregory's hand stays on Janine's back until she walks away.

Gregory follows Janine inside.

END SHOW