**NOT ON MY CAMPUS**

**Cast of Characters:**

Ariel Browne

Floyd Swift

Mardi Jerry

Katherine Kane

Stuart Goldberg

The Jittery Hand

Common Newscaster

Camera Man

Spicer University Students

**Act One, Scene One**

**Outside of the Spicer University Campus.**

**ENT. NEWSCASTER and CAMERA MAN SR.**

CAMERA MAN

This doesn’t look like breakfast.

COMMON NEWSCASTER

Stop whining. We’re about to cover the story of the century.

CAMERA MAN

At this place?

COMMON NEWSCASTER

Don’t you pay any attention when you’re working?

CAMERA MAN

I just point and shoot.

COMMON NEWSCASTER

Spicer University has been nothing but a hot bed for scandal, controversy and ridicule. The public can’t get enough of this place. They eat that shit up.

**THE CAMERA MAN turns around and examines the campus behind him.**

CAMERA MAN

Is this where they hired that Neo-Nazi to come speak to the History majors?

COMMON NEWSCASTER

They claimed it was a mix up. Their Instagram story told a different *story*.

CAMERA MAN

And the Faculty Sex Scandal? That was here too?

COMMON NEWSCASTER

That’s right. And the Stale Bread Fiasco, the Graffiti Catastrophe, the Dating App Attack, the Essay Blitz and of course… the Night of the Neo-Nazi.

CAMERA MAN

Gross.

COMMON NEWSCASTER

Yeah, what a week that was.

CAMERA MAN

So, what kind of trouble are they in now? And when are we getting breakfast?

COMMON NEWSCASTER

Point, shoot and pay attention.

**THE COMMON NEWCASTER adjusts his hair as THE CAMERA MAN holds up the hand-held studio camera directly in front of him. They move USR.**

**ENT. ARIEL BROWNE SL. She is in the midst of drinking coffee as she watches the newscast on her phone.**

ARIEL

I don’t fancy myself a religious person, but let’s see if my prayers were answered.

CAMERA MAN

And…action!

COMMON NEWSCASTER

Good morning, I’m a common newscaster. With a new haircut. I’m currently standing in front of Spicer University, home to over twenty thousand undergraduate students and the last time I checked: nine graduate students.

ARIEL

Damn it. 7 AM and all they can talk about is Spicer. World War Three broke out yesterday for crying out loud!

COMMON NEWSCASTER

In the past this institution has been known for its innovative programs, fostering the brightest, most articulate minds of this generation. But, not lately. From Neo-Nazis to stale bread: this campus has seen better days. And now, a new controversy is currently spicing things up at Spicer.

CAMERA MAN

Your puns aren’t funny.

COMMON NEWSCASTER

Just point and shoot Gus. (pause) This year, Spicer’s enrollment rate saw a dramatic decline; putting the school under serious financial trouble. The President of the university, one Floyd Swift, blames the low enrollment rate on a variety of circumstances, mostly pointing the finger at the caffeine consumption of the students. As such, Swift is determined to remove all on campus cafes, coffee kiosks, vending machines and impose a campus wide ban on all caffeinated beverages. He states that this plan, in addition to other financial cuts, would not only increase enrollment, it would save the school thousands of dollars. Many students do not take this lightly. Especially those pesky student politicians.

**EXT. COMMON NEWSCASTER and CAMERA MAN.**

**ENT. MARDI JERRY, KATHERINE KANE, STUART GOLDBERG, THE JITTERY HAND and STUDENTS SR.**

**MARDI, KATHERINE and STUART are all in front of podiums CS, with ARIEL BROWNE and various STUDENTS gathered around each individual podium. THE JITTERY HAND stands partially away from the crowd, quietly observing the scene.**

**MARDI, KATHERINE and STUART are delivering a speech; each speech is self contained.**

MARDI

Fuck you, Floyd Swift!

**The STUDENTS surrounding her podium cheer.**

MARDI

When I’m on this campus, pulling an all nighter, trying to put the finishing touches on an essay, I have the luxury of walking to the on-campus Starbucks and standing in line for my daily cup of joe. Caffeine is a miracle worker, I wouldn’t have made it to my third year without it. And Spicer University thinks that they can take that away from me? Away from all of us?! Well, not on my campus!

KATHERINE

I lost my father to caffeine.

STUDENT

Your father died of a caffeine overdose?

KATHERINE

Car accident. Which never would’ve happened had he not stopped at Starbucks, forcing him to take a different route to work where that Ford Ranger was practically howling for his blood.

STUDENT

They make howling cars now?

KATHERINE

 Look at all the research conducted by the Spicer Health Department. They discovered that caffeine is forty-nine times more harmful than alcohol, tobacco and cocaine. Combined! If people need to do a few lines of coke to help them focus, okay. I’m not going to pass judgement. But drinking *coffee* in its pure, black state and even lacing it with dairy and sugar. That’s just gambling with your life! You need caffeine? Then go to the nearest dark alley! Not on my campus!

**The STUDENTS surrounding her podium cheer.**

STUDENT

I want to see the methodology behind that study. The findings just don’t make any-

STUDENT

We have a Pro-Caffeinator here!

KATHERINE

Get them!

STUDENT

Stuart, how do you feel about this whole coffee thing?

STUART

I’d love a cup. Thank you!

STUDENT

No, no. I’m talking about the proposed caffeine ban.

STUART

Yeah, I saw the memo about that. So, what is your question?

STUDENT

How do you feel about Swift’s caffeine ban?

STUART

How do *I* feel? Well…I really have no strong feelings about that.

STUDENT

None?

STUART

None. I just really think that you should all vote for me as your next Student President.

**Awkward silence. We hear the literal sound of crickets chirping.**

STUDENT

Is that it?

STUART

What more do you need? My name is Stuart Goldberg, I’m a second year Psychology student and I think I’d do a swell job representing the students of Spicer.

STUDENT

You’d be working alongside Floyd Swift, is that correct?

STUART

He’d be working alongside me.

STUDENT

Would you try and talk him out of the ban or would you support it?

STUART

I just want to win. Can we remove this person? But give them one of my Letterman’s jackets first.

STUDENT

But what if you don’t win?

STUART

Not on my campus!

**A small number of students cheer.**

MARDI

Vote Mardi Jerry and your voices will be heard. We can work together to defeat the Evil Empire of Spicer University.

STUDENT

“Star Wars” references are outdated.

MARDI

No. What’s outdated is President Swift and how he runs our university. “Let them drink coffee!” That’s what I say.

STUDENT

Enough with the references!

STUDENT

Katherine! What do you think of your opponent: Mardi Jerry?

KATHERINE

Miss. Jerry? A third year Arts & Contemporary Studies major. A dirty Pro-Caffeinator. Let me tell you something about Mardi, she spent a semester at Greenwood before transferring here. Making her an illegal alien! Is that who you want to elect?

STUDENTS

No!

STUDENT

Yes.

KATHERINE

Wouldn’t you rather have a fourth year English student who has stuck by Spicer through all the scandals and still believes…

**KATHERINE begins tearing up.**

KATHERINE

I’m sorry. I just thought about my father and how proud he would be if I were your next Student President. I miss you so much, Daddy.

STUDENTS (sympathetically)

Awe.

STUART

Opinions, facts and theories are overrated. Educational institutions are overrated. Educate yourself for crying out loud. Stop asking me questions and just vote for me, damn it.

STUDENT

But why?

STUART

I just told you why.

STUDENT

Stuart, what is your opinion on the war?

STUART

Don’t make me come out there!

MARDI

Caffeine ban? Not on my campus! Vote Mardi Jerry!

KATHERINE

Caffeine? Not on my campus! Vote Katherine Kane!

STUART

Me fail election? That’s unpossible!

STUDENT

“The Simpsons” references are outdated.

STUART

Not on my campus! Vote Stuart Goldberg!

**The STUDENTS surrounding his podium awkwardly clap.**

**EXT. all the STUDENTS, MARDI, KATHERINE & STUART.**

**ARIEL BROWNE walks CS, rubbing the temples of her forehead.**

**THE JITTERY HAND approaches her, dressed in sunglasses, jeans and a hoodie.**

THE JITTERY HAND

Awfully spirited.

ARIEL

Excuse me?

THE JITTERY HAND

The candidates. I listened to all their speeches. They were *awfully* spirited.

ARIEL

If you think so.

THE JITTERY HAND

What did you think?

ARIEL

Please, my opinion is irrelevant. As far as my job description is concerned. I’m the Manager of Student Life. I’m overseeing their election.

THE JITTERY HAND

I don’t know who to vote for, they all make such compelling points.

ARIEL

Uh huh.

THE JITTERY HAND

I’ll probably vote for that Mardi. I can’t stand the idea of coffee being outlawed. It’s sacrilegious.

ARIEL

Mardi. (sighs) Mardi would die for this election. She was never involved at her former college, comes to university and she’s as involved as physically permitted. Constant voicemails, texts, rocks thrown at my window. Yesterday, she pried my door open with a crow bar. She owes me a new crow bar.

THE JITTERY HAND

Sounds intense.

ARIEL

Katherine is another story. Do you know her father isn’t even dead? He calls her every day. The man won’t even touch coffee because he thinks it makes him impotent. She just wants to lie herself into the position.

THE JITTERY HAND

T.M.I., much?

ARIEL

And Stuart! Oh, don’t even get me started on him.

THE JITTERY HAND

I won’t.

ARIEL

He set up his campaign office in the Faculty Garbage Hub. I walked in there the other day and he was using the paper shredder as a cheese grater.

THE JITTERY HAND

I see no issue with that.

ARIEL

He’s just feeding his ego. He went over his campaign budget by spending it on Letterman’s jackets. And for what? He has no platform! All he wants is a victory. (pause) I don’t mean to complain. Especially to an obvious stranger. I just wish this school would find its moral center. God, I wish these kids would find their moral center. How can I run a fair, honest election when the candidates are treating it like a real one?

THE JITTERY HAND

Perhaps we ought to murder them: you and I.

ARIEL

Hold on, are you even a student here?

THE JITTERY HAND

Oh, yes… I’m currently working on my Master’s in Caffeine Studies and Disciplines. It’s a hard program to get into.

ARIEL

They aren’t opening up applications until next year! Get out of here, you maniac.

THE JITTERY HAND

Oh, I’ll be back.

ARIEL

Don’t make me call security. (pause) Oh wait, Swift laid them off yesterday. How could a lack of security possibly save us money?

THE JITTERY HAND

Do you expect me to answer that?

ARIEL

Beat it!

**EXT. THE JITTERY HAND SL.**

**ENT. MARDI, KATHERINE & STUART SR. MARDI is waving a stack of papers.**

MARDI

Ariel! Ariel! I found something!

KATHERINE

What did *you* find?

MARDI

Why did *you* follow me?

KATHERINE

I have my eye on you every moment of every day.

MARDI

Are you telling the truth?

KATHERINE

I only lie when I’m on the campaign trail.

ARIEL (groaning)

Oh, Katherine.

MARDI

Ariel! Ariel! Ariel!

ARIEL

Mardi, whatever you have for me, it can wait until tomorrow. I have my afternoon meditation coming up, a meeting with-

STUART

Shut it, Ariel. Tell us what you found, Mardi.

MARDI

I was in the Faculty Garbage Hub and I came across this.

**She hands the stack of papers to ARIEL.**

ARIEL (reading)

Floyd’s Coffee Corner Design Plans. To be located at 340 Granger Ave.

KATHERINE

What is it?

ARIEL

It appears to be plans for a coffee shop, located right across from the main campus.

MARDI

And guess whose owning and operating it? President Floyd Motherfucking Swift.

ARIEL

Now Mardi, we don’t know that President Swift is the one behind this.

MARDI

Look at the fourth page.

ARIEL (reading)

Owned and operated by Floyd Swift. That’s right, I’m more than an educated man. I am a coffee God.

KATHERINE

It doesn’t say that.

ARIEL

I wish it didn’t. He even goes on to say… (pause) Oh my, that’s not appropriate. Even for Spicer.

MARDI

This is why he wants to ban coffee. He’s getting rid of all the competition so that he can make a shit ton of money on his own.

STUART

What were you even doing in the Faculty Garbage Hub? That’s my office. Did you take notice of the flashing neon sign?

ARIEL

Flashing neon sign?

MARDI

I was snooping. Nice Letterman’s jackets by the way.

STUART

You really like them?

MARDI

No, they’re awful! I wanted to burn every last one of them but then I found that. And something else. Take a look at this gem.

**MARDI hands a stack of paper to KATHERINE.**

KATHERINE (reading)

“The Jittery Hand or How I Learned To Stop Worrying and Love The Coffee Bean.” By Ariel Browne.

STUART

I’m not familiar with her work.

MARDI

Stuart…

**MARDI points at ARIEL.**

STUART

Well, shit.

ARIEL

Mardi, I’m taking away your keys. And yours too Stuart. Neither one of you belong in the trash.

KATHERINE

What is this?

ARIEL

I was just fooling around one day.

KATHERINE (flipping through the pages)

Looks like you’ve been writing.

MARDI

What is The Jittery Hand?

ARIEL

It’s something satirical.

STUART

It looks like some kind of radical manifesto. Like the FLQ!

KATHERINE (reading)

And on the seventh day of the Holy Dark Roast week, The Jittery Hand declares that the most appropriate time to consume coffee is between the hours of 10 AM and 1 AM.

ARIEL
Please give me that. It was in the garbage for a reason.

KATHERINE (reading)

The Jittery Hand declares that those individuals, organizations or any other identifiable entities who act out against the Holy Coffee Bean are to be shown the error of their ways, through whatever means necessary. Be they extreme or passive measures.

STUART

Woah. What is wrong with you? What kind of a monster would write something like this?

MARDI

Explain Stuart.

STUART

Suppose that falls into the wrong hands. Some maniac could misinterpret the work and wreck havoc on our beloved university.

MARDI

Oh, so suddenly you give a fuck about the school?

STUART

People’s lives are in danger.

MARDI

You’re overreacting.

STUART

That thing belongs in the trash.

ARIEL

It *was* in the trash.

STUART

Mardi should stay out of my office.

MARDI

It’s the Garbage Hub, you don’t get an office until you’re elected. Which won’t happen, because you suck and everyone knows you have nothing to offer.

KATHERINE

There’s that Greenwood College attitude coming through.

MARDI

Think you’re so damn perfect Citizen Kane?

KATHERINE

What did you call me?

MARDI

How’s your Daddy doing? Maybe all your supporters would like to get their own daily phone call from him.

KATHERINE

I’d like all your supporters to see your Disorderly Discharge Certificate from Greenwood. You drunk hick.

MARDI

You bitch!

STUART

Simmer down you two. There are more important things to talk about, like what the hell is *satire*?

KATHERINE

How do you not know what that means?

STUART

Do you, Katherine?

KATHERINE

I’m an English major. How would I know?

MARDI

What does it mean?

ARIEL

Everyone! Stop! This constant back and forth is getting us nowhere. As usual. (pause) Katherine, give me that manifesto.

**KATHERINE hands it to her.**

ARIEL

I like to write in my spare time. I like to write about things in a unique or funny way. So, I wrote this fake manifesto to poke fun at what’s happening at Spicer. But I had no intention of showing it to anyone. Hence why it was in the *trash*!

MARDI

Can I keep it? It looks interesting. Like some forbidden coffee table book.

ARIEL

No!

KATHERINE

Ariel.

ARIEL

Yes, Katherine?

KATHERINE

What about Swift’s plan? He’s a hypocrite.

MARDI

He’s being sketchy and dishonest.

STUART

I doubt that he can make a decent cappuccino.

ARIEL

I’ll meet with him tomorrow. I’ll show him the plans that he tried to throw away.

MARDI

Can we all meet with him?

KATHERINE

Why not?

STUART

If it means I stand a greater chance of winning.

ARIEL

Hmm…no.

MARDI, KATHERINE & STUART

Come on!

ARIEL

You three are already at each other’s throats as it is, you can’t bring that kind of dynamic into the President’s office.

MARDI, KATHERINE & STUART

Doesn’t your job description say that you must cater to our every whim?

ARIEL

You memorized it?

MARDI, KATHERINE & STUART

You bet we did.

ARIEL

Fine. I’ll set up a meeting. But, you all have to learn to work together on this. If you want to do the right thing then you have to set aside your differences. Please for the good of the university and the country, set aside your differences!

MARDI, KATHERINE & STUART
I think we can do that.

ARIEL

We’ll see. And stop speaking in unison. Please and thank you.

**ARIEL spots a trash bin USR.** **She throws “The Jittery Hand Manifesto” into the bin and exits SR.**

MARDI

I’m tempted to take that out of the trash again.

KATHERINE

Ariel wouldn’t like that. Do you want to meet with Swift or not?

MARDI

You have a point. For once.

STUART

I’m telling you that thing could’ve fallen into the wrong hands.

KATHERINE

It’s a good thing that no one else passes by *this* garbage bin.

**EXT. KATHERINE, STUART and MARDI SL.**

**ENT. THE JITTERY HAND SR.**

**He spots “The Jittery Hand Manifesto” in the trash bin.**

THE JITTERY HAND

Hello reading material.

**He picks it up and flips through the pages.**

THE JITTERY HAND

They let this fall into the wrong hands. I’m glad that I happened to pass by *this* garbage bin.

**BLACKOUT**

**Act One, Scene Two**

**FLOYD SWIFT’s office.**

**ARIEL is sitting in a chair behind his desk CS. FLOYD SWIFT is sitting in his chair. They are in the midst of a conversation.**

FLOYD

And that’s why this war can’t go on for too long. The politicians simply don’t know how to master the art of digital warfare. I do though. I could *win* the war for us. (pause) Are you getting all this?

ARIEL

You wanted me to take notes?

FLOYD

I fired my secretary today. Turns out she was a Pro-Caffeinator.

ARIEL

As I was about to say Mr. President-

FLOYD

On to a more pressing matter, I’m not sure if you’re aware of this whole enrollment/caffeine thing.

ARIEL

The bed bugs in the cafeteria are aware of it, sir.

FLOYD

 It’s gotten everyone out of whack. Especially our PR department. But my primary concern truly rests on the well being of…you know.

ARIEL

I’m relieved to hear you say that. You do care about the students.

FLOYD

Students? Oh no, I’m talking about me right now.

ARIEL

You?

FLOYD

With all the budget cuts I’m being forced to make while still ensuring you Faculty members can put food on the table, there’s not going to be any money left for me! But, I managed to come up with a brilliant solution. And it is so perfect, I ended up throwing my old solution into the trash.

ARIEL

You did?

FLOYD

It was really faulty. But this new plan is a masterpiece.

**ARIEL slams the stack of paper on his desk.**

ARIEL

Was this the original solution to your financial woes? Open up a coffee shop right across the street from your university which enforces a caffeine ban?

FLOYD

Well, yes. But where did you get this?

ARIEL

The Faculty Garbage Hub.

FLOYD

Didn’t you bring enough for lunch today?

ARIEL

This is no longer happening, right? You said you threw it away and came up with a better solution. Please, tell me I’m right.

**FLOYD examines the papers briefly.**

FLOYD

Yes, this is the plan I threw away.

ARIEL

That’s good.

**FLOYD opens his desk drawer and pulls out a stack of papers.**

FLOYD

I changed the name to *Spicer’s Coffee Corner*. Think that’ll work? I mean it doesn’t have my name in it, but it gets the point across.

**ARIEL grabs the stack of papers from FLOYD. She compares the two stacks.**

ARIEL

These plans are exactly the same, word for word. All you changed was the name!

FLOYD

Ah, so then it’s not word for word. Is it, Ariel?

ARIEL

If you want to open a coffee shop, why are you doing it now? The timing and the *location* is so wrong.

FLOYD

There’s never a good time or location for these things. You’ll never find the right hour or place to make enough money. But I have knowledge, the knowledge of how to make money.

ARIEL

You think you’re not doing wrong by the students?

FLOYD

They’re getting a generic, costly education. What do I get out of my job?

ARIEL

The responsibility of being a decent leader?

FLOYD

Oh, that doesn’t matter. What students don’t know weren’t hurt them.

ARIEL

Ariel, Katherine and Stuart know about your coffee shop.

FLOYD

You mean that there are three students out there who know about Spicer’s Coffee Corner? And not just average students, we’re talking about intelligent, calculating, moralistic students. (pause) Well, two of them are.

ARIEL

Mardi found your original plans and brought them to our attention. All three of them were very unsettled about it, even Stuart.

FLOYD

I hate that Mardi Jerry. Pesky student politician.

ARIEL

Would you meet with them and clear the air?

FLOYD

What the hell do you mean?

ARIEL

Come forward about your coffee shop, listen to their opinions. Would you be willing to do that? You’ve been caught *Mr. President* and you need to explain yourself.

FLOYD

I don’t think so, now give me those plans and erase this conversation from your long-term memory.

**FLOYD reaches for them as ARIEL violently pulls them away.**

FLOYD

What do *you* want? Tell me and I’ll see to it that you get it.

ARIEL

I want you to have a meeting with them.

**FLOYD comes around his desk and begins pacing around his office.**

FLOYD

Come on Ariel. I know you pretty well. You’ve worked here for… um

ARIEL

Three years.

FLOYD

Three years. The students don’t care about what you do. You’re just a babysitter, as far they’re concerned. You’re the type who is so eager to help people, so obsessed with doing the right thing. But all the while, you aren’t looking out for yourself.

ARIEL

I don’t know what you mean.

FLOYD

I remember when you first started here. You had all these ideas about how to make Spicer a better school. But eventually, you discovered how things really get done around here. What’s that term from “House of Cards”? (pause) Ruthless pragmatism. That’s how I run my university.

ARIEL

And has that worked? Spicer has earned the worst reputation. It’s because of the decisions *you* make. I still can’t eat bread or appreciate graffiti art.

FLOYD

Ariel, do you really think that having a Student President in this office will make a difference? They’re undergraduates, they can barely get out of bed each morning (whining sarcastically) because life is too hard and they have anxiety.

ARIEL

I know that they can make a difference.

FLOYD

So, you don’t ever want to shake them and tell them to play by the rules? It would make your job a whole lot easier.

ARIEL

It’s not about me. It’s about them.

FLOYD

Classic Ariel. Trying to be George Bailey in Frank Underwood’s office. (pause) Now, let’s say we strike ourselves a deal. Enough talking.

ARIEL

A deal?

FLOYD

Since there’s no way to withhold knowledge from those creeps any longer, I will have a meeting with them. Tomorrow afternoon.

ARIEL

It’s the very least you could do.

FLOYD

And if you don’t tell any other faculty members or students about Spicer’s Coffee Corner, you can quit this job quietly with my promise of a certain financial compensation.

ARIEL

I’m not asking for that.

FLOYD

Don’t make a decision until you see the number. You may think you’re some divine, P.C. angel but you need money just like anybody else.

**FLOYD grabs a piece of paper off of his desk. He pulls a pen out of his jacket pocket and scribbles a figure on it. He then hands it to ARIEL.**

ARIEL

This is way more than my annual salary.

FLOYD

I meet with your candidates, you keep your mouth shut to the rest of the school and you receive that amount without ever setting foot on this campus again. It’s a good deal.

ARIEL

I can’t…I just-

FLOYD

No more undergraduate drama, no more planning events you don’t want to go to, no more listening to campaign speeches.

ARIEL

Mr. President-

FLOYD

No more Mardi Jerry bursting into your office. She used your crowbar this time, am I right?

**BRIEF SILENCE.**

ARIEL

Okay.

FLOYD

We have a deal?

ARIEL

Yes, I guess we do.

FLOYD

Let’s go draw up the agreement, come along Ariel. You’re finally doing something sensible.

**EXT. ARIEL and FLOYD SR. The lights stay on for approximately thirty seconds with the stage completely empty.**

**ENT. THE JITTERY HAND SR. He is wearing a bandana around his mouth, a coffee cup in one hand and a gun in other.**

THE JITTERY HAND

President Swift! It’s all over! The Jittery Hand has arrived and we will show you the error of your ways! (pause) I mean, I will show you the error of your ways. Through whatever means necessary!

**He points his gun around the stage as he searches FLOYD’S office.**

THE JITTERY HAND

The hell? Where are you Swift?

**He comes to the realization that the office is empty.**

THE JITTERY HAND

I went to all the trouble. Maybe it’s time to rethink my life choices. Maybe I’ll actually get that MA, it would make my picture frame proud. This could be a blessing in disguise.

**ENT. STUDENT SR.**

STUDENT

You!

THE JITTERY HAND

Oh fuck, you scared me.

STUDENT

Are you the new secretary?

THE JITTERY HAND

Quite the opposite, I’m-

STUDENT

Okay, shut up and take these to the Faculty Garbage Hub. I’d do it myself but I have class.

**THE STUDENT hands him a large stack of paper.**

STUDENT
The first thirty pages go in the Incriminating Evidence Shredder, pages thirty-one to seventy-two go in the Pointless Greeting Card Shredder and pages seventy-three to one hundred five go in the Deadly Public Relations Shredder. Got that, kid?

THE JITTERY HAND (examining the papers)

These pages aren’t numbered.

STUDENT

You have fingers. You can count. And don’t forget the pile he left on his desk. (pause) Nice gun. Where did you get it?

THE JITTERY HAND

The White House was having a sale. Something to do with a war?

STUDENT

Easy there. I didn’t ask for a long explanation. I have places to be.

**EXT. STUDENT SR.**

**THE JITTERY HAND sighs and approaches Swift’s desk. He grabs the paper off of his desk and reads it.**

THE JITTERY HAND

Spicer’s Coffee Corner? (pause) This man must be stopped.

**EXT. THE JITTERY HAND**

**BLACKOUT**

**Act One, Scene Three**

**FLOYD SWIFT’S OFFICE. SWIFT is on stage fumbling with a piece of paper.**

FLOYD (rehearsing)

“What can I do to help you feel safe?” “What would you most want me to know about your…experience?” “I hear you.” (pause) Maybe I ought to add a few curses in there, just to even things out.

**There is a loud knock at his door.**

**SWIFT walks to the door way SR and opens it.**

**ENT. MARDI, KATHERINE and STUART.**

FLOYD

Hi, hi there, I’m President Floyd Swift. Please, come in.

KATHERINE

Hello Mr. President.

STUART

What’s up Prez?

MARDI

You can cut the cheerful intro, we all know who you are, Floyd.

FLOYD

Oh, let me guess: you’re Mardi Jerry.

MARDI

Don’t act like you don’t know me. Our paths have crossed before, Floyd.

FLOYD

You may be right. I think you were the little dickens who slashed my tires a week ago. I didn’t have enough change for the bus, so I had to walk home. In the rain. With no shoes. And no pants. And no shirt. (pause) I offered my clothes to the bus driver in exchange for a ride. She drove off with them.

MARDI

Add a moustache and glasses and people would’ve mistaken you for Walter White.

FLOYD

I don’t do drugs.

MARDI

Neither did Walter White.

FLOYD (whispering to her)

If you keep this attitude up, I’ll send you right back to Greenwood where your thoughts and beliefs don’t matter in the slightest. Because you have no power. You’re lucky to be in this office. Maybe you’ll get something out of me, maybe you won’t. Probably not. You’d be wise to cut the shit and take a seat.

KATHERINE

What did you say?

FLOYD

Let’s all pull up a chair, take a seat.

**KATHERINE and STUART each sit down in a folding chair across from FLOYD’S desk. MARDI stares at FLOYD in disgust. FLOYD motions for her to sit down. She sits down on the third folding chair beside STUART.**

**ENT. ARIEL BROWNE SL, she walks DSL and stares out into the audience. Her phone rings.**

ARIEL (on the phone)

Hello? (pause) Yes, this is she. (pause) Perfect, I’ll meet you there. (pause) Yes, in the President’s Office. Okay, see you soon!

**She hangs up the phone.**

ARIEL

I’ll take a large, black coffee please.

**EXT. ARIEL BROWNE.**

MARDI

Pulling in a three-figure salary and we have to sit on folding chairs? That’s lame.

FLOYD

The university is going through a recession kids. Corners must be cut.

MARDI

Yeah, yeah. Anyways, you know that *we* know about Floyd’s Coffee Corner.

FLOYD

Actually, it’s now known as: Spicer’s Coffee Corner.

KATHERINE

You changed the name?

FLOYD

You did not hear that from me.

MARDI

Will you admit that you’re planning on opening the coffee shop?

FLOYD

What makes you think I’m doing that?

STUART

We found your plans.

MARDI

I found your plans.

FLOYD

Let’s settle this right now, shall we? Let me take a look at these *plans*.

**BRIEF SILENCE.**

FLOYD

May I see them or not?

MARDI

Ariel has them.

FLOYD

Ah, so you don’t have them with you?

MARDI

No.

FLOYD

In this day and age, not one of you thought to take pictures on your phone? You’re paying for an education and you’re still unsmart.

MARDI

Why do we keep putting people like you in power?

**FLOYD consults his paper.**

FLOYD

Now then, “What would you most want me to know about your experience?” And don’t start in on coffee this and coffee that. There’s no need to get dramatic.

**ENT. THE JITTERY HAND SR. He dramatically barges into FLOYD’S office.**

THE JITTERY HAND

Put your hands up President Swift!

**He points the gun at FLOYD.**

**FLOYD, KATHERINE, MARDI and STUART raise their hands in the air.**

THE JITTERY HAND (gasps)

The candidates!

MARDI

Who are you?

THE JITTERY HAND

I am The Jittery Hand.

FLOYD

Just take it easy, fella. Tell us what you want.

THE JITTERY HAND

Those individuals, organizations or any other identifiable entities who act out against the Holy Coffee Bean are to be shown the error of their ways, through whatever means necessary. Be they extreme or passive measures.

FLOYD

Still waiting to hear what you want.

STUART

That’s a passage from Ariel’s writing!

THE JITTERY HAND

You, sir, have violated the Holy Coffee Bean with your caffeine ban. And yet you’re going to open a café. Your contradictory attitude has confused The Jittery Hand, and now we must know your position on the Holy Coffee Bean.

FLOYD

What the hell is The Jittery Hand?

THE JITTERY HAND

We are a group dedicated to preserving the integrity of the Holy Coffee Bean.

FLOYD

So you’re a bunch of Pro-Caffeinators?

THE JITTERY HAND

That’s right. Now, what is your stance?

FLOYD

I’m still going to ban coffee at Spicer.

THE JITTERY HAND

And the café?

FLOYD

And I’m going to open a café, yes.

THE JITTERY HAND

You are still violating the ancient teachings of The Jittery Hand.

STUART

I think you should know that this manifesto you came across isn’t legit.

KATHERINE

He’s right, it’s a satirical manifesto written by someone who works at the school.

THE JITTERY HAND

What does satirical mean?

FLOYD

Don’t ask me.

MARDI

There’s no reason to threaten Floyd. As annoying and immoral as he is, he doesn’t deserve to have a gun in his face.

THE JITTERY HAND

But he violated the Holy Coffee Bean. Therefore, I am taking extreme measures to bring him down.

MARDI

If you really want to fuck with him, slash his tires.

FLOYD

Please, not the tires! And who the hell wrote this manifesto? You said it was someone from the school?!

KATHERINE

It was Ariel. This attention seeking maniac must’ve came across it in the trash.

FLOYD

If everyone would just stay out of the trash, we would all be better off! Why did Ariel write such a thing?

MARDI

She likes to write.

STUART

Didn’t I tell you that this would happen? Ariel is as bad as Swift!

MARDI

No, Swift is still the bad guy.

KATHERINE

I don’t know, Mardi. Swift was just going to take coffee away from us and make some money. Ariel may just indirectly kill us.

STUART

This election really wasn’t worth my time and energy. What have I done to myself?

KATHERINE

If I survive this, I’m still going to support the caffeine ban and I’m going to…oh, fuck it. I don’t care anymore.

MARDI

Shut up, the both of you. Hang in there.

THE JITTERY HAND (flipping through pages)

There’s some section in here about extreme measures, let me just find it. And then you can all be happily executed.

FLOYD

If you let me have a look at that manifesto, maybe I could help you find what you’re looking for.

MARDI

There’s a way out of this. Can we call security?

FLOYD

Had to let them go.

MARDI

You what?!

FLOYD

Recession, Mardi. Blame it on the recession.

THE JITTERY HAND

I found it!

FLOYD

You sure that you’ve located the right section?

THE JITTERY HAND

It says that I’m supposed to shoot you at point blank range in the face. And…kill all witnesses.

**THE JITTERY HAND approaches Swift and points the gun straight at the temple of his forehead.**

FLOYD

Don’t shoot me! I’ll do whatever you want me to do!

THE JITTERY HAND

I want you to die.

FLOYD

Okay, kill me if you must. But spare the pesky student politicians.

THE JITTERY HAND

Why?

FLOYD

If you kill them, who will open my coffee shop?

MARDI

Oh, shoot him already!

**ENT. THE COMMON NEWSCASTER, CAMERA MAN and ARIEL BROWNE SR. ARIEL is carrying her large cup of coffee.**

COMMON NEWSCASTER

Holy shit! Gus, get out the camera!

**CAMERA MAN holds up his camera and begins filming THE COMMON NEWSCASTER in front of the situation before him.**

CAMERA MAN

Three, two, one and action!

COMMON NEWSCASTER

I’m standing in the office of Floyd Swift, the President of Spicer University, where it appears that a tense standoff is taking place between himself, three students and a lone, attention seeking maniac.

**THE COMMON NEWSCASTER brushes past THE JITTERY HAND and pulls FLOYD over to the camera.**

COMMON NEWSCASTER

Pardon me, sir. You can have him back in a second.

ARIEL

What the hell is going on here?

KATHERINE

Ariel, he has a gun!

ARIEL

Are you telling the truth Katherine?

MARDI

She is!

STUART

Someone found your manifesto.

ARIEL

Son of a bitch.

THE JITTERY HAND

I said I’d be back.

COMMON NEWSCASTER

President Swift, we have received word that you are planning on opening a coffee shop. Is this information accurate?

**THE JITTERY HAND aims his gun at THE COMMON NEWSCASTER and FLOYD. ARIEL then takes her coffee and throws it in the face of THE JITTERY HAND who wails in extreme pain.**

THE JITTERY HAND

My eyes! My eyes! That coffee is hot!

ARIEL

That’s why they have a warning on the label.

THE JITTERY HAND

Fuck!

COMMON NEWSCASTER

Excuse me, we’re live here. We’ll get to you in a little bit.

FLOYD

Ariel! What the hell happened to our deal?

MARDI, KATHERINE & STUART

Deal?! What’s this about a deal?

FLOYD

I hate it when you kids speak in unison! Well, Ariel? Our deal?

ARIEL

We agreed that I wouldn’t tell any faculty or students about your plan, but we never said anything about the *media*. Did we, Mr. President?

FLOYD

The Quibble. You used the Quibble. How could you?

**THE JITTERY HAND wails loudly again.**

COMMON NEWSCASTER

Is it true?

**FLOYD rubs his face in distress and loudly sighs.**

FLOYD

Just take me to jail.

CAMERA MAN

With pleasure.

**THE CAMERA MAN puts his camera down and flashes his police badge.**

COMMON NEWSCASTER

Gus! You’re a cop?

CAMERA MAN

An undercover one. I’ve been waiting to take this crook in for a long time.

COMMON NEWSCASTER

Why didn’t you ever tell me you were undercover?

CAMERA MAN

Never underestimate the power of withholding knowledge. You’re coming with me, Mr. Swift.

COMMON NEWSCASTER

All he did was ban coffee, contradict himself by opening a coffee shop and tarnish the reputation of Spicer, what else has he done?

CAMERA MAN

Let’s just say that Swift has a lot of *accusations* against him.

FLOYD

Yeah, yeah. I’ll be back on the streets by brunch time.

CAMERA MAN

Save the cliched, tough guy talk until I actually have cuffs on you.

THE JITTERY HAND

Is anyone going to acknowledge me?!

CAMERA MAN

Oh right, better handcuff the maniac first.

THE JITTERY HAND

My name is Jacob.

COMMON NEWSCASTER

I got him.

**THE CAMERA MAN handcuffs FLOYD. He hands an extra set to the THE COMMON NEWSCASTER who then handcuffs THE JITTERY HAND.**

COMMON NEWSCASTER

Thanks for the story, Ariel.

**EXIT SR. FLOYD, COMMON NEWSCASTER, CAMERA MAN and JITTERY HAND.**

**KATHERINE, STUART and MARDI hug ARIEL.**

ARIEL

Alright. Yes, I saved your lives and brought down Swift. You don’t need to hug me.

MARDI

Deal with it, Ariel.

KATHERINE

Thank you.

STUART

I love you, Ariel.

**They continue to hug.**

**ENT. CAMERA MAN SR.**

CAMERA MAN

Oh, what a lovely, sentimental scene. It’s nice to know there are still decent, law abiding, hard working entities left on this planet. (pause) Ariel Browne, you’re under arrest.

ARIEL

Uh?

MARDI

What? How come?

CAMERA MAN

Your maniacal companion showed us your manifesto, we’ve got you for conspiring to assassinate Floyd Swift.

**CAMERA MAN pulls out a set of handcuffs and places them on ARIEL.**

ARIEL

But it wasn’t my fault, he found it after I threw it away!

CAMERA MAN

Just save your story for the investigation.

STUART

But officer, it’s just meaningless satire!

ARIEL

Yes, it’s satirical!

CAMERA MAN

Don’t give me silly buzzwords. I looked at the manifesto, your stance on Swift’s ban was pretty clear.

MARDI

But she was just trying to be funny!

KATHERINE

It made us laugh!

CAMERA MAN

You kids could’ve been killed because of this woman’s writing, how could that make anyone laugh?

ARIEL

Satire! Like “Dr. Strangelove.”

CAMERA MAN

The Stanley Kubrick movie?

ARIEL

Yeah!

CAMERA MAN

We didn’t have movies back in my day. Let’s go, Ariel.

ARIEL (to KATHERINE, STUART and MARDI)

Don’t stop trying. You hear me, don’t stop trying to change the world. For the rest of your days, you’ll have to restore peace and morality, whatever that may entail. But just promise me one thing!

MARDI

What is it?!

ARIEL

Stay out of politics. War is hell.

**EXT. CAMERA MAN and ARIEL SR.**

**BRIEF SILENCE.**

STUART

So, who wants to grab coffee? I mean, before we restore peace and morality and all that jazz.

MARDI

I’m down.

KATHERINE

Me too.

**BLACKOUT.**

**THE END.**