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Product Code Y603-FC

Rightyville Vs.
Leftyland:
The Hopeful Handshake

by
Tom DeMuro

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Rightyville Vs. Leftyland: The Hopeful Handshake

by Tom DeMuro

CHARACTERS:

31F / 9M

Double & Triple Casting Possible to Reduce Cast Size
Some Roles Gender Neutral

ALYSSA: *Recreation Director at the 'Young at Heart Senior Center'*

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE: *Does her best to keep the peace*

RIGHTYVILLE CHARACTERS:

NARRATOR

RIGHTY RICK, *Mayor*

CITIZENS #1 – 4

TOWNSPEOPLE

MANICURIST

MRS. MAYBERRY

WAITRESS

MAN

WOMAN

MRS. BECKMAN

STUDENT #1

STUDENT #2

STUDENT #3

STUDENT #4

RIGHTYVILLE SENIOR CITIZENS

MR. MARCONI

MRS. GORDON

MRS. MENDOCINO

LEFTYLAND CHARACTERS:

NARRATOR

LEFTY LARRY, *Mayor*

CITIZENS #1 – 4

TOWNSPEOPLE

DRIVING INSTRUCTOR

MELISSA

JUDGE

MR. CLARK

JUNE ROSE

LILY GOLDMAN

MRS. GOLDMAN

NANCY

JENNIFER

JIMMY

LEFTYLAND SENIOR CITIZENS

MRS. LEWIS

MRS. JONES

MRS. WILLIAMS

APPROXIMATE RUNNING TIME:

60 Minutes

SCENES

NOTE: Throughout the play, the actions of the Rightyville citizens are set up STAGE LEFT and those of Leftyland citizens are set up STAGE RIGHT. This is done intentionally so that it makes more sense from the audience perspective.

SCENE 1: THE TWO NEIGHBORING TOWNS

A sign or a small flag featuring the preferences of its citizens is displayed at the far STAGE LEFT (for Rightyville) and far STAGE RIGHT (for Leftyland).

SCENE 2: DOWNTOWN RIGHTYVILLE

Simple scenery or backdrop; include props that are favored by the people of Rightyville.

SCENE 3: DOWNTOWN LEFTYLAND

Simple scenery or backdrop; include props that are favored by the people of Leftyland.

SCENE 4: THE YOUNG AT HEART SENIOR CENTER

The backdrop should include a sign stating the name of the Center. The scenery should create the atmosphere of a typical Senior Center including such items as flowers, a card table, rocking chairs, etc. The colors reflected in the costumes of the Seniors and their location on the stage should suffice to let the audience know what side of town they are from.

SCENE 5: THE TWO NEIGHBORING TOWNS

Same as SCENE 1.

SCENE 6: THE YOUNG AT HEART SENIOR CENTER

Same as SCENE 4.

SCENE 7: A SEGREGATED CAMPAIGN SETTING

The stage is clearly divided by simple background scenery (flags, posters, etc.) once again showing the likes of the citizens of each of the towns. A podium is set up for each of the mayors to speak from.

SCENE 8: TOGETHERTOWN; A VERY DIFFERENT SETTING

The backdrop or scenery is devoid of prejudice. Simple costume changes (hats, scarves, jackets, etc.) are made by the characters to emphasize the fact that they are fully open to trying something different.

**Rightyville Vs. Leftyland:
The Hopeful Handshake**
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SCENE ONE
The Conflict Continues

AT RISE: *LEFTYLAND NARRATOR* is reading the *Leftyland Daily News* with the front page of the paper facing the AUDIENCE that reads “*Rightyville Bans Left-handed Scissors*”.

LEFTYLAND NARRATOR
(Looking up and noticing the AUDIENCE; disgusted.) Oh, hi! I’m just reading today’s paper. Look at this! Can you believe it? *(Pointing to the newspaper and quoting the headlines in frustration)* “*Rightyville Bans Left-handed Scissors*”. This, of course, follows their ban on left-handed baseball gloves passed last year. Nothing new here. It’s the same old thing. The folks on the other side of town are at it again.

RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR enters STAGE LEFT.

RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR
(Responding in disbelief) Excuse me?! We’re at it again? Don’t you think your viewpoint is just a little one sided?

LEFTYLAND NARRATOR
One sided? Really? Maybe you need to take a good look in the mirror. You’re the ones who always think they’re right.

RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR
Maybe you need to practice what you preach, my friend.

LEFTYLAND NARRATOR
Oh, please! *(Once again referring to the newspaper headlines)* Banning all of your stores from selling left-handed scissors? Really?

RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR
Oh, relax! You can always pick some up on Amazon if you’re really desperate. Besides, once in a while, it would be nice to see you show some respect towards the opinions of others.

LEFTYLAND NARRATOR
Why don’t you step over here and I’ll give you five opinions. *(Raising her left-handed clenched fist)*

RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR

(Shaking her head in disgust) Always looking for trouble, aren't you?

LEFTYLAND NARRATOR

Seems like you have a short memory. Who was the one who started the argument yesterday?

The two NARRATORS start walking towards each other as they reach the point of rage. Slowly, they raise their respective fists, grab each other with their free hand and are about to go at it when they suddenly hear some unusual, but obviously familiar, MUSIC PLAYING in the background. Simultaneously, their motion freezes and their faces are filled with fear as they seem to sense what's about to happen. As the music continues, OFFICER HUCKLEBEE slowly swaggers onto the stage with a nightstick in her hand and makes her presence known.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

(Paces back and forth as she speaks slowly, calmly and firmly) Now folks... didn't we just go through this same exact thing yesterday?

The NARRATORS remain frozen, avoid eye contact with her and mumble their answer back to OFFICER HUCKLEBEE.

BOTH NARRATORS

Yes, Officer Hucklebee.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

(Visibly agitated and raises her voice) I can't hear you!

NARRATORS, Together

(They respond a little bit louder) Yes, Officer Hucklebee.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE walks behind the NARRATORS and slowly pushes their hands down, steps between them and responds in a thunderous voice.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

I said I can't hear you!

NARRATORS snap to attention as if they are soldiers and respond with loud crisp voices.

NARRATORS, *Together*

Yes, Officer Hucklebee!!

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

(Goes back to pacing; temporarily calm) Personally, I'm getting a little sick and tired of having to constantly get in the middle of you two. *(Raising her voice; pounding her nightstick into her hand)* I gotta tell ya'... it's starting to get old. *(Showing frustration and pointing to the AUDIENCE)* You gotta remember, these kind people out there don't even know what you're arguing about.

NARRATORS start right back in arguing where they left off.

LEFTYLAND NARRATOR

I'll tell you what we're arguing about! Just look at these ridiculous headlines! We're not going to tolerate this anymore!

RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR

Ridiculous? How dare you make fun of our laws!

NARRATORS grab each other briefly. OFFICER HUCKLEBEE extends her arms to separate them and restore order.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

Now, let's be civil and explain to these nice folks in the audience why it is that the two of you can't seem to get along any better than the Road Runner and Wyle E. Coyote.

NARRATORS, *Together*

(Looking at each other in confusion) Who?

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

You know, that old cartoon with...never mind, it's not important. Now, who wants to go first?

The shouting match resumes.

RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR

I'll go first. It's important that we begin with the truth!

LEFTYLAND NARRATOR

The truth? According to whom?

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

(Separates them once again) OK. OK. My mistake. Let's try this again. *(Hides her hand behind her back)* I'm thinking of a number between one and ten. Whoever is closer goes first.

They reluctantly agree as she points to them one at a time.

LEFTYLAND NARRATOR

Three.

RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR

Eight.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

(Reveals her hidden fingers) The number was two. *(Points to the LEFTYLAND NARRATOR)* You may begin.

RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR

That's not fair. She cheated.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE puts her head in her hands in exasperation.

LEFTYLAND NARRATOR

How could I have cheated?

RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR

I saw you peeking behind her back! I call... do over!!

One more time, NARRATORS grab one another.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

(Shouting) That's it!

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE blows her whistle and two other policemen come out to remove the RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR from the stage. THE RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR shouts out her last words to the AUDIENCE before she is dragged off.

RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR

Don't believe a word she says! It's lies, I tell ya'...all lies!

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

(Waits for quiet then speaks directly to the AUDIENCE) Sometimes that's the only way to keep your sanity around here. *(Looks at her watch)* Well, I gotta run, folks. Call me if things get out of hand...again. *(To the LEFTYLAND NARRATOR)* They're all yours.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE slowly disappears as MUSIC PLAYS, the same way she arrived. The LEFTYLAND NARRATOR, relieved to see her go, takes the chance to tell the AUDIENCE her side of the story.

LEFTYLAND NARRATOR

Wow... Where do I start? I guess from the beginning. I'm from Leftyland where all of our citizens are – you guessed it – left-handed. From everything I've read and from what my parents tell me, we just got tired of being treated like second-class citizens. As Lefties, let's face it, we are so outnumbered. So, we decided to just keep to our side of town and do things our way. *(RIGHTYVILLE CITIZENS enter STAGE LEFT prepared to share their part of the story)* But those people on the other side of town are just... well... I guess they would probably tell you...

The LEFTYLAND NARRATOR looks on in silence, but shows her disagreement.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZENS, *All together*

We do things right!

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #1

We throw with our right hand.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2

We catch with our right hand.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

We eat with our right hand and...

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #4

We write with our right hand. In our humble opinion...

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZENS, *All together*

(Raising their right hand to support their claim) We do everything right!

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #4

(Glancing to her right) Unlike some other people we know...

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #1

But, let's be clear about this.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2

This rivalry is about much more than which hand we prefer to use.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

Those folks on the other side of town are just a little “different” (*Puts the quotes in the air with her fingers*) in a lot of ways.

LIGHTS UP STAGE RIGHT as the LEFTYLAND CITIZENS enter. The RIGHTYVILLE CITIZENS immediately turn their backs on them.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #1

And what, may we ask, is your definition of “different”? (*Also demonstrating quotes in the air with his fingers*)

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #2

(*Sarcastically*) Not like you?

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #3

Yes, we use our left-hand...

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #4

To throw.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #1

To catch.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #2

To write.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #3

To read.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #1, 2 & 4

(*Confused by her statement*) To read??

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #3

I just wanted to see if the audience was paying attention.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #4

But we do agree about one thing.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #2

That is, that we disagree about pretty much everything.

The two groups advance towards one another as the dialogue goes back and forth between them.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #1
We drink Coke.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #1
No Coke – Pepsi!

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2
We love the Yankees.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #2
We are true blue Mets fans.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3
We wear our hats forward.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #4
We prefer to wear ours backward.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #3
Wait, wait! That’s not really a fair comparison. You kind of have to wear your hat backwards when you’re a Mets fan.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #4
We thrive on loud, hard driving rock music!

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #1
We love the smooth sophisticated sound of jazz.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #1
We’re strict vegetarians.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #2
We believe that a delicious rack of barbeque ribs never hurt anyone.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2
We would play video games 24 hours a day if our parents would let us. *(Smiling)* And they do!

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #3
We’d rather be outside on the sports field any day.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3
There’s nothing like the purr of our cats as they cuddle up on our laps in our living rooms.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #4

Cats have attitudes. Dogs only in our neighborhoods.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #4

Our favorite color is red.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #1

Ours...

They all point to a certain part of their wardrobe which features every color but red.

LEFTYLAND CITIZENS, *Together*

Isn't!

The RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR bursts in STAGE LEFT and brushes herself off. She looks around, clearly out of breath, as if she just escaped from the two policemen. The NARRATORS pick up the conversation as the groups slowly turn their backs on each other.

RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR

To be honest, we're not really sure how this whole fight got started, but my grandpa says it's been that way for as long as he can remember and it doesn't look like things will change anytime soon.

LEFTYLAND NARRATOR

How can they when one side (*Points to the LEFTIES with her thumb*) refuses to respect the rights of others.

RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR

(Just as sarcastically) And what side might you be referring to?

LEFTYLAND NARRATOR

Well, since it's obviously not us, I guess that leaves the Coke drinking, right-handed Yankee fans, doesn't it?

RIGHTYVILLE NARRATOR

(Raising her voice, sarcastically) Obviously! It couldn't possibly be the left-handed, carnivorous jazz lovers, could it? *(Shouting louder with hands on hips)* Heaven forbid that you admit that you are the ones who are "different" around here.

ALL begin to shout at each other and, just when it looks like chaos is about to erupt, the familiar MUSIC PLAYS announcing the imminent arrival of OFFICER HUCKLEBEE.

EVERYONE cringes in anticipation. They look at each other deciding whether they should hang around or run.

NARRATORS are the first to exit. After a few more seconds, ALL CITIZENS EXCEPT FOR RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2 and LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #1 scatter in fear. The two remain on the stage facing each other, laughing hysterically.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #1

(Laughing) Do you believe those guys?

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2

(Laughing right along with him) I know, right? Running away like a bunch of scaredy cats.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE enters but neither of them notices her.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #1

(Laughing even harder) You would think Hucklebee is six foot ten or something the way they were bolting out of here.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2

(Keeping up with his laughter) I know. What is she like four foot three or something? I could crush her with one hand tied behind my back.

They go to “high-five” one another with their respective hands when they suddenly catch themselves remembering that they are from different sides of town.

LEFTLAND CITIZEN #1 notices OFFICER HUCKLEBEE standing with her arms folded a few feet behind RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #1

Umm...I gotta get going!

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN

Don't tell me you're afraid, too?

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #1 ignores the question and backs away slowly and exits. RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2 yells after him.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN, *Continued*

Well, some of us don't scare that easily!

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE quietly moves closer to her.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

(Speaking in a calm voice) Really? Well, that's good to know.

Without turning around, RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2 immediately shows signs of panic. She takes out her handkerchief and begins to wipe perspiration off of her forehead. OFFICER HUCKLEBEE begins banging her nightstick first against her thigh and then on the palm of her hand to intimidate her.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE, *Continued*

So, what were you saying again about crushing me with one hand tied behind your back? *(Sarcastically)* Now, I'm assuming that your left hand would be the one tied behind your back *(Takes RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2's left hand and gently twists it behind her back)*, since you prefer to use your right hand. Am I correct about that?

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2

(Nervously) Oh that? I was just kidding, Officer Hucklebee. Another thing you probably don't know about us Righties is that we have a great sense of humor. Yup, real jokesters. That's us.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

(Sarcastically) Hmm... No I didn't realize that. I guess we learn something every day. *(Putting a little more pressure on her arm as she raises her voice)* Well, I suggest you take that sense of humor back to your side of town where I'm sure it will be much more appreciated!

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2

Yes, Officer Hucklebee! *(Puts her handkerchief back in her pocket; cautiously begins to exit feeling relieved to get off the hook)* Thank you! Have a great day, ma'am!

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

(Shaking her head and speaking directly to the AUDIENCE) And on and on the insanity goes, folks. I tell ya', the bickering between these two groups never stops. That's why I moved out of this area completely a few years back. Nothing ever changes around here. The LEFTIES stay on their side of town called Leftyland. The RIGHTIES keep to themselves in Rightyville.

From speaking to the local historians, I've learned that years ago both sides used to live peacefully in one town called Togethertown. *(Smiles to herself)* Imagine that... all living together in one place and getting along. No disrespect. No judgment. No prejudice. Man... must've been a beautiful thing. Now, don't get me wrong. Leftyland and Rightyville are beautiful places – but, for some reason, they just can't be beautiful together. I remember a few years back we actually came close to having peace and harmony. And in the final step, when it was time to shake hands on the agreement, we hit a snag. *(CITIZENS #4 enter, demonstrating)* The Righties wanted to shake hands with their right hand and, of course, the Lefties insisted on shaking with their left hand. It just didn't work out. *(CITIZENS #4 demonstrate the dilemma then exit)* Well, I know this is your first time visiting the area, so I'll let you look around for yourselves.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE's MUSIC PLAYS as she slowly exits. LIGHTS FADE OUT.

SCENE TWO
Downtown Rightyville

AT RISE: *Downtown Rightyville; ROCK MUSIC is blasting in the background. Three distinct locations are represented – a nail salon; a restaurant and a school – all used to highlight the rigid characteristics of their side of town. Some of the TOWNS-PEOPLE are walking back and forth while others are standing in groups talking. General LIGHTS DIM and MUSIC FADES OUT as LIGHTS UP on the nail salon. MRS. MAYBERRY is seated in a chair in the salon across from the MANICURIST at a small table displaying a collection of nail polish.*

MANICURIST

So what can I do for you today, Mrs. Mayberry?

MRS. MAYBERRY

Well, I'm attending the Annual Rightyville Ball this Friday evening and I thought I'd treat myself to a manicure.

MANICURIST

Why, of course. Have you thought about what color nail polish you'd like?

MRS. MAYBERRY

Hmm...what do you suggest?

MANICURIST

Well, of course, that'll all depends on what color dress you're wearing. *(Pretends as if this topic really needs any thought)* Let me guess...

MRS. MAYBERRY is surprised at the question then she and the MANICURIST respond with wide smiles, laughing and throwing their hands up into the air.

MRS. MAYBERRY/MANICURIST, *Together*

Red!!!

MANICURIST

Splendid choice! Well, in that case, let me see what might work for you. *(Picking up the bottles one at a time and slowly reading each label)* I have flaming red, rosy red, dark red, sparkling red and *(Hesitates a bit.)*...just plain red!

MRS. MAYBERRY

My goodness! Decisions, decisions. You always have such a wonderful selection here! I think I'll go with...just plain red!

ROCK MUSIC PLAYS as LIGHTS DOWN on salon and LIGHTS UP on the restaurant. There is a table with a red tablecloth. A MAN and a WOMAN are seated at the table looking over menus, getting ready to order. MUSIC FADES OUT.

WAITRESS

(Approaches the table smiling) Good evening. My name is Victoria and I'll be your waitress for this evening. Have you dined with us before?

MAN

No. Actually, this is our first time.

WAITRESS

Oh, well. You're in for a real treat, then. All of the meals at our cafe are prepared on premises with the freshest ingredients available. People come from all over Rightyville to dine with us. Of course, like every restaurant in town, we serve vegetarian meals only. Have you had a chance to look over our menu?

WOMAN

Yes, and we've decided to start with the seaweed wraps for an appetizer.

WAITRESS

Wonderful choice! That's actually my personal favorite. They just melt in your mouth.

MAN

Sounds great! For my entrée, I'd like to order the tofu and seasoned vegetables. No salt. Light on the olive oil, please.

WAITRESS

Absolutely. And you, ma'am?

WOMAN

The grilled veggie burger caught my eye.

WAITRESS

I'm not surprised. That's our biggest seller.

WOMAN

Really? Well, it sounds delicious. Now, I'd like that without the roll and, may I ask, is your lettuce organic?

WAITRESS

Of course it is.

WOMAN

And your tomatoes?

WAITRESS

The same, ma'am. We are proud to serve only local organic veggies of the highest quality.

WOMAN

(Looks at MAN and smiles) I knew we came to the right place. *(To WAITRESS)* We're very particular about what we put into our bodies.

WAITRESS

Spoken like a true Rightyville citizen. Anything else before I put that order in for you?

MAN

Yes, may we have a large arugula salad to split?

WOMAN

Dressing on the side, please.

WAITRESS

You bet! Coming right up! (*Turns to head towards the kitchen and place the order; suddenly stops in her tracks and returns to the table*) Oh, I almost forgot to mention that you might want to leave room for dessert. Our special this evening features a double chocolate fudge brownie delight with vanilla ice cream. It's buried in nuts, cherries and whipped cream and drenched in chocolate sauce!

MAN/WOMAN, *Together*

(*Looking first at each other and then at the AUDIENCE*) Sounds good to us!

ROCK MUSIC PLAYS as LIGHT DOWN on Restaurant and LIGHTS UP on a simple classroom setting with 4 chairs. MRS. BECKMAN, the teacher, stands before 4 STUDENTS seated at the desks. ROCK MUSIC FADES OUT.

MRS. BECKMAN

Good morning, class!

ALL STUDENTS

Good morning, Mrs. Beckman.

MRS. BECKMAN

(*In a bubbly voice*) Happy Monday, children! I trust you all had a wonderful weekend! Before diving into our core curriculum, let's begin the morning as we always do. Please stand to recite the Rightyville creed.

The STUDENTS stand and raise their right hands.

STUDENTS

(*Right hands raised*) We, the people of Rightyville, do promise...

STUDENT #1

To stand by the Yankees through thick and thin - even in the tough years.

STUDENT #2

To never leave the house in the morning without wearing something red.

STUDENT #3

And to download only rock music on our iPhones.

STUDENT #4

(Interrupting) But, Mrs. Beckman?

MRS. BECKMAN

(Startled by the interruption) Yes, dear?

STUDENT #4

I was just wondering. What would be so bad about listening to something else besides rock music once in a while?

The OTHER STUDENTS react by putting their hands over their mouths in disbelief.

MRS. BECKMAN

(Horried by the question) I will not tolerate those kinds of outbursts in my classroom, Missy! *(Grabs her by the wrist)* Come with me. Let's just go down to Principal Johnson's office and see what he has to say about this.

ROCK MUSIC PLAYS as LIGHTS OUT on classroom. OFFICER HUCLEBEE returns to CENTERSTAGE. LIGHTS GENERALLY RESTORE as MUSIC FADES OUT.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

See what I mean? Nice people, generally speaking. They're just a little set in their ways. But, as Chief Strickland says, there are always two sides to every story. Here's the other side.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE THREE

Downtown Leftyland

AT RISE:

Downtown Leftyland; JAZZ MUSIC PLAYS. Three distinct locations are represented – the front seat of a car, outside a school, and a courtroom – all used to highlight the rigid characteristics of Leftyland.

General LIGHTS DIM as LIGHTS UP on MRS. LARSON, a driving instructor and MELISSA, a student, in the front seat of the car preparing for her first driving lesson. JAZZ MUSIC FADES OUT.

MRS. LARSON

Okay, Melissa. So this is your very first driving lesson, correct?

MELISSA

(Nervous with excitement) Yes, Mrs. Larson. My very first time behind the wheel!

MRS. LARSON

Alrighty, then. *(In a preaching tone)* Let's take this slowly. One step at a time. Safety is our number one priority. We don't even put the key in the ignition until our seatbelts are fastened and our mirrors are checked.

MELISSA

Yes, ma'am! Seatbelts fastened *(Puts hers on)* and mirrors checked *(Checks her side and front mirrors)*.

MRS. LARSON

Perfect! Now, start her up. *(SFX: Sound of Engine Starting)* Now, remember, never go past the designated speed limit. It's there for a reason. And two hands on the wheel at all times! *(Pounds her hand in her fist)* Safety, safety, safety!

MELISSA

(Focusing firmly on the road with two hands on the wheel) Of course, Mrs. Larson. Two hands on the wheel at all times!

MRS. LARSON

Okay, do you see that blue stop sign up ahead?

MELISSA

Yes, ma'am.

MRS. LARSON

Make sure you come to a complete stop whenever you see one of those.

MELISSA

(Seeming a bit more relaxed) Absolutely. Every time, ma'am.

MRS. LARSON

(Smiling) You're doing beautifully. Okay, be careful now, Melissa. We're coming into a very congested area. Always watch out for the other guy. Drivers these days are doing everything but watching the road. They're listening to music, texting, drinking coffee... I tell you it's a nightmare. If nothing else, my job is to impress upon you the importance of safety when driving. Safety first is our motto!

MELISSA

Yes, Mrs. Larson. Safety comes first! Got it.

MRS. LARSON

Now, we're coming up to a traffic light. Remember, green is for go and, when it turns to amber, slow down.

MELISSA

Yes, ma'am. Green is for go and I slow down when I see amber. (*Hesitating*) May I ask a question, Mrs. Larson?

MRS. LARSON

Of course, Melissa. Ask any question you want. That's how we learn! Now is the time to ask. Shoot!

MELISSA

If green is for go and amber is to slow down, what does it mean when the light turns red?

MRS. LARSON

Red?? (*Seems totally baffled*) I'm not really sure. We don't pay much attention to that here in Leftyland.

JAZZ MUSIC PLAYS as LIGHTS DOWN on car and LIGHTS UP on NANCY and JENNIFER, two friends wearing their backpacks, walking out of school having a casual conversation. JAZZ MUSIC FADES OUT.

NANCY

Thank goodness it's Friday! It was a long week for me. I had three tests and two projects due.

JENNIFER

Yeah, it did seem like a long week. I guess it's also because I've been really looking forward to this weekend. My cousin, Jimmy, is coming to visit me.

NANCY

Your cousin, Jimmy? I've never even heard you mention him before.

JENNIFER

That's because I haven't seen him since we were in the same class in Kindergarten. We did everything together, Nancy. Our moms say we were so alike that we could've been twins. But he moved away about five years ago and we haven't seen each other since.

NANCY

Where did he move to?

JENNIFER

Somewhere far away to a place called Peaceful Village. I don't know much about it. All I know is that we're going to pick up right from where we left off. I can still remember the two of us playing outside for hours. He promised to call me when he gets to my house this afternoon. (*Just then, her cellphone rings and she looks to see who it is.*) It's him!

JIMMY enters STAGE RIGHT, cellphone in hand. JENNIFER and JIMMY cannot see each other.

JENNIFER

(*Answering phone; excited*) Hey Jimmy! How are you?

JIMMY

I'm doing great, Jennifer. We just made it to your house about 15 minutes ago. Hurry up! I can't wait to see you! I brought my entire Wii collection with me. I'll get everything set up in your basement while I'm waiting.

JENNIFER

(*Looking a little stunned*) The basement?? Your entire Wii collection?

JIMMY

Yeah, I can't wait to get started. What do you want to play first? Let's see...I brought the New Mario Brothers, Lego Batman 2: DC Super Heroes, the Angry Birds Trilogy...

JENNIFER

(*Interrupts*) Wait, how long are you guys here for?

JIMMY

We're just here for the three-day weekend.

JENNIFER

Jimmy, if we only have three days together, why would I want to waste it sitting in my basement when we can be outside enjoying this beautiful spring weather?

JIMMY

Waste it? Are you kidding me, Jen? The Angry Birds Trilogy has almost 300 hundred levels. Let's get started. I say we pull an all-night video game marathon!

JENNIFER puts her head in her hands in total disappointment.

JAZZ MUSIC PLAYS as LIGHTS DOWN on the friends and LIGHTS UP on a courtroom.

MRS. GOLDMAN and daughter, LILY, are seated STAGE LEFT. MISS ROSE, the kindergarten teacher, and MR. CLARK, the prosecutor, sit STAGE RIGHT. The JUDGE enters and everyone stands. JAZZ MUSIC FADES OUT.

JUDGE

This is the case of Goldman versus the Leftyland Public Schools. Let's begin with the prosecution. Mr. Clark, please call your first witness to the stand.

MR. CLARK

Your honor, I call Miss June Rose to the stand. (*JUNE walks up to the stand.*) Now Miss Rose, can you please state your occupation?

JUNE ROSE

I'm the Kindergarten teacher at Leftyland Elementary School.

MR. CLARK

Thank you, Miss Rose. And how long have you been in this position?

JUNE ROSE

This is my 15th year, Mr. Clark.

MR. CLARK

And can you tell us what you witnessed on the first day of school this year?

JUNE ROSE

Well...I (*Takes out a hanky and wipes her brow as if she is too upset to talk about it*) I was about to administer my first day Kindergarten assessments as I always do, your honor, when out of the corner of my eye I saw something I couldn't believe. I saw Lily Goldman take out her pencil and... (*Hesitates*) and... (*Hesitates again, then begins to sniffle*)...and put it... (*Bursts into tears*)

MR. CLARK

(*Attempts to console her*) Now, now, Miss Rose. I know this can't be easy reliving this nightmare, but it is imperative that the court hears the truth. Please continue.

JUNE ROSE

(*Having trouble getting the words out*) She...she... picked up the pencil and... (*Goes back to sobbing hysterically*)

MR. CLARK

Yes? And, then, what did she do with it?

JUNE ROSE

She put it in her right hand— (*Turning to glare at LILY*) —or should I say her wrong hand— and begins to write with it!

MR. CLARK

Thank you, Miss Rose. No further questions.

MISS ROSE continues to sob uncontrollably as she leaves the stand.

JUDGE

The prosecution may now call his next witness.

MR. CLARK

I call to the stand Lily Goldman. (*LILY skips up to the stand with a giant lollipop in her hand. The prosecutor looks disgusted.*) Can you please tell the court your name?

LILY

Sure. My name is Lily Goldman.

MR. CLARK:

Now, Lily, can you please tell the court how old you are?

LILY

Of course. I just turned six on Tuesday. (*Holds up six fingers; her mother claps*)

MRS. GOLDMAN

(*Yelling out with pride*) And she just lost her first tooth yesterday.

LILY

And I got two dollars from the tooth fairy and I bought this lollipop!

JUDGE

(*Not amused*) Yes, that's very nice, Lily. (*Trying to get things back on track*) Umm, Mr. Clark?

MR. CLARK

And can you please tell the court what you were caught doing on your very first day of school?

LILY

(*Innocently*) I was writing my name.

MR. CLARK

Yes, but how were you writing your name?

LILY

Like this. *(Stands up and writes it in the air)* L...I...

MR. CLARK

(Getting frustrated) Yes, yes, but with which hand?

LILY

Oh...this one!

LILY proudly raises her right hand. The JUDGE gasps. MR. CLARK wipes his face with a handkerchief as if exhausted by the process.

MR. CLARK

No more questions, your honor.

JUDGE

(Speaking to Mrs. Goldman) Well, as her mother and the one responsible for teaching her right from wrong – and I guess you could also say “right from left” – what do you have to say for yourself, Mrs. Goldman?

MRS. GOLDMAN

Well, your honor, she's just a little girl and—

JUDGE

Just a little girl? I've never heard such nonsense! *(Bangs the gavel)* I hereby sentence you both to write “I will not write with my right hand!” 100 times!... *With* your left hand, of course. Case dismissed!

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE's MUSIC PLAYS. LIGHTS OUT on the court as OFFICER HUCKLEBEE enters. General LIGHTS RESTORE as MUSIC FADES OUT.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

Same deal with the good folks from Leftyland. Kind and caring people... as long as you agree with them, of course. And, if you don't? *(Chuckles)* Well, that's when the trouble starts. And, as you just saw, it's the same deal no matter where you go around these two towns—in restaurants, shops, schools. Even age has no bearing on their beliefs. I volunteer at the Young at Heart Senior Center on Monday afternoons and, I tell ya', it ain't no different over there. *(Snaps her fingers as she gets a good idea)* Hey, why don't you join me? I'm heading over there right now. C'mon.

As OFFICER HUCKLEBEE begins to exit, her MUSIC PLAYS. Appearing suddenly frustrated, she turns around and directly confronts the SOUND BOOTH.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE, *Continued*

Okay, okay, we get the idea. Give the music a rest already! (*MUSIC abruptly stops*) And by the way, (*Speaking to the AUDIENCE*) I know on the outside I act like I'm all big (*Stands tall*) and bad (*Rolls up her sleeve and flexes her muscle to prove her point*) but, on the inside, (*Completely softening her tone*), I'm really just an old softy. It's just that I gotta act tough to keep order around here. (*Looking at her nightstick and then back at the AUDIENCE*) Oh, this thing? I would never use it to hurt anyone. In fact, there's really only one thing that I do use it for usually when no one's around. (*Looks around*) You seem like a trustworthy group. I guess I can let you in on my little secret. (*To SOUND BOOTH*) Hit it!!

ROCK MUSIC PLAYS as OFFICER HUCKLEBERRY demonstrates her air guitar skills. Then MUSIC OUT.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE, *Continued*

Consider yourselves lucky. You're the first ones that I ever shared my air guitar skills with! So, let's just keep that a secret between you and me. It's important that I keep my image around here. C'mon. My senior friends are waiting.

*OFFICER HUCKLEBEE exits.
LIGHTS OUT.*

SCENE FOUR

The Seniors Show Their Colors

AT RISE: *The Young at Heart Senior Center which is used by both Rightyville and Leftyland Citizens. Onstage are two tables, one with a red tablecloth (Rightyville) and the other one with a multicolored tablecloth (Leftyland).*

MRS. LEWIS, MRS. JONES and MRS. WILLIAMS sit STAGE RIGHT at the table with the multicolored tablecloth and MR. MARCONI, MRS. MENDOCINO AND MRS. GORDON sit STAGE LEFT at the table with the red tablecloth. ALYSSA, their extremely enthusiastic recreation director, is attempting to lead some activities.

ALYSSA

Good morning, everyone! I'm so glad to see you all this morning. I hope you all had a wonderful weekend!

MRS. LEWIS

Wonderful? It rained all weekend and, to make matters worse, no one even came to visit me.

ALYSSA

Oh, I'm so sorry to hear that, Mrs. Lewis. But, I'm sure it was very difficult to get here because of all the flooded roads.

MRS. LEWIS

So, if the weather was so bad, what's wrong with a phone call? What's so hard? You pick up the phone and dial my number. 847-26... *(Trying to remember)* No, 874-09... *(Shaking her head in frustration)*

MRS. JONES

With all of that rain, I was worried that we'd all float away.

MRS. WILLIAMS

(Having trouble with her hearing) Who doesn't want to stay?

ALYSSA

(Speaking loudly) No, Mrs. Williams, Mrs. Jones said that she was worried we'd all float away.

MRS. WILLIAMS

Oh, I'm sorry, dear. I can never remember what day it is.

ALYSSA

(Looking confused) Oh, no. I...

MR. MARCONI

I'm hungry! When are we having breakfast?

ALYSSA

Why... you just finished your breakfast, Mr. Marconi.

MR. MARCONI

Alright, then...when is lunch?

ALYSSA

(Trying to get everyone together) I'll tell you what. Why don't we get started with our morning activities and I'm sure that will get your mind off of food, Mr. Marconi.

MRS. GORDON

They say it's best to eat small meals many times throughout the day rather than eating a big breakfast, lunch and dinner.

ALYSSA

Very true, Mrs. Gordon. So, let's begin with our bingo game this morning. Would you like to hand out the cards, Mrs. Mendocino?

MRS. MENDOCINO is sleeping on a nearby rocking chair and snoring away. The others appear to be annoyed with her. ALYSSA goes over to gently wake her.

ALYSSA, *Continued*

Mrs. Mendocino?

MRS. MENDOCINO

(Jumps up) What's going on? What happened? Are the Lefties causing a problem again?

MRS. MENDOCINO's comments get everyone yelling at each other, with the exception of MRS. GORDON who shakes her head in disappointment. They stand up and start shaking their canes at each other.

ALYSSA

(Trying to calm them down) Please, please, folks. Let's remember our rules at the Young at Heart Senior Center. We treat everyone with respect, no matter what our differences are. *(SENIOR CITIZENS grumble and moan.)* I know... I know... this is difficult for you since it's not the way you've lived your lives, but since there is only one Senior Center in the area you must try to get along and make it work. *(SENIOR CITIZENS settle down and turn their backs to each other.)* Being an out of townner, I just can't get used to this petty bickering. Okay, now... let's get started with our bingo game.

MRS. LEWIS

Why? Every time we play, the Righties cheat!

MR. MARCONI

(Jumps up) It's about time! Did she just say it's time to eat?

ALYSSA

(Trying to be patient) No, no, Mr. Marconi. Never mind. Why don't we skip our bingo game for today? Let's begin with some relaxing yoga stretches before going into our morning exercise routine. Remember, it's important to keep active and keep our muscles moving. So...up, up, up everyone! Come and grab a spot for our opening chair yoga stretches.

Using canes and walkers, all of the SENIOR CITIZENS – except for MRS. MENDOCINO who fell back to sleep again – cross at a snail’s pace up to the front to grab a chair, facing the AUDIENCE. They grunt, groan and grimace as they do so.

MRS. JONES

Are you sure we can do this? I don’t want to throw my back out again.

MRS. GORDON

They say yoga is the number one exercise to keep the circulation moving.

ALYSSA

You’re right again, Mrs. Gordon.

MRS. LEWIS

Yes, but I don’t want to stretch out my brand new blouse. The people from the laundry service have already ruined half of my wardrobe.

ALYSSA

You’ll be fine, Mrs. Lewis. Remember, we listen to our bodies and take it at our own pace. Are you coming Mrs. Mendocino?

MRS. MENDOCINO is snoring away again. She wakes up to the sounds of everyone complaining about her.

MRS. MENDOCINO

Yes, yes...of course, dear. I almost dozed off. *(She slowly heads over to join them.)*

ALYSSA

(Chuckling) Yes, almost.

The SENIOR CITIZENS finally make it to their chairs and face the AUDIENCE.

ALYSSA, *Continued*

Okay, now. Let’s begin by bringing our hands to heart center, closing our eyes *(Closes eyes while SENIOR CITIZENS ignore her directions)* and setting an intention for today’s session. And, most importantly, remember that peace begins within ourselves and, then, that peace only becomes more meaningful when we share it with others.

Throughout the session, the SENIOR CITIZENS make faces and show their disregard for the other side except for MRS. GORDON. ALYSSA keeps her eyes closed, not seeing any of this.

ALYSSA, Continued

It makes no difference what color someone prefers (*SENIOR CITIZENS show off their clothes*) or what hand they use (*SENIOR CITIZENS raise their respective hands as if they are taking a pledge*), we accept others for who they are and, in that respect, we are all one.

The SENIOR CITIZENS stick their tongues out and make mean faces at each other. ALYSSA opens her eyes only to see the chaos that is going on. She tries to distract them.

ALYSSA, Continued

Okay now, extend your right hand in the air (*Only the RIGHTIES participate*) ...And now your left (*Only the LEFTIES participate*)...And now both.

SENIOR CITIZENS respond using their dominant hand except for MRS. GORDON who raises both hands. ALYSSA just shakes her head amused by their stubbornness.

ALYSSA, Continued

Okay, everyone. Now that we've loosened up, let's all stand and prepare to take it up a notch.

ALYSSA steps in front of the group as MUSIC PLAYS leading them in a brief, high energy dance routine. OFFICER HUCKLEBEE enters and joins them, trying to keep up. MUSIC OUT as the exercise concludes. The SENIOR CITIZENS return to their seats in the same extremely slow fashion in which they came up. OFFICER HUCKLEBEE assists them in doing so. As they are in motion, ALYSSA steps forward, smiles and speaks directly to the AUDIENCE.

ALLYSA, Continued

Just another routine day here at the Young at Heart Senior Center.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE FIVE

Stepping Up

AT RISE: *LEFTYLAND and RIGHTYVILE
CITIZENS enter and return to their
respective sides STAGE RIGHT and
STAGE LEFT. The LEFTYLAND
CITIZENS speak silently with each other
but clearly make their traits visible by
what they are wearing and what they are
holding in their hands. The
RIGHTYVILLE CITIZENS talk amongst
themselves putting down members from
the other side. RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN
#3, afraid to share her feelings aloud,
speaks strictly through a VOICEOVER.
Whenever she speaks, the OTHER
CITIZENS freeze symbolizing that they
are unable to hear her.*

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #4

Man, I don't know how those guys drink Pepsi. It must taste disgusting.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN # 1

Yeah... it probably tastes worse than medicine.

They ALL nod in agreement.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3 VOICEOVER

I guess it's hard to say since none of us have ever really tried it.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #4

And how do they not realize how ridiculous they look walking out of their houses wearing every color in the rainbow, but refusing to include the best color of all?

They ALL again agree.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3 VOICEOVER

I would never say it to those guys but... you know what... I'm kind of getting tired of not being able to walk out of my house without having to wear something red!

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2

Oh brother, just look at them holding onto those silly balls as if they were gold trophies! Why would you even bother wasting your time and energy running up and down a dumb soccer field when you could accomplish the same thing by just relaxing in your basement with a videogame controller in your hand?

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN # 1

I know, right? It just doesn't make any sense!

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3 *VOICEOVER*

I don't know... I'm actually thinking that it might feel pretty cool to hold a real ball in my hand for once.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3 crosses to the LEFTYLAND CITIZENS, who are also frozen, and takes the basketball out of one of their hands. She cautiously twirls it and bounces it, acting as if it is the first time she's ever touched one. She puts the basketball back and then returns to her group.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

(Looks at her watch; then aloud) I gotta go, guys! They're having a birthday party for my grandma over at the Young at Heart Senior Center. She's turning 85 today!

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #1

Wow! 85 years old?

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2

Wish her a happy birthday for us!

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3 Starts to exit slowly STAGE LEFT.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #4

(Calling after her) Hey! Where's your present?

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #1

If I were turning 85, I'd expect something pretty awesome!

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2

Yeah...what did you get her?

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

(Turning back briefly; answers in a mysterious tone) Let's just say it's a total surprise.

BLACKOUT.

SCENE SIX
Secrets Revealed

AT RISE: *The Young At Heart Senior Center: RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3 enters just SENIOR CITIZENS are finishing singing "Happy Birthday" to MRS. GORDON, her grandmother. The RIGHTIES are enthusiastically clapping while the LEFTIES are participating politely.*

ALYSSA
Happy birthday, Mrs. Gordon! Blow out the candles and make a wish. *(She does.)*
Wonderful!

MRS. WILLIAMS
What did you wish for?

MRS. GORDON
The same thing I do every year, dear.

MRS. JONES
Good health and a long life? *(Shakes head no)*

MRS. LEWIS
A more efficient laundry service? *(Laughs; shakes head no again)*

MR. MARCONI
Better food in the dining hall?

OTHERS laugh.

MRS. MENDOCINO
More opportunities for an afternoon nap?

They ALL roll their eyes.

MRS. GORDON
No, no... I'm afraid none of you are even close.

ALYSSA
Well, what then?

MRS. GORDON
(Secretively) I'm afraid if I tell you, it may never come true.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

Can you at least give us a hint, Grandma?

MRS. GORDON

Well, let's just say... I'm wishing for something special to happen.

Suddenly, ALL freeze as OFFICER HUCKLEBEE enters from STAGE LEFT. She slowly crosses to CENTERSTAGE with a look of relief and contentment.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE

(Looking directly at AUDIENCE) And that was the day that something hopeful happened.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE peacefully strolls off STAGE LEFT with the same smile plastered on her face. Once she is off, the scene resumes.

ALYSSA

Oh my goodness, this evening is flying by. It's almost time for the feature film of the week.

MRS. WILLIAMS

What are they showing, dear?

ALYSSA

I believe tonight's movie is the Hollywood classic 'Gone with the Wind'.

MRS. JONES

Isn't that the famous one with that handsome Clark Gable?

ALYSSA

Yes, I believe that's the one.

MRS. MENDOCINO

Oh, that's a beautiful movie. I hope I don't fall asleep.

MRS. LEWIS

Yeah, right. Good luck with that.

The SENIOR CITIZENS exit heading into the next room anxious to see the film except for MR. MARCONI who stops and MRS. GORDON and HER GRANDDAUGHTER.

MR. MARCONI

Wait, aren't we going to have some birthday cake?

ALYSSA

(Laughing) Yes, Mr. Marconi. Let's get settled first and then we'll all enjoy a piece while we watch the movie.

*As everyone heads out of the room,
RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3 addresses
her grandmother.*

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

Don't you want to go in and watch the movie, Grandma?

MRS. GORDON

Oh, who wants to watch some silly old movie when you can spend some time with your beautiful granddaughter?

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

Sounds good to me. So, Grandma, that wish that you made...is it something that I can help with?

MRS. GORDON

(Sighs.) Oh... I wish it was, my dear. I'm not really sure if there's anyone who could help at this point.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

Now you've really got me curious, Grandma. What was your wish??

MRS. GORDON

I make the same wish every year – that Leftyland and Rightyville would put their differences aside and just get along. Been making that wish since I was your age. I wished it again today. Not so much for me, anymore, but *(Pinches her cheek)* for you... and all of the children in both towns.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

(Sits up with obvious interest) Really? That would be amazing, wouldn't it...but highly unlikely. Can I share something with you, Grandma?

MRS. GORDON

Sure.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

I've been hoping for the same thing myself. I've actually been dreaming about that very thing happening. In fact, *(Looks around cautiously)* I sometimes experiment a little myself. You know... when no one is around. Want to see my handkerchief?

MRS. GORDON

(Confused) Your handkerchief?

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3 slowly pulls out a multi-colored hanky. Her Grandma smiles.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

Want to hear something else? *(Moves closer)* I tried a hot dog the other day. *(Laughing)* I smothered it in ketchup and onions, too! I kind of liked it. *(GRANDMA hugs her.)* You're not upset with me?

MRS. GORDON

Me? No! I'm proud that you're brave enough to take a chance. Be yourself. Try new things. See what the world has to offer! *(Her GRANDDAUGHTER seems relieved.)* Well... *(Looks around cautiously)*

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

(Looking confused) Is everything okay, Grandma?

MRS. GORDON

Oh, I just want to make sure that nosy Mrs. Lewis isn't listening. She makes a career out of listening to other people's business.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

It's okay. We're alone. What did you want to say? Don't tell me you've experimented, too?

MRS. GORDON

(Motions) Come closer. I've done more than experiment. I've kept a secret forever. You remember seeing pictures of my parents – your great-grandparents – Phil and Louise? *(She nods.)* Well, Grandpa Phil was a Lefty and Grandma Louise was a Righty.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

(Shocked) And, as a family, how did you make that work?

MRS. GORDON

We didn't. The only thing we worked at was keeping it a secret from our neighbors. Of course, as a young child, I was too embarrassed to let anyone know.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

So, what did you do?

MRS. GORDON

What did we do? The only thing we could do. We just kept moving. We had no choice. As soon as our neighbors found out, they did everything they could to make our lives miserable. And here I am seventy years later and nothing has changed. Years come and go, new mayors

MRS. GORDON, *Continued*

are elected and everything remains status quo. The two sides stay apart for reasons that they don't even understand. How foolish!

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

Wow! I'm totally shocked, Grandma, but I guess you're right. It is what it is. There's nothing that the two of us can do to change it. (*Her face slowly begins to light up as a thought comes to her.*) Or is there?

MRS. GORDON

I'm not sure what you're thinking dear, but at this point, I'm open to trying anything. Let's hear what you've got.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

What if, this year, a brand new candidate ran for mayor?

MRS. GORDON

(*Doubtful of her plan*) I'm afraid that's not going to happen. The same two clowns run every year on the same exact platforms. We're different, we like it that way, and there's no room for compromise. Amen.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

But, Grandma, what if there are other people in both communities that are thinking just like us but are afraid to say anything?

MRS. GORDON

Oh, I'm sure there are, but I'm also certain that we'll never know about it.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

Unless...

MRS. GORDON

(*Intrigued*) Unless what?

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

(*Beaming from ear to ear*) Unless a bright, enthusiastic candidate with fresh ideas and a vision for the future is willing to step forward and embrace change.

She stands up fueled by her own newly formed positive energy.

MRS. GORDON

(*Laughing*) I love your energy, my dear, but I'm afraid you're just not old enough to run for mayor. Maybe someday, though.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

Oh, I wasn't talking about me, Grandma. I was talking about you!

MRS. GORDON

(Astonished) Me? Who's going to listen to some old lady living at the Young at Heart Senior Home?

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

(Obviously energized by her own plan) Think about it, Grandma. The people at the Young at Heart Senior Center have more experience and knowledge about what has gone on in our past than anyone. You told me yourself that Mr. Marconi spent his entire career working as a judge in the courthouse. Mrs. Williams was a school Principal for over 20 years. And you wrote for the local newspaper for the longest time. Let's face it, who is better qualified to straighten things out then someone with your life experiences?

The expression on GRANDMA's face begins to change. The AUDIENCE can see she is pondering the possibility of running for mayor.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

C'mon, Grandma. Please! I'll be your campaign manager. What do you think? Will you do it?

Just then, MR. MARCONI reappears behind them staring at the cake. They do not acknowledge him in anyway.

MR. MARCONI

(Pleading with MRS. GORDON) Well, birthday girl, I'm going to ask you for the last time. Won't you please share some of your cake with us?

GRANDMA and GRANDDAUGHTER stare deep into each other's eyes; so deep in thought that they don't even hear him.

MRS. GORDON

(Suddenly jumps up with enthusiasm) Yes, I'll do it!

Her GRANDDAUGHTER jumps up to hug her.

MR. MARCONI

Thank goodness! We're all starving back there!

MR. MARCONI picks up the cake and walks away with it as LIGHTS FADE OUT.

SCENE SEVEN

Grandma Gordon for Mayor

AT RISE: *A political rally for Mayor in progress; MAYORAL candidates address a SEGREGATED CROWD. All of the LEFTYLAND and RIGHTYVILLE TOWNSFOLK, CITIZENS and SENIOR CITIZENS are present carrying political signs to support their candidate. The CROWDS cheer after their respective candidates take turns speaking.*

LEFTY LARRY

Good evening, fellow Lefties! It's once again time for us to lift our voices so that it comes out loud and clear that we want to keep Leftyland separate!

RIGHTY RICK

Thanks for coming out on this beautiful day, everyone! I am Righty Rick once again running unopposed for your Mayor of Rightyville!

LEFTY LARRY

It's important that we have a separate place where we can shop for left-handed scissors and left-handed coffee mugs. We are the ones known for our common sense and a rich history of staying to ourselves. Not to mention being a kind and generous bunch... as long as you agree with us, of course.

RIGHTY RICK

You all know as well as I do that in order to keep our community proud, peaceful and prejudice, we must remain separate in all that we do.

LEFTY LARRY

So, this Election Day, vote for me as Mayor to keep Leftyland independent!

RIGHTY RICK

Yes, ladies and gentlemen, I am asking that on Election Day you all do the right thing – get it, the right thing? – (*The RIGHTYVILLE CROWD responds positively to his pun.*) – and vote for me, Righty Rick. Remember, a vote for me is a vote for our sanity. Our two sides have remained separate for over 75 years and well... if it ain't broke, don't fix it!

Both sides of the CROWD go wild as 'HAIL TO THE CHIEF' MUSIC PLAYS in the background. While each side of the CROWD celebrates separately, GRANDMA GORDON slowly makes her way up to the podium with her GRANDDAUGHTER by her side. GRANDMA GORDON bangs her cane on the podium to get their attention. Little by little, the CROWD begins to notice her.

GRANDMA GORDON

But... it is broken. Very broken. Look at you all cheering. What exactly are you celebrating? Segregation? Prejudice? Disrespect? The animosity that you show towards each other day after day?

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #2

So what's wrong with liking rock music instead of jazz?

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #1

Or wearing your hat forward instead of backward?

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #2

Or liking dogs better than cats?

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #3

Or being a Mets fan instead of a Yankees fan?

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #4

Wait, you may not want to use that one to demonstrate your point.

The CROWD reacts in agreement.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #4

Anyway, what's so bad about having strong opinions about things?

GRANDMA GORDON

Nothing. Except that you miss out on all that the world has to offer. (*The CROWD reacts in confusion and then gathers around slowly to hear more.*) Imagine a town that is not limited to one kind of music, but one in which you are able to sample songs to match your own mood of the day. Imagine a downtown featuring restaurants with an endless variety of foods to choose from and – yes – one that serves both Coke and Pepsi. Imagine a place where, after waking up and realizing that you have no red socks or underwear left, your day is not ruined. (*Pauses; giving them time to process her comments*) There's absolutely no reason why Righties and Lefties can't live side-by-side in peace and harmony.

The CROWD reacts with disbelief.

LEFTY LARRY

(Interjects) But Miss, with all due respect...you're living in a fantasyland if you think that two towns so far apart can actually come together.

GRANDMA GORDON

Am I?

RIGHTY RICK

Please, ma'am, listen to reason. History has shown that it just can't work.

GRANDMA GORDON

Well, I disagree. And I have proof to back it up. My father was a Lefty and my mother was a Righty.

The CROWD gasps.

LEFTYLAND CITIZEN #1

(Beginning to show interest) And it worked?

GRANDMA GORDON

(Confidently) I'd say so. They were married for 52 years.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #1

But, if you don't mind me asking, ma'am, how did they shake hands?

GRANDMA GORDON

Oh, what a foolish question! They cooperated, respected each other and took turns with their dominant hand. And they loved each other, not despite their differences, but because of their differences.

A deadly silence comes over the CROWD as GRANDMA GORDON pauses and looks over the two sides.

GRANDMA GORDON, *Continued*

So, I guess that tomorrow you all have a decision to make as you enter that voting booth.

OFFICER HUCKLEBEE and ALYSSA, interested in this new possibility, quietly enter and join the CROWD.

GRANDMA GORDON, *Continued*

If you are tired of living in a close minded – my way or the highway – town...If you are ready to accept the ideas of others and have your own ideas accepted, vote for me for Mayor.

The CROWD continues to buzz.

RIGHTY RICK

(Interrupting) Pardon me, Mrs. Gordon, but I'm a bit confused. Which town are you running for?

LEFTY LARRY

Yes, are you running for Mayor of Leftyland or Rightyville?

GRANDMA GORDON

(Staring down the CROWD) I am Annabelle Gordon and I am running for Mayor of... Togethertown!!

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

And I am her granddaughter and I approve this message!

The CROWD cheers.

RIGHTY RICK

But what about the rights of our people? Get it...our rights??

This time, the CROWD moans in reaction to his joke.

LEFTY LARRY

Don't be brainwashed by her senseless blathering. Besides, I'm giving out left-handed catchers mitts to everyone who votes for me.

The CROWD totally ignores LEFTY LARRY.

RIGHTYVILLE CITIZEN #3

Vote for my grandma! She'll turn things around, restore peace to our community and put Togethertown back on the map!

GRANDMA GORDON

(To HER GRANDDAUGHTER) Hopefully.

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes