

SYNOPSIS

In a small Tennessee town, the student body of America High assembles. They lament the punishing nature of school and pray for relief (“To War”). The students mingle, teasing and insulting one another (“Concrete Jungle”). Ian reassures his boyfriend, Javier, that everything will be a-okay, because one day his music will change the world. In choir class, Ian leads his fellow students (“Drummer Boy”). A gunshot rings. He dies. Students scatter (“Thoughts and Prayers”). The shooters celebrate their carnage (“Comic Book Heroes”). Parents learn about the tragedy and pray their children make it out alive (“Pray They’re Hurt”). A group of students including Vincent and Marla, Janelle’s girlfriend, hide in a locker room. They take shrooms and blissfully hallucinate until gunshots bring them back to reality (“The Trip”). They call their loved ones and beg forgiveness for all the mistakes they’ve made in their lives (“Last Call”). Janelle interviews a student during the shooting. She heads out to further document the event.

One week later, the school reopens with increased security. The students, plagued by survivors' guilt and PTSD, pray once more for God to save them (“To War (Reprise)”). During the shooting, a teacher kills one of the shooters (“Ave Maria”). A month after the shooting, at a family dinner, Javier renounces the Catholic Church since, without them, he would have kissed Ian when he was alive. In the ensuing argument, a loud noise triggers Javier. In the parking lot during the shooting, Javier can’t find Ian. He and Vincent head back inside to search for him. Marla becomes an alcoholic after the event and sees a therapist. During the shooting, Marla considers letting the shooters have her as a way of committing suicide without anyone knowing (“Requiem for the Clown”). A right-wing podcast host claims the shooting was a false flag operation designed by the global elite to destroy the Second Amendment. Ian’s ghost sarcastically agrees with growing anger and hatred (“False Flag - Part 1”). Janelle and Javier lambast do-nothing politicians, saying that as long as these shootings continue, the promises of the American flag mean nothing (False Flag - Part 2”). On the day of the tragedy, Janelle interviews an injured student who gets killed by the remaining shooter. The monster attempts to seduce Janelle. Javier and Vincent arrive. In a struggle over the gun, Vincent dies. Javier beats the shooter unconscious.

Javier gives a eulogy during Ian’s funeral. He’s lost, unsure of his faith, lonely, and tired of people asking for respectful silence (“Moment of Silence”). He urges people to march to Ian’s beat. To be loud. The cast comes together to demand that the audience do something... That we finally, finally do something (“Origami”).

CAST OF CHARACTERS

IAN (M, teens, vocal range: D3-B4), a young, bullied high school teenager with a passion for music

JAVIER IBARRA (M, teens, Hispanic, vocal range: C3-B4), his boy friend, a stuttering Catholic who plays soccer

JANELLE (F, teens, BIPOC, vocal range: C4-E5), a brilliant student on the yearbook committee who longs to leave her small town

MARLA (F, teens, vocal range: Bb3-F#5), her drug addicted girlfriend

VINCENT (M, teens, vocal range: C3-C#4), a teenage bully

THE MONSTER (M, teens, caucasian, vocal range: E3-G4), a student and monster

FRANKENSTEIN (M, teens, caucasian, vocal range: Eb3-D4), his "creator," another student

MRS. PERKINS (F, 30s or older, vocal range: Bb4-Eb5), a teacher

MRS. TISDALE (F, 30s or older, vocal range: Eb4-D4), a teacher

PRINCIPAL STONEMAN (30s or older, non-singing), the principal

REPORTER (F, adult, non-singing), a prime-time opinion show host on a news network

CAMERON WHITEHOUSE (Adult, non-singing), a "left-leaning" political commentator

V.L. BRZEZINSKI (Adult, non-singing), a right-wing political commentator

DAMIAN JONES (M, adult, non-singing), a therapist and drug dealer

JACE WITHERS (M, adult, non-singing), a far-right podcast host

POLICE OFFICER (Adult, non-singing), an officer who reports to the school

MR. IBARRA (M, adult, non-singing), Javier's father

MRS. IBARRA (F, adult, non-singing), Javier's mother

AMAYA (F, child, non-singing), Javier's younger sister

ISIDORA (F, 50s or older, non-singing), Javier's grandmother

PARENT 1 (Adult, vocal range: D#4-D5), a parent

CAST OF CHARACTERS (CONT'D)

PARENT 2 (Adult, vocal range: Bb3-A4), a parent

PARENT 3 (Adult, vocal range: C#4-Eb5), a parent

PREACHER (Adult, non-singing), a preacher

PREGNANT GIRL (F, teens, vocal range: C#4-A4), a student

GROSS KID (M, teens, vocal range: F#3-C#4), a student

DIVA (F, teens, vocal range: D4-D5), a student

CHEERLEADER (F, teens, vocal range: E4-E5), a student

HIGH KID (Teens, vocal range: B4-G#5), a student high on mushrooms

EXCLAMATION POINT (Teens, vocal range: E3-A3), a student, jock

DERIVATIVE (Teens, vocal range: C#4-A4), a student, nerd

QUESTION MARK (Teens, vocal range: C#4-C#5) a student, jock

SQUARE ROOT (Teens, vocal range: C#3-B3), a student, nerd

GUY (M, teens, vocal range: Ab3-C4), a student

GIRL (F, teens, vocal range: D4-Ab4), a student

MOMMA'S BOY (M, teens, vocal range: G3-C4), a student

SAD GIRL (F, teens, vocal range: C5-Db5), a student

POOR STUDENT (Teens, Bb3-C4), a student

VIOLINIST (Teens, Eb4-G4), a student

SHORT SKIRT WEARER (Teens, Eb4-G4), a student

ENSEMBLE (Teens), a collection of students and whatever else is called for.

SUGGESTED DOUBLING

IAN/PREACHER

JAVIER

JANELLE

MARLA

VINCENT

THE MONSTER/POLICE OFFICER

FRANKENSTEIN/JACE WITHERS

MRS. PERKINS/CAMERON WHITEHOUSE/ISIDORA/PARENT 1

MRS. TISDALE/V.L. BRZEZINSKI/MR. IBARRA/DAMIAN JONES/PARENT 3

PRINCIPAL STONEMAN/REPORTER/MRS. IBARRA/PARENT 2

ENSEMBLE, all other named roles

PRODUCTION NOTES

Scenes typically switch between the day of the shooting at America High and various locations and times in the aftermath, showing the repercussions of the events that unfold

Neither The Monster nor Frankenstein are named in the show. They are referred to by their name a handful of times, but these names are not legible. Tackle this how you will, but do not give them names. On a related note, their duet, "Comic Book Heroes," is meant to be performed in sincerity. Our horror comes from their surety of their righteousness.

If there are any physical descriptions in the show, change them to fit your casting, not the other way around.

SCENE 1

A bugle sounds, bright and annoying. Two military leaders enter, MRS. PERKINS & MRS. TISDALE, teachers at America High, a public high school in a small town in Tennessee.

PERKINS & TISDALE

(Lines split at own discretion)

Up and at 'em, maggots! It's zero-seven-thirty, you've slept through your first alarm, and everyone in the house is pissed the fuck off at you.

Beep. Beep Beep.

Shut it up! Your mother's about to scream. Out of bed, clothes on.

We expect to see you in the courtyard with smiles--Young lady! Those shoulders will cause male soldier to spoil their pants. Are you a fucking animal? Are you?

(They bark like dogs. Then:)

Cover yourself, slut.

Faster, faster, faster!

Finish your homework. Study on the way. Classes start in 25.

Hustle, hustle, hustle!

1. TO WAR

IAN

LAST WEEK, MY BRAKES FELL OUT MY CAR
IN THE HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT, OH, GOD.
MOMMA SAID NO ONE WOULD DO THAT;
I'M SAFE AND THAT'S A FACT.

MARLA

EVERYDAY I SLEEP IN HOMEROOM.
THEN DETENTION THREE TO FOUR AND
I CANNOT FOCUS.
PLUCK THE LASHES OUT MY EYES;
DAD JUST GIVES ME MELATONIN
AND IN THE MORNING SHIPS ME OFF.

STUDENTS

THEY'RE SENDING US TO WAR
 TO FIGHT ANOTHER FUCKED UP BATTLE.
 MARCH US OFF TO FACE DOWN
 SNOT-NOSED TEACHERS
 ARMED TOOTH AND NAIL WITH STATE-BASED
 TESTING
 SHOOT US DOWN WITH BACK-HAND COMPLIMENTS

JANELLE

"You're like a tour guide Barbie doll."

PERKINS

PRETTY, PREPPY, BUT NOT MUCH UP THERE.

JAVIER

"You exceeded my expectations."

TISDALE

I THOUGHT YOU COULD ONLY MAKE DOG SHIT.

THE MONSTER

"It's so nice that someone doesn't care about rumors."

PERKINS & TISDALE

FUCK A BITCH,
 HAVE YOU HEARD THE RUMORS YET?

JAVIER

MY GRANDMA CALLS ME EVERY NIGHT
 JUST TO SAY SHE PRAYED FOR ME AGAIN
 AND EVERYTHING WILL BE A-OKAY.
 WELL, MY STUTTER'S ACTING UP AGAIN,
 BUT I LACE MY BOOTS AND I'M ON MY WAY.

STUDENTS

THE GOVERNMENT WANTS US IN FACTORIES
AS PRISONERS OF WAR,
WORKED TO DEATH IN SMALL TOWN TENNESSEE.

FRANKENSTEIN

Yeehaw!

ALL

HERE COMES THE PLATOON!

THE MONSTER, JANELLE

BOOM, BOOM, BOOM!

ALL

FOLLOW UP, THE NAVY!

JAVIER, VINCENT

SPLISH, SPLASH!

ALL

AIR FORCE!

FRANKENSTEIN, MARLA

IN THE AIR! ZOOM ZOOM!

IAN

AND IN SELF-IMPOSED EXILE,
MARCHING IN THE BACK,
TO THE TIMID BEATS OF MY DRUMS...

ALL
(Minus Ian)

RAT-A-TAT!
RAT-A-TAT!

IAN

BOOM, BAM, SNARE, MARCH:
LEFT, RIGHT, FOOTSTEP!
IN TIME MOVING TOWARDS THE GRAVEYARD.
RAT-TAT-RAT-TAT!
LITTLE DRUMMER BOY.

ALL

BOY, BOY, BOY, BOY!

WE'RE MARCHING OFF TO THE WAR
TO FIGHT ANOTHER UPHILL BATTLE.
FUCKING CLIQUES AND HORMONAL ISSUES,
CARDBOARD CUTOUT FOOD AND PEOPLE,
HOLLERS, HICKS, AND GREEN COATED TOILERS.
BROKE-DOWN BUSES, BUSTED DRESS CODES,
AND PURPLE MALICE IN THE AIR.
TO WAR.
TO WAR.
TO WAR!

DEAR GOD IN HEAVEN,
WON'T YOU PUT YOUR HAND IN MINE?
I NEED SOMEONE TO HOLD ME CLOSE AND EASE MY
MIND,
AND IN YOUR GLORY WE ARE MARCHING OFF TO
FIGHT.
PLEASE LET THIS PATH WE'RE ON BE ONE THAT IS
DIVINE.
I'LL HOLD MY HEAD UP
AND I'LL SHOUT IN SCREAMS OF LOVE.

PERKINS

At ease, soldiers.
Mr. M!

THE MONSTER

Yes, sir?

PERKINS

You have ketchup on your lips. Clean it up.
Dismissed!

STUDENTS

Aye, aye, Cap'n, my cap'n.

JANELLE

Capitan.

FRANKENSTEIN

Calzone.

MARLA

Calimari.

VINCENT

Yes, sir, Secretary Caldera, sir.

The students break off to socialize.

JAVIER

Morning, stud muffing. What's wrong?

IAN

I think something took a dump in my parking spot. I can still smell it and I can't tell if it's actually on me or I'm just remembering it.

JAVIER

Let me smell. It's you.
I'm kidding. You smell like you.

IAN

And that's not the smell of shit, right?

MARLA

...and I didn't finish my chemistry homework.

JANELLE

Just copy it off M before class. Tell him I asked.

Oh, hey, gotta go. Yearbook stuff.

I'll pick you up when you're done with practice, yeah?

MARLA

Love you.

JANELLE

You better.

DUMBASS

Right, a whole army of illegals marching to the border.

CARD DORK

I summon Darthuk, the water lycan, and attack your ground otter. Take that, bitch.

BAND KID

I miss marching band.

JAVIER

Almost forgot. Amaya said she misses you, so we need to schedule a play date.

IAN

What, she's no longer afraid my loser aura will rub off on her?

JAVIER

Excuse you, mister. She's nine-and-a-quarter now, far too old to believe in auras.

But you're a Leo and apparently more compatible with her than this stupid Sagittarius.

GROSS KID

Look, it's the pregnant slut!

2. CONCRETE JUNGLE

PREGNANT GIRL

WELCOME TO THE CONCRETE JUNGLE.
WOULD YOU LIKE A FAKE TAROT CARD?
OOPS, YOU DREW THE ACE OF SPADES.
WELCOME TO THE END OF DAYS!

GROSS KID

IT'S SO NICE YOU COULD JOIN US
TO DANCE IN THIS CHARADE.
A MINUTE AGO IN THAT BATHROOM,
I SHOVED A TWIZZLER UP MY ASS!

PREGNANT GIRL

Ew, Johnny.

GROSS KID

It was for money.

STUDENTS

IT'S STILL PRETTY FUCKING GROSS!
BUT AT LEAST YOU MADE SOME DOUGH.

DIVA

I WORK ABOUT FORTY-FIVE, FIFTY MINUTES AWAY.
I MEAN, I'M NOT GETTING PAID.
BUT STILL.
COMMUNITY THEATRE BEATS
DRAMA CLUB ANY DAY.
I'M A GEM ON-STAGE.
MR. FINCH CAN LICK MY CLI...!

STUDENTS

TALL ORDERS FROM THE GOVERNOR.
HE SAID TO STRANGLE EACH OTHER WITH VINES.

IN A CONCRETE JUNGLE, I GUESS THAT MEANS
MOLD.

IAN

I'M ARMED WITH A FIG LEAF
RIGHT HERE IN FRONT OF MY APPLES,
BUT IT'S NO GOOD FOR FIGHTING WARS.

JANELLE

HELLO, LUCIFER, LET ME TAKE A BIT.

STUDENTS

WELCOME TO THE CONCRETE JUNGLE!
WATCH US BURN THE FORESTS DOWN.
THEY'RE TEACHING US TO FUCK THE TREES
AND HUG IT OUT
OR PUNCH IT DOWN ON VIDEO.

MARLA

PUBLICITY FOR FREE!

CHEERLEADER

I WAS VOTED MOST SCHOOL SPIRIT.
I FANTASIZE ABOUT BLOWING UP THE GYM,
BUT THAT IS FROWNED UPON
SO INSTEAD, BEHIND THE BLEACHERS,
I'LL BLOW MY BOYFRIEND JIM...OTHY

STUDENTS

THAT'S THE DUMBEST WHITE BOY NAME!
HOORAY!

VINCENT

Yo, mornin' Ian.

What's that smell? Piss yourself again?

JAVIER

Back off.

VINCENT

Seriously, Jav, there are better fags you could be wetting your spicy dragon in, eh? I believe in you.

JAVIER

(Stuttering)

I'll kick your ass.

IAN

Hey, it's fine. I'm used to it.

Breathe. Do the tongue click.

I'm okay.

3. DRUMMER BOY

IAN

DON'T LET THE MADMEN DRAG YOU DOWN.
 WE'RE IN A HIGH SCHOOL BATTLE GROUND
 IN THE WINTER GOING SNOW-BLIND,
 AND I THINK THAT YOU'LL FIND
 IN STALINGRAD THE WINNERS ARE
 THE ONES WHO LAST THE LONGEST.
 WE'LL GET FAR WITH NO MORE CZARS.
 KEEP SMILING, THAT'S STRONGEST.
 SO LET'S LAUGH AND BLAME THE WEATHER ON
 BAD COFFEE
 SNOW IS SNOW; LET'S SNORT AND GO.
 SUMMER SUN IS WAITING.

WE CAN PULL OUT FANGS AND CLAWS
 OR SUFFER THROUGH IT ALL.
 TRY TO SEE PAST THIS ARMY CRAWL.
 ONE DAY EVERY FASCIST FALLS.

JAVIER

You're such a dork.

IAN

IT MIGHT BE, IT MIGHT BE, IT MIGHT BE
 A LONG SHOT DREAM
 IT WILL COME, IT WILL COME, IT MAY NEVER BE
 BUT ONE DAY I WILL FACE THE SUN,
 AND THE THE WORLD WILL MARCH TO THE BEAT,
 BEAT, BEAT, BEAT OF MY DRUM.

STUDENTS

RAT-A-TAT, RAT-TAT
 RAT-A-TAT-TAT

IAN

RIGHT NOW IT'S HARD TO BREATHE.
 SORRY I'M NOT WHO YOU NEED.

JAVIER

Don't start that.

IAN

YOU'RE MAGENTA SKATING ON THE SKYLINE.
 SETTING SUN, COMING NEARER, YOU'RE SO FINE.
 RIGHT NOW, I'M A LOSER, FUTURE BOOZER,
 CRY IN BED EVERY DAMN NIGHT.

JAVIER

Ian.

IAN

I'M NO HIGH FLIER,
 NOT GOOD AT TRACK AND FIELD.
 BUT IN THE SCHOOL CHOIR,
 MY DOMINANCE WON'T YIELD!
 I AM THE DRUMMER BOY
 WHOSE MARCHING BEAT IS LAW!

STUDENTS

RAT-A-TAT, RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT!
 RAT-A-TAT, RAT-A-TAT-A-TAT-TAT!

A bell rings.

JAVIER

Have fun in choir, Drummer Boy. Love you.

IAN

Love you.

We enter the choir room...

IAN

RAT-A-TAT, RAT-TAT-TAT-TAT!

IAN, CHOIR

RAT-RAT, RAT-A-TAT-A-TAT-TAT!
 RAT-A-TAT, RAT-TAT!
 RAT-A-TAT-A-TAT!

CRASH, BA-ZOOM, HIGH HAT, LOW RIM!
 BANG-A-TANG, ZING, CLING, BLISH, ZIM!
 BOOM, HISS, WISH, SHOOT A STAR!
 WATCH THE WORLD
 AND CHANGE IT ALL FOR YOU (ME)!

IAN

IT MIGHT BE A LONG SHOT DREAM.
 IT MAY NEVER BE.
 BUT ONE DAY I WILL FACE THE SUN.
 AND THE WORLD WILL MARCH
 TO THE BEAT OF MY DRUM!