

Human Vidiots

By Jack Hall

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CHARACTERS

Connie- A real actress

Angela- Connie's new church friend

Beth- Church drama director

Joey- A boy on the drama team

The setting is an empty church classroom. Angela and Beth are stage right, talking. Joey, Christine, and Dana are stage left. Connie enters, stage left, and talks to Joey. Angela looks up and sees her.

CONNIE- Excuse me, is this the drama team meeting?

ANGELA- Connie!

CONNIE- Hey, Angela.

ANGELA- *(runs over to hug Connie)* Oh, I am so excited you came.

CONNIE- Are you kidding? I wouldn't miss it.

ANGELA- Well, church acting isn't for everyone.

CONNIE- Acting is acting, and I've been an actress since I was three. Using that gift for God... how cool is that?

ANGELA- You guys, I'd like you all to meet my friend Connie. This is Joey.

JOEY- Hey there.

ANGELA- Dana, Christine, and over there is our director, Beth.

CONNIE- Hello.

BETH- Welcome, young actress. We're so glad you've joined our theatrical flock.

CONNIE- I'm so excited you all have a drama team. I can't wait to get started.

BETH- Good. Let's jump right in then. Places, my actors, we're doing Turnaround.

Connie, you stand at the end of the line with Angela.

CONNIE- Okay.

Dana, Beth, Angela, and Connie line up across the stage.

BETH- Christine, your mark?

Christine waits off to the side on Beth's end of the line. Joey is opposite Christine by the CD player.

CONNIE- *(aside to Angela)* Hey. Don't I even need a script?

ANGELA- Script? Why would you need one of those?

CONNIE- We are going to be acting, right?

ANGELA- Of course. Why would you need a script?

BETH- Okay, my actors! And... action!

Music starts, "Total Eclipse of the Heart". Over the piano, Christine dramatically walks to Beth. The action corresponds to the lyrics as written:

Turn around, Every now and then I get a little bit lonely and you're never coming round.
(Christine walks to Beth.)

Turn around *(Dana spins.)*

Every now and then I get a little bit tired of listening to the sound of my tears. *(Dana and Christine embrace, then Christine moves on.)*

Turn around *(Beth spins to face Christine.)*

Every now and then I get a little bit nervous that the best of all the years have gone by.
(Beth and Christine embrace.)

Turn around *(Angela spins)*

Every now and then I get a little bit terrified and then I see the look in your eyes. *(Angela and Christine embrace)*

Turn around, bright eyes *(Christine taps on Connie's shoulder. Connie looks back)*

CONNIE- I'm sorry, what's going on here?

BETH- Stop the music, Joey.

Joey stops the music.

BETH- Something wrong.

CONNIE- Something? Yeah, uh, Beth, right?

BETH- That's me.

CONNIE- I, uh, I don't quite get this. What's going on here?

BETH- Isn't it obvious? Christine here is a lost girl, seeking acceptance. So she embraces lust, and addiction, and fear, and ultimately you.

CONNIE- Lost girl embraces me, why?

BETH- Because you're death.

CONNIE- Uh huh.

BETH- But then she becomes fearful, and tries to escape, only to find she is surrounded by vice, and can only be saved by Jesus.

CONNIE- You have this written down any place?

BETH- Of course not.

CONNIE- Right, well, not to tell you how to do your job or anything, but scripts?

Sometimes they do come in handy.

JOEY- Scripts? There's a script for this?

BETH- Relax, Joey, just relax. We've obviously jumped in too far ahead for Connie, so why don't we back it up a pace? Joey? "I Can Only Imagine."

The girls ahhh excitedly as Joey changes CD. Music begins playing. Joey, Dana, Christine, and Angela line up to do the “drama” while Beth motions along from the side.

I can only imagine (*touch forefingers to head*)

what it will be like, (*hold hands out, mouths open in surprise*)

when I walk (*mime a cool walk*)

by Your side... (*turn to partner, holding hands and skipping in place*)

I can only imagine, (*forefingers to head*)

what my eyes will see, (*put hands in front of eyes closed in a fist, then hands open to mimic eyes opening*)

when Your Face (*wave hand over face*)

is before me! (*gesture with both hands from face out*)

I can only imagine. (*clutch hands to heart, then fling them out to heaven*)

I can only imagine. (*same as above*)

CONNIE- Whoa, whoa, stop this! Stop just a second!

BETH- What is it now?

JOEY- Yeah, we’re trying to do a little acting here!

CONNIE- You call that acting?

Everyone nods.

BETH- Yeah. What would you call it?

CONNIE- How about a bunch of bad pantomimes doing the “Stop the car, I need to go to the bathroom, Daddy,” dance!

JOEY- Hey, you can’t talk to Beth like that! She’s a theatrical genius!

ANGELA- Yeah, she’s the one who first thought of doing “The Champion” to the tune of “Stairway to Heaven”!

JOEY- And if you’re gonna stand here and talk bad about her, you can just go--

BETH- Joey, that’s enough.

JOEY- But she can’t talk to you like--

BETH- Joey, what would Carman do?

JOEY- (*repentant sigh*) Sorry.

BETH- Connie, this is not pantomime. It’s called a human video.

CONNIE- A human what?

BETH- Human video.

CONNIE- Now what in the world is a human video?

BETH- Someone care to answer that? Joey?

JOEY- Human video is acting out a song on stage. It's like a music video, only live.

CONNIE- And that's what you people call drama?

ANGELA- It's only the most powerful form of drama in the world today.

CONNIE- It's not drama at all! It's not even acting!

BETH- Sure it is!

CONNIE- Acting is playing a character, learning lines and subtext, dramatizing situations through words and actions.

ANGELA- We are playing characters!

CONNIE- You're waving your arms around like a bunch of monkeys. What with your little eyes, and this arms to chest, flinging out to heaven? What's that all about?

ANGELA- I can't believe I'm hearing this. I thought you were a theater lover.

CONNIE- I am! But you all look ridiculous. Why stop at hand gestures? Get some sticks, wave those around to the music.

JOEY- We did that last week!

BETH- Connie, I'm sorry you can't appreciate the vision for our ministry.

CONNIE- Oh spare me your vision. Drama isn't pseudo-sign language to music. It's real life, and no one in real life goes around flinging their arms about miming like a stupid circus chimp!

Ted enters dramatically, out of breath.

TED- Connie!

Connie spins, mimicking the first "Total Eclipse of the Heart" move.

CONNIE- Ted? It's you!

They embrace, like in the human video.

TED- I'm so sorry I *(does the forefinger to head move)* lost my temper at you.

CONNIE- *(does the mouth open, hands out move)* What were you thinking?

TED- I don't know. I guess I thought I could *(does the cool walk)* walk this hard road alone.

CONNIE- Why walk alone *(takes his hand, skips in place)* when we can walk side by side?

TED- *(forefinger to head)* Do you think we'll make it?

CONNIE- Ted, *(does the hands as eyes opening move)* no one can see the future but God.

TED- Can we *(hand waves before face)* wipe the slate clean?

CONNIE- *(moves hands from her face to his)* I forgive you.

TED- *(hands to chest, then out)* I love you, Connie!

CONNIE- *(copies his move)* I love you!

They embrace. Fade up music, the chorus of "Friends", as the rest of the cast lines up to do one last "drama" for Ted and Connie, who watch.

And friends are friends forever *(all hold hands and lift them high)*

If the Lord's the Lord of them *(hands up to God, then down and out to the ground)*

And a friend will not say never *(turn to a partner and shake finger and head in a "no" sign)*

'Cause the welcome will not end *(hands out, palms up)*

Though it's hard to let you go *(join hands with partner, then dramatically pull hands away)*

In the Father's hands we know *(both hands go out in front, cupped together)*

That a lifetime's not too long *(hands fan out)*

To live as friends *(join hands and lift them in the air)*

CONNIE- I don't care what you idiots call it, that's still NOT drama!

Connie and Ted exit.