MATTHEW THREE HORN
### Character Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MATTHEW</td>
<td>An average fourth grade monster ready to make new friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANNE</td>
<td>A kindhearted and open minded monster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THRASH</td>
<td>A smart, well read, well spoken, and aggressive monster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GABE</td>
<td>A follower and a bit dim witted monster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMANDA</td>
<td>A fashionista and opinionated monster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRS. SHADDUCK</td>
<td>A lover of knowledge with a passion to mold and educate young monster minds.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Also a monster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOM</td>
<td>Mother of THRASH. A monster that can be played by the same actor who is MRS.</td>
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</tbody>
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This piece was written with the intent to travel. So even though it takes place at several locations minimal or simple set pieces are welcome and even preferred.

This play does not exceed a sixty-minute run time.

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**Scene**

A quiet monster suburb of a major monster city.

**Time**

The present.
Lights rise on two rows of chairs and small desks that form the majority of MRS. SHADDUCK’s classroom. A larger desk is visible with various books scattered on top accompanied by a single red apple. MRS. SHADDUCK is at the white board writing down several math equations. Her STUDENTS are loudly talking, laughing, and getting settled in their seats. MRS. SHADDUCK finishes her work and turns to the rabble that is her class. She closes her eyes and absorbs the chaotic energy. She calmly counts down to herself.

    MRS. SHADDUCK

The school bell RINGS. MRS. SHADDUCK’S eyes flash open and happily claps her hands together. The STUDENTS are all in their seats. MRS. SHADDUCK excitedly looks upon her class. She pauses slightly to build the suspense of what is about to happen.

    MRS. SHADDUCK
Good morning my lovely students! My knowledge sponges. I have one word and four syllables just for you. Mathematics!

    MRS. SHADDUCK savors the powerful word she just said while allowing her STUDENTS to realize the significance of it. They don’t.

    MRS. SHADDUCK
Please answer these equations out loud. Concentrate and listen carefully.

As the equations are asked by MRS. SHADDUCK and responded by the STUDENTS, the lesson morphs into a sing song chant of call and answer. The STUDENTS and MRS. SHADDUCK have all done this before.

    MRS. SHADDUCK
Three times three divided by three is what?
STUDENTS
Three times three divided by three is three!

MRS. SHADDUCK
Good. B plus three is thirty-six.

STUDENTS
Thirty-six? Pick up sticks.

MRS. SHADDUCK.
What is then the value of B?

STUDENTS
B then equals to thirty three!

MRS. SHADDUCK
Yes! Three swans are at a lake.

STUDENTS
At a lake? What's at stake?

MRS. SHADDUCK
One of three flies away.

STUDENTS
Flies away? Have a nice day!

MRS. SHADDUCK
What's the fraction that went away?

STUDENTS
What could it be?

MRS. SHADDUCK
What could it be? I think you know.

STUDENTS
Is it one third?

MRS. SHADDUCK
Or in other words?

STUDENTS
One over three!

MRS. SHADDUCK
Wonderful! Well done. Give yourselves a hand.

MRS. SHADDUCK leads a round of applause. MATTHEW enters.
MRS. SHADDUCK
Well, hello there! Welcome. Come on in! Don't be shy now. Welcome to Maplewood Elementary. You must be Matthew. I am Mrs. Shadduck.

MATTHEW
Hi. Sorry I'm late.

MRS. SHADDUCK
No worries. No worries at all. The first day can be tricky.

MATTHEW
Thank you. Where should I sit?

MRS. SHADDUCK
We have a seat reserved just for you. But first, how about you introduce yourself.

MATTHEW
Oh. Sure. Hi. I’m Matthew. I moved here to be with my dad and I’m excited to meet all of you.

Wonderful. And?

MRS. SHADDUCK
And nothing much else. I’m a pretty normal monster.

Of course. And?

MRS. SHADDUCK
Well, I do like baseball and reading books.

Interesting. And?

MRS. SHADDUCK
And the name Maplewood makes me think of bacon?

Cute. And?

MRS. SHADDUCK
And?

AND???

MRS. SHADDUCK
And...
MRS. SHADDUCK
And you’re happy I’M your new teacher???

MATTHEW
Oh. And I’m happy you’re my new teacher.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Marvelous! You’re new and ecstatic, thrilled even that I am your newest educator! Let’s make Matthew feel welcome.

MRS. SHADDUCK excitedly leads the STUDENTS in applause.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Your seat is right here. Go ahead and get settled. Class, please take out yesterday’s spelling quiz for review. Or should I say R-E-V-I-E-W. I wasn’t too happy with our first attempt, so we will be taking the quiz again later today.

STUDENTS groan in dismay.

MRS. SHADDUCK
No sound effects please. Use this time now to go over any words you may have missed and for some of you that means several. Matthew, here is a fresh quiz. Just try your best and if you have any questions don’t be afraid to ask.

MATTHEW
Thank you.

MRS. SHADDUCK hands MATTHEW the quiz and returns to her desk.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Oh, but Matthew? No hats on in the classroom please.

MATTHEW
Oh yeah. Sure thing.

MATTHEW takes off his baseball cap revealing a third horn on his head. No one moves. All are still, silent, and staring at MATTHEW. Slowly a hand of a STUDENT is raised. Then another. And then another. One by one they rise until all STUDENTS have a hand raised to ask a question.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Yes? Thrash.
THRASH
Why does Matthew have three horns?

Oh.

MRS. SHADDUCK

AMANDA
Why is he different?

Well-

MRS. SHADDUCK

ANNE
Does this mean we will all be getting an extra horn?

Not exactly.

THRASH
I don’t like it.

GABE
Yeah. I don’t like it.

AMANDA
I don’t think anyone likes it.

ANNE
Does he like having an extra horn?

THRASH points and counts MATTHEW's horns.

THRASH
One plus one plus one is three! Mathematics!

STUDENTS laugh.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Class, settle down. This is no way to make Matthew feel welcome. We apologize. Don’t we?

All STUDENTS speak except for THRASH.

STUDENTS
We're sorry.

MRS. SHADDUCK
I couldn’t hear you Thrash.

THRASH
I’m sorry.
MRS. SHADDUCK
Better. Now please keep your focus on your quiz and continue to study.

A few moments pass as the STUDENTS study quietly. THRASH eventually raises his hand and speaks.

THRASH
Mrs. Shadduck? How do you spell the word freak?

MRS. SHADDUCK
That isn’t one of your words, Thrash.

THRASH
I know. I’m just curious.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Please be curious about the words on your quiz.

THRASH
But I know them already.

AMANDA

THRASH
I don’t know if that’s right. I thought it was freak: M-A-T-T-H-E-W. Freak.

STUDENTS laugh.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Thrash this is your final warning. Stop. Don’t make me take away your recess time.

THRASH
I’m sorry Mrs. Shadduck.

STUDENTS go back to studying. THRASH quietly begins a chant.

Freak. Freak. Freak.

GABE joins. The chant builds and gets louder.

THRASH AND GABE
Freak. Freak. Freak.

The other STUDENTS join in. ANNE is hesitant. AMANDA gives ANNE a look.
ANNE surrenders and mouths the words but no sound comes out. The chant noise level and momentum hits its peak.

STUDENTS
Freak! Freak! Freak!

MRS. SHADDUCK
That is enough!

The STUDENTS stop. The school bell RINGS. STUDENTS get up to leave.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Freeze. Thrash and Gabe I need to talk to you.

THRASH
Of course. Whatever you would like to talk about I am fully available.

GABE
Fully available.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Very gracious of you both. You then won’t mind if we take up most of your recess time. The rest of you can go. But this doesn’t mean I’m not disappointed.

THRASH and GABE approach MRS. SHADDUCK's desk. The other STUDENTS exit. MATTHEW stays. Lights fade around MATTHEW leaving him in a single light.

MATTHEW
I’m different.

BLACKOUT

Lights rise revealing MATTHEW sitting down on the playground reading a book. ANNE and AMANDA enter and slowly walk about talking.

AMANDA
I was thinking short but I would keep my bangs.

ANNE
That could be cute.
AMANDA
I think so too. It's fun to change it up every once and a while.

ANNE
Not for me.

AMANDA
I know. If it’s not long and flowing you won’t be happy.

ANNE
I just like what I like.

AMANDA
And that's not short. Or braided. Or in a ponytail. Or any sort of style that isn’t what you have right now.

ANNE
And you sound annoyed.

AMANDA
I just don’t like it when certain individuals don’t participate in certain slumber party activities.

ANNE
I participated. I ate pizza. Played truth or dare. Called a boy monster and hung up when he answered.

Yes. But-

ANNE
And tried to make you wet the bed by putting your hand in warm water while you were sleeping.

Which wasn’t funny.

ANNE
I disagree.

AMANDA
Regardless. You didn’t let me braid your hair.

ANNE
I never said I was perfect.

AMANDA
I’m starting to realize that.

ANNE finally notices MATTHEW sitting alone.
ANNE
You weren’t very nice to him earlier.

AMANDA
Who?

ANNE
Him.

AMANDA
Oh, that was funny.

ANNE
Not really.

AMANDA
You did it too.

ANNE
I pretended to.

AMANDA
Really? Gosh. Okay, Mother Teresa.

ANNE
It just seemed off that we would do that.

AMANDA
Why do you even care about him? He’s so weird.

ANNE
You don’t know that.

AMANDA
He has three horns.

ANNE
And you have two.

AMANDA
Right. Two is normal. Three is not.

ANNE
He’s normal. Just different normal.

AMANDA
Different normal means weird.

ANNE
It means he’s special.

AMANDA
That doesn’t sound better.
ANNE
I mean he’s unique.

AMANDA
Fine. His three horns make him “unique”.

ANNE
Thank you.

AMANDA
And his reading?

ANNE
What?

AMANDA
Look at him. He’s reading.

ANNE
I like to read.

AMANDA
During recess? We're supposed to play during recess. Not read.

ANNE
That’s silly.

AMANDA
That’s called truth.

ANNE
Well, we’re not playing. We’re just walking around and talking.

AMANDA
Yes, but, we're not reading. He has three horns and he reads at recess. He’s weird.

ANNE
Unique and that’s kind of mean.

AMANDA
I’m just being realistic.

ANNE
And being kind of mean.

AMANDA
The truth hurts.

ANNE
Well. I’m going to go talk to him.
What?

He looks lonely.

With his book.

With his book. I’m going to talk to him.

Why?

To be nice.

And I’m going to stay here.

And judge me.

Yes.

Why are we friends again?

I’m fashionable and delightful to be around.

You’re something all right.

THRASH and GABE enter.

Why hello, Anne. How are you?

Thrash. Not today.

You look nice.

Please don’t.

I see you’re wearing your light blue sweater.
ANNE

Thrash.

THRASH

I actually prefer your pink one but this is still nice.

ANNE

I just want to talk to Amanda, okay?

Looks warm. Gabe?

GABE

Blue is good. Pink is better. Both are fuzzy.

Agreed.

AMANDA

Grow up guys.

THRASH

What? We just want to talk. That’s all.

Let’s go Amanda.

THRASH

Okay, okay. Fine. You’re right. We also wanted to well...three.

Thrash.

THRASH

Two.

ANNE

Please don’t.

One.

THRASH AND GABE

RAAAWWHHH!!!

THRASH and GABE chase ANNE and AMANDA in dramatic fashion. ANNE and AMANDA scream and are sent off. THRASH and GABE remain laughing in triumph. They notice MATTHEW sitting alone.
THRASH

MATTHEW
My name is Matthew.

THRASH

MATTHEW
Hi.

THRASH
I’m Thrash. This is Gabe.

MATTHEW
Okay.

THRASH
Sorry Matthew. Are we disturbing reading time? Gabe and I just wanted to come over and say hi. Officially welcome you to our school. So welcome.

GABE
Welcome.

MATTHEW
Thanks.

THRASH

MATTHEW reluctantly hands over his hat to THRASH. THRASH puts it on.

THRASH
Pro fit. Cool. Fits good.

GABE
Looks good.

THRASH
Feels good. Yeah. I play first base on my little league team. I’m awesome.

GABE
Very awesome.
THRASH
Thank you, Gabe. I'm VERY awesome. And oh, there it is. The talk of the town. Horn number three.

MATTHEW
Please give me my hat back.

THRASH
You and that horn are causing a stir around here, Matthewwww. I would say that you're actually popular in a weird kind of way.

MATTHEW
I don’t want any trouble.

THRASH
Trouble? No trouble here. Just came over to say hello, welcome you to our wonderful school, try on your very comfortable hat, and point out the fact that you're a freak.

MATTHEW
Come on, Thrash. Give me my hat.

THRASH

MATTHEW
I already said please.

THRASH
Pretty please.

MATTHEW
Pretty please.

THRASH
Good. Here’s your hat, freak.

THRASH tosses the hat to MATTHEW.

THRASH
I didn’t want it anyway. Your freak germs are all over it. Wearing that thing will probably make me grow a third horn.

GABE
Yeah. Matthew probably gave you Matt-Flu.

THRASH
Holy crap! Gabe. That is the single greatest thing you have ever said in your life. Matthew has Matt-Flu.
Matthew Matt-Flu!

Please leave me alone.

Alright. Let’s bounce, Gabe. Matt-Flu is in the air.

Oh no!

Gabe? Is that you?

It sure is, buddie. I’m not leaving you.

I’m right here.

Remember me...

Thrash? I need help. Matt-Flu...

Gabe dramatically passes out into Thrash's arms.

What is it Gabe?

Thrash pulls Gabe's body away from Matthew.

It’s not ending this way. Not today. Stay with me, Gabe. Gabe?!

Gabe meekly wakes up.

Thrash...

I’m right here.

Gabe's body goes limp.
THRASH
Noooooo! Gabe! You’re not doing this to me. Gabe? Gabe?!?!

THRASH frantically checks GABE's pulse and his two horns.

THRASH
Oh. You’re fine. You still just have two.

GABE immediately stands up and is back to normal.

GABE
Thank goodness!

THRASH and GABE laugh and high five.

THRASH
We got to go, Matty-Mat. There’s a Matt-Flu epidemic. But don’t worry. We’ll be back when things clear up so we can chat some more.

MATTHEW
Great.

THRASH
Wow, freak. Sarcasm is rude. You're on my list Matty-Flu.

THRASH turns to leave. MATTHEW notices something coming out of the top of THRASH's jeans. THRASH becomes aware and quickly covers it up. THRASH sees that MATTHEW noticed.

THRASH
What are you staring at?!

MATTHEW
Nothing.

THRASH gets into MATTHEW's face.

THRASH
That’s right, freak. NOTHING. And by the way...

THRASH smacks MATTHEW's book out of his hands and points to it.

THRASH
Both dogs die. Have a nice day. Gabe, you need to talk more. Matt-Flu. Genius.
GABE and THRASH exit.

MATTHEW

Dang it.

MATTHEW picks up his book and quietly leaves. A few moments pass before ANNE enters looking for MATTHEW.

ANNE

Matthew?

He is too far gone to be seen. The school bell RINGS and lights fade on ANNE.

Lights rise on the classroom. STUDENTS are seated as MRS. SHADDUCK is completely absorbed in her book of Greek mythology. She bounces back and forth from writing on the white board and reading the book as she delivers another life changing lesson to her class.

MRS. SHADDUCK

The tale of the Trojan War is one of love, betrayal, and deception!

ANNE seeks out MATTHEW with her eyes. She finds him. MATTHEW and ANNE smile. ANNE takes a piece of paper out and writes a note.

MRS. SHADDUCK

It involved the mighty kingdoms of Troy and Greece who found themselves in a ten year conflict full of turmoil and loss. And all of it. All of it was spawned from the singular action of kidnapping the lovely Helen.

ANNE passes AMANDA the note and urges her to hand it over to MATTHEW. AMANDA mouths the word, “no”. ANNE nods her head “yes”. AMANDA resists and shakes her head “no”. ANNE pleads with her eyes. AMANDA finally concedes and tosses the note to MATTHEW. Before MATTHEW can even grab it THRASH snatches the note. All the STUDENTS are watching the note passing action.
Hey. Give that back!

All STUDENTS gasp and turn to MRS. SHADDUCK.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Yes! Exactly! “Give that back!”, says the Greek King Agamemnon and he sends a massive army across the Aegean sea to hunt down the captors and rescue his love.

All STUDENTS turn back to THRASH. THRASH happily rips up the note.

MRS. SHADDUCK
This is why it is said that Helen of Troy is the monster face that launched a thousand ships!

ANNE writes another note. THRASH is watching.

MRS. SHADDUCK
The Greek warriors armed with shields and spears, swords and bows, all took to the beach and marched onto the mighty walls of Troy.

ANNE finishes writing and slowly gets up from her seat. She carefully moves to hand deliver the note to MATTHEW without being detected by MRS. SHADDUCK.

MRS. SHADDUCK
But the resistance was strong. With the help of such heroes as Hector and Paris, the Trojans were able to intercept the Greek advancements.

THRASH moves to stop ANNE. ANNE back pedals. THRASH is chasing after ANNE. ANNE and THRASH are moving in slow motion in a game of "cat and mouse" as they go about the classroom. All the while MRS. SHADDUCK obliviously teaches on.

MRS. SHADDUCK
For years the battle waged on. Back and forth the two sides fought. Neither side giving up. Neither side letting down. Too strong was their resolve to allow any quarter given!

AMANDA
Just let her go!
STUDENTS gasp and freeze as they look to MRS. SHADDUCK. MRS. SHADDUCK is too enthralled with the story to look up.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Let her go? Oh, no! The Trojans couldn’t! Like Agamemnon, Prince Paris was in love with Helen. Too far in love to even think about surrendering her to the Greeks!

ANNE gives up and sits back down in her chair. THRASH sits in his seat triumphantly. GABE gives THRASH a fist bump.

MRS. SHADDUCK
War, turmoil, and loss lasted for a decade! Ten long years until finally...an idea came.

ANNE gets an idea and takes out a large piece of paper.

MRS. SHADDUCK
The Greek army decided to retreat but not before leaving a gift for the Trojans.

ANNE hurriedly writes down a single word. THRASH sees this and takes out his own paper and writes down a word as well.

MRS. SHADDUCK
The Greeks choose to construct and leave a large wooden horse!

GABE gets inspired and takes out a large piece of paper and writes.

MRS. SHADDUCK
So harmless the horse seemed that the Trojans brought it inside the city walls and celebrated their victory.

ANNE lifts up her sign showing it to MATTHEW. It says, "WELCOME." MATTHEW and ANNE share a smile.

MRS. SHADDUCK
But, under the cover of night, several hidden Greek soldiers emerged from the horse.

THRASH shows his sign to MATTHEW. It says, "FREAK." THRASH is pleased with himself.
MRS. SHADDUCK
They opened the city gates and helped lead an assault on Troy that finally ended it all!

GABE reveals his sign. It says, "HORSES" with a heart drawn around it.

MRS. SHADDUCK
And that's how the Greeks ended the Trojan War. With a Trojan Horse! Any questions?

MRS. SHADDUCK is released from the story she was presenting and finally looks at her STUDENTS. ANNE and THRASH quickly put down their signs. GABE keeps his up. MRS. SHADDUCK sees it.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Oh. Correct Gabe. The Greeks used a horse. That I now know you love. Good for you, Gabe.

GABE smiles and proudly shows off his sign to the rest of the class. THRASH simply shakes his head.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Very well my students! We are now going to leave the shores of Troy and continue on. Free time is upon us!

STUDENTS happily get up to leave.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Freeze. Remember that it is Thrash and Gabe's turn for the computer.

THRASH AND GABE
Yes!

MRS. SHADDUCK
And for the rest of you there's still the puzzle corner, the study lounge, or the art station to take full advantage of. Now go. Grow. Let your scholastic minds be your guide!

Lights fade. Lights rise on MATTHEW. He's quietly standing at a small table putting together a panda bear puzzle. Sitting across the room is ANNE. She's busy drawing in a spiral notebook. MATTHEW notices ANNE. Their eyes meet and both smile. ANNE sets down
her notebook and pencil, and walks over to MATTHEW.

Hello.

Hi.

Can I help?

That's fine. ANNE

You sure?

Yeah. MATTHEW

Silence.

I'm Anne. ANNE

Hi. MATTHEW

Hello. Again.

Silence.

I'm Matthew. MATTHEW

I know. ANNE

Right.

Silence.

Panda bear. MATTHEW

Incomplete panda bear.

They come from China.
Correct.

They eat bamboo.

Yes.

For ten to sixteen hours a day consuming twenty to forty pounds.

I did not know that.

They’re my favorite animal.

MATTHEW attempts to place a few pieces. He fails. ANNE picks up a few pieces and puts them in correctly.

That piece goes there. And that one goes there. And that one there.

You’re pretty good at this.

I have a grandmother.

I see.

My grandmother loves puzzles. We work on them together every Sunday. It’s kind of our thing.

Well, it shows.

Thanks.

You’re welcome.

MATTHEW puts a piece in the correct spot.
Nice.

Panda eyeball. Complete.

Silence.

You’re different.

I’ve heard.

No. I mean, yeah, you do have a lot of horns.

Only one more.

Only one more. But what I meant was is that you act different.

Okay.

In a good way.

Thanks.

You’re welcome. It’s just nice to talk to a boy monster without having to be chased by them.

That makes sense.

It’s tiring. I don’t get it.

Chasing. It’s a love language.

What?

We chase because we care.
ANNE
Why don’t they just talk to us?

MATTHEW
Boy monsters prefer to chase.

ANNE
Well, I prefer a nice conversation.

MATTHEW
While putting together a puzzle?

Yeah.

ANNE
Good.

MATTHEW
Good.

ANNE
Good.

Silence.

ANNE
I’m sorry I haven’t talked to you until now.

MATTHEW
It’s okay.

ANNE
I’ve wanted to.

MATTHEW
It’s okay.

ANNE
It’s just Amanda and then Thrash–

MATTHEW
Really. Don’t worry about it.

ANNE
I should have tried harder.

MATTHEW
Anne. You did just fine. Promise. I liked your sign.

ANNE
Good.

Silence.
ANNE
Eucalyptus leaves are poisonous to most animals but not to koala bears who in fact are not bears at all.

MATTHEW
But are marsupials.

ANNE
My favorite animal.

A moment of smiles.

MATTHEW
You going to be around for free time tomorrow?

Yeah.

MATTHEW
Would you mind if we do this again?

ANNE
Nope. This could be our thing.

Awesome.

Another moment of smiles.

ANNE
Boy monsters chase girl monsters because they like them?

Yeah. It’s weird.

ANNE
Yep.

MRS. SHADDUCK enters.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Class! Free time has come and gone! Please take your seats for your next academic adventure!

MATTHEW and ANNE do so while the rest of the STUDENTS enter and follow suit.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Science!
The word gives MRS. SHADDUCK the chills as she allows it to linger. The STUDENTS feel nothing.

MRS. SHADDUCK
On Monday we will be diving head first into the exciting world of science. How do you say you may ask? By presenting science projects!

The STUDENTS groan in dismay.

MRS. SHADDUCK
No, no, no. Groans are not allowed. These projects can be whatever your little scientific hearts desire and, here’s a twist, you will be doing them with science partners! Yes! Two minds are indeed better than one! To choose your science partners I will now randomly draw names out of the “thinking cap”. Oh goodness!

MRS. SHADDUCK chuckles as she brings out a small beanie cap with a mini propeller on the top of it.

MRS. SHADDUCK
This hat gets me every time. What a silly thing with such a dignified name. Am I right?

MRS. SHADDUCK laughs loudly longing for others to join her. Nothing but blank stares are given from the STUDENTS. GABE raises his hand.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Gabe?

GABE
The answer is... yes?

MRS. SHADDUCK
Yes. Thank you Gabe. Moving on! The first three names drawn will be the first grouping, and they are... oh, drum roll please.

The STUDENTS make drum noises and then stop.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Anne! Amanda! And Gabe!

ANNE and AMANDA happily exchange a high five. GABE attempts to excitedly high five AMANDA as well.
AMANDA denies and GABE is left hanging. Self high five for GABE.

MATTHEW AND THRASH

Oh no.

MRS. SHADDUCK

Then that means our final pair of science partners shall be Matthew and Thrash!

MRS. SHADDUCK sets down the cap and applauds excitedly. The STUDENTS don't join her.

MRS. SHADDUCK

Congratulations one and all!

THRASH

No way! Mrs. Shadduck I demand a recount!

MRS. SHADDUCK

No one was voting Thrash.

THRASH

Then I demand a redrawing then!

MRS. SHADDUCK

I’m sorry. The caste has been set. The science gods wanted you two to be partners. Oh my goodness! Science god. Oxymoron!

THRASH

Please Mrs. Shadduck I can’t–

MRS. SHADDUCK

Let it go Thrash. These projects are to be presented on Monday so I suggest getting together with your partner as soon as possible. I await to witness your scientific brilliance! But first...

MRS. SHADDUCK pauses for the school bell. The bell RINGS.

MRS. SHADDUCK

We eat. See you in thirty!

The STUDENTS and MRS. SHADDUCK exit. THRASH lingers to glare at MATTHEW but eventually pouts off. ANNE and MATTHEW remain. MATTHEW is lost in his thoughts. ANNE gets her sack lunch out of her backpack and then approaches MATTHEW.
ANNE
What do you have for lunch?

MATTHEW
What?

ANNE
Lunch. What do you have?

MATTHEW
Oh.

MATTHEW gets his sack lunch and book.

MATTHEW
A sandwich, fruit snacks, an apple.

ANNE
Sounds good.

MATTHEW
Or unexciting. I try not to rock the boat when it comes to lunch.

Lights change and ANNE and MATTHEW walk to a table. They are now in the lunchroom.

ANNE
I’m the same way. It’s nice to have something consistent.

MATTHEW
Yeah. If I don’t have my bologna sandwich I feel off for the rest of the day.

ANNE
I feel that way with my ham sandwich. I wouldn’t give it up for anything.

MATTHEW
Except for leftover pizza.

ANNE
Oh, of course. Give me cold pizza and I won’t remember what a sandwich is.

MATTHEW sits. ANNE does also.

MATTHEW
What are you doing?
ANNE: Eating lunch.

MATTHEW: You know you don’t have to sit with me.

ANNE: I know.

MATTHEW: I can be by myself.

ANNE: I know.

MATTHEW: I can just read.

ANNE: I know. *Ender’s Game*.

MATTHEW: I really don't mind it.

ANNE: Are you trying to get rid of me?

MATTHEW: No. I just don’t want to you to feel pressured to hang out with me.

ANNE: Because I’m the only one that will talk to you.

MATTHEW: Right.

ANNE: I don’t feel pressured.

MATTHEW: But all of your friends are over there.

ANNE: No. Not all of them.

MATTHEW: You mean me, right?

ANNE: Of course. Chip?
MATTHEW
Thanks. You’re pretty awesome.

ANNE
I know.

MATTHEW and ANNE munch on chips happily. THRASH and GABE enter.

THRASH
Hey kids. Seat taken?

ANNE
Thrash. Please leave me alone.

THRASH
Oh, Anne. Sweet, sweet, Anne. Believe it or not but the world does not revolve around you. I'm here actually to speak to my good ol' buddy Matty-Pew.

ANNE
His name is Matthew.

THRASH
Anne. Shush now. Adults are talking.

What do you want?

MATTHEW
Abrupt and to the point. Well, Matty-Flu, seeming that fate has a sense of humor and has forced us to be science partners, I have decided-

MATTHEW
You have decided?

THRASH
Yes. Don’t interrupt. I have decided that we'll be doing our project at my house. Not yours.

MATTHEW
Okay. Why?

As THRASH answers the question it slowly evolves into a very hip beat poem.

THRASH
me not freak. no thank you freak. you big freaky freak.
freak. freak.

gabe

yeah!

gabe snaps his fingers together
like he's at a poetry slam.

thrash

wow. that was way more than five.

matthew

whatever, thrash.

thrash

great. gabe will give you directions.

gabe

here.

gabe tosses a piece of folded paper
on the table.

thrash

be there saturday at six. don’t be late. anne, see you on
the playground. you’re wearing shoes you can run in.
excellent. goodbye, matty-fatty.

thrash notices matthew's book.

thrash

ender’s game. huh. let’s do a project about rockets.

matthew

super.

thrash

you know what, matt? rockets are super. they allow space
tavel. space travel is really super. sarcasm is not.
 alright. this conversation was almost pleasant. and thank
you for the fruit snacks.

thrash grabs fruit snacks.

matthew

hey!

thrash

bully tax.

matthew

goodbye thrash.
THRASH
Yep. Enjoy your lunch. And Matty-Mat-Fat? Ender’s games are actually real space battles being remotely controlled by Ender and his comrades that in part believe they are merely involved in training exercises. But they aren’t. It’s for real. Ender saves the planet. See you later.

THRASH and GABE exit.

MATTHEW
I really need to stop reading at school.

ANNE
You going to talk to Mrs. Shadduck about him?

MATTHEW
You want me to tell on Thrash?

ANNE
Not tell. Explain.

MATTHEW
Maybe.

ANNE
Just an idea. He's being a jerk. She could help.

MATTHEW
I’ll think about it.

ANNE
I mean. Why wouldn't you? You're even having to go to his house now.

MATTHEW
I’m not excited about that.

ANNE
What if, I don’t know, he tries to beat you up or something?

MATTHEW
I guess I would have to protect myself. Or run away.

ANNE
You know how to fight?

MATTHEW
No. Run? Yes. And besides I'm pretty sure if he wanted to beat me up he would have by now. So I'm good. No help required.
ANNE
Well. If you aren't going ask Mrs. Shadduck then you leave me with no choice. I'm going to have to protect you.

MATTHEW
You?

ANNE
Simply yell and I’ll come running.

MATTHEW
You have supersonic hearing?

ANNE
Just the regular kind. Thrash lives three blocks away from me. Yell and I’ll save you.

MATTHEW
I couldn't do that.

ANNE
And why not? Asking for help isn't a weakness you know.

MATTHEW
I can take care of myself.

ANNE
I know you can. But why take this on alone if you don't have to? Oh. Look. Amanda's coming. Let's have you talk to her.

MATTHEW
She's not a fan.

ANNE
Not a fan YET.

MATTHEW
I don't see the point.

ANNE
Because you also need help making friends. I can't be your only one.

MATTHEW
I'm weird. She knows it.

ANNE
You're just different. Show her why that's a good thing.

MATTHEW
I don't know.
ANNE
You can do it. Baby steps.

AMANDA enters.

AMANDA
Ready to go?

ANNE

MATTHEW
Hi. How are you, Amanda?

AMANDA
Come on, Anne.

MATTHEW
You excited about the science project?

AMANDA
Anne?

MATTHEW
You’re not too happy to be in a group with Gabe are you?

ANNE
Please don’t ignore him. He’s just trying to be friendly.

AMANDA
Hi, Matthew. I’m fine. No. Not one bit. Can we go now please?

ANNE
I’m sorry for my friend’s rudeness. Amanda has to go to the bathroom.

MATTHEW
Oh.

AMANDA
Anne!

MATTHEW
And you need to go with her?

ANNE
It’s a girl monster thing.

MATTHEW
I’ve been noticing that.
I’m leaving.

AMANDA

I’m coming. She doesn’t like me revealing feminine secrets. And that was so good. Told you you can do it.

ANNE

Baby steps.

MATTHEW

See you in class.

ANNE

ANNE and AMANDA begin to exit.

MATTHEW

Help!

ANNE stops and puts her hands on her hips and does her best superhero impersonation.

ANNE

Yes, citizen?

MATTHEW

Just testing you.

ANNE

See. That's all you have to do. I got your back.

MATTHEW

Thank you.

ANNE

No problem. But still remember how to run.

MATTHEW

I won’t forget.

ANNE

Bye.

MATTHEW watches ANNE leave as lights fade.

Lights rise on MRS. SHADDUCK at her desk eating lunch. MATTHEW enters.

MATTHEW

Mrs. Shadduck?
Oh, hello Matthew!

Hello.

Don't be shy. Come on in!

Thank you.

Sorry. I'm just finishing up here. Cucumber salad. Cucumis sativus! Delicious!

I can come back.

Oh no. Please sit. What can I do for you?

Um. So. Mrs. Shadduck, I've been wondering what to do. Uh. You see-

Oh dear. Matthew! I'm sorry to interrupt but may I first apologize? This morning was atrocious!

Yeah...

I'm so very sorry. Usually they’re such a welcoming group. Is this why you came to me?

Well, mostly because I’ve been struggling with one certain classmate.

I'm sorry to hear that.

Me too.

Being the new one in school can be difficult sometimes. What would you like me to do?
MATTHEW
I don't know really. Back home everyone was like me. This whole being different is so, well, different.

MRS. SHADDUCK
I want you to be happy here. Let me look out for you Matthew.

MATTHEW
I'm afraid that could make matters worse.

MRS. SHADDUCK
If not handled delicately. How about I start by just assigning you a different science partner?

MATTHEW
So you know it’s Thrash then.

MRS. SHADDUCK
It was an educated guess.

MATTHEW
But to be honest I don't know if I would even want that. He'll know I was here and all this would just hand him another excuse to give me more trouble.

MRS. SHADDUCK
I can see why you would think that. Bullies can be a resilient entity. But I feel that if we-

MATTHEW
No. It's okay. I'm sorry. It's just. No. I shouldn't have come here. Sorry for bothering you Mrs. Shadduck.

MATTHEW moves to leave.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Matthew. Would you like to know a secret?

MATTHEW
Sure.

MRS. SHADDUCK
We're all a little different.

Yeah?

MATTHEW
Even me.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Promise?
MRS. SHADDUCK
Promise. We’ll get through this. You’re not as alone as you think.

MATTHEW
Thank you Mrs. Shadduck.

MATTHEW moves to exit.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Matthew?

MATTHEW
Yes?

MRS. SHADDUCK
Are you sure you don’t want help with a new science partner?

MATTHEW
Yeah. I’m sure. I think I can be pretty resilient myself.

MRS. SHADDUCK smiles. MATTHEW exits and lights fade.

Lights rise on MATTHEW as he approaches a door and knocks. THRASH opens it.

THRASH
You can follow directions. Congrats. Come on. Let’s get this over with. Try not to touch anything.

MATTHEW
Okay.

THRASH
Just kidding. You can. We’re going to disinfect everything once you leave. Mom! The new kid is here! We’re going to be in my room!

THRASH's mom yells from elsewhere.

MOM
Sounds good, Sweetie!

THRASH
Let’s go.

MOM
Would you like any refreshments?!

THRASH
You want anything? Don’t answer that. Like I care what you
want.

To MOM.

No! We’re fine!

MOM

Ants on a log?!

THRASH

To MOM.

No thank you!

MOM

Cheese and crackers?!

THRASH

This is really for me and not for you.

To MOM.

Mom! We’re fine!

MOM

Mixed berry smoothie?!

THRASH

Oh. You know what? I could go for a smoothie. I’m a little parched. You allergic to anything? My mother doesn’t need your death on her hands.

MATTHEW

Peanut butter.

THRASH

Matt-Pew there is no peanut butter in a mixed berry smoothie. Don’t be stupid.

MATTHEW

Just answering your question.

THRASH

Huh. Touché.

To MOM.

Okay! Berry smoothies would be great!

MOM

Two smoothies coming up!
THRASH

Shall we?

THRASH and MATTHEW enter THRASH's bedroom.

THRASH

Yes. I know. My room is awesome. Please refrain from playing my gaming console during your visit and those action figures are for display only. Do not attempt to sit on my bed. If you must look at my extensive book collection you can do so but please keep it at a distance. I know you love books and the last thing I want you to have is have fun. Actually. Let’s just make that a general rule. No fun while you’re here. I set up a workstation for us. You can sit in this chair, not that one, and quietly watch me as I put the finishing touches on our fully operational homemade rocket.

MATTHEW

Wait. You finished the project already?

THRASH

Pretty much.

MATTHEW

Without me?

THRASH

Yes. I have survived in this world without you for many years now. Many happy years. Now shut up and let me work.

THRASH works on the rocket while MATTHEW sits in silence. MATTHEW's patience eventually gives out.

MATTHEW

This is stupid. I’m going home.

You cannot leave.

THRASH

Why? There’s no point of me being here.

Yes, there is.

THRASH

No, there isn’t.
THRASH
You are here, please pass me that glue, to show my mom that I did the assignment that was given to me, which was to do a science project with a science project partner.

MATTHEW passes THRASH the glue.

THRASH
You are here because you're said science partner and she’s a stickler for the rules.

MATTHEW
But I haven’t done anything.

THRASH
You just passed me the glue. Nice job, partner.

MOM enters with smoothies in hand.

MOM
Two mixed berry smoothies.

Thank you.

MATTHEW
Cathy. You’re welcome.

Matthew.

MOM
Very nice to meet you, Matthew. Welcome to our home.

MATTHEW
Thank you. It’s very nice.

MATTHEW
Thank you. I helped with the interior design.

MOM
I like it. And that's a Kilcher wall sconce from the Hendrick Collection.

MOM
Yes it is. How in the world did you know that?

MATTHEW
My dad's in the lighting business.

MOM
Interesting.
MATTHEW
He likes it. Maybe a little too much. He tends to walk into things.

MOM
Oh dear.

MATTHEW
Yeah. He’s always looking up at light fixtures. Walls are his worst enemy.

MOM
I never knew his occupation could be so dangerous.

MATTHEW
For him it can be.

THRASH
Mom. Are we staying long?

MOM
Hush Thrash. How are you liking school?

MATTHEW
Oh. Well. It’s been a transition.

MOM
It usually is. Has Thrash been helping you get accustomed to everything?

MATTHEW
Well... MATTHEW catches a challenging glare from THRASH.

MATTHEW
He was the first one to officially welcome me.

MOM
That’s good.

THRASH
Okay. You need to leave now, Mom.

MOM
Matthew. There was a time when my son liked me to be around.

THRASH
Please Mom. We have work to do.
MOM
But those days are gone. I am now forced to bribe him with blended beverages just to be in his presence.

MATTHEW
The smoothie is great.

MOM
Good. I used raspberries, strawberries, and blueberries.

MATTHEW
And sherbet.

MOM
Yes, I did. Nice palate you have there!

THRASH
That’s it! Break time is officially over. No more social hour with Matthew!

MOM
Be nice to your mother. You haven’t even said thank you yet.

THRASH
Thank you for the drink but you need to go.

MOM
I raised you well.

THRASH hurriedly guides MOM to the door.

THRASH
Goodbye!

MOM
I’m going. I swear if you didn’t bunch up your tail so much you would be a happier monster.

THRASH
Mom!

MOM
It was nice meeting you, Matthew.

MATTHEW
Bye, Cathy. Thanks again.

MOM
You’re very welcome.

THRASH quickly closes the door behind CATHY. He turns and glares
at MATTHEW. THRASH goes back to the rocket. MATTHEW slurps from the straw of his smoothie and watches THRASH work. A moment passes.

MATTHEW

So. You do have a tail.

THRASH

RAAAWWWHHH!!!

THRASH tackles MATTHEW pinning him to the ground. Smoothie goes flying.

THRASH

You will never mention this to anyone! Got it? If you do, so help me, I will destroy you Matt-Pew!

MATTHEW

Get off me!

THRASH

What I want to hear right now is that you understand. Do you understand?!

MATTHEW

I understand. Now get off me!

THRASH remains holding MATTHEW to the ground cementing his point. THRASH eventually gets off MATTHEW and goes back to the rocket like nothing happened. MATTHEW lies there a moment before slowly getting up and noticing the smoothie mess. He grabs paper towels from a roll on the workstation and starts to clean.

THRASH

What are you doing?

MATTHEW

What does it look like? I’m cleaning up the mess.

Why?

THRASH

Your mom is nice.
THRASH
What? I just tackled you, threatened your life, and the next thing you want to do is clean because my mom is nice?!

MATTHEW
She’s nice. That’s what I said. She didn’t know me, saw my third horn, and was still nice to me. So I am doing something nice for her like cleaning up the house she cares about. So if you don't mind please stop talking and let me clean.

THRASH and MATTHEW continue their activities in silence. THRASH building. MATTHEW cleaning.

I don’t get you.

MATTHEW
I really don’t care.

THRASH
No. I tease you, threaten you, physically attack you, and you don’t let up. I don’t get it.

MATTHEW
Thrash. What am I supposed to do? I can’t change who I am. You don’t like me. Fine. Others do. I talk to the others and try to avoid the ones like you.

A moment passes.

THRASH
None of the other kids at school have tails.

Silence.

THRASH
Everyone in my family does but they don't. You don’t. No one does.

Silence.

THRASH
I hate being different.

MATTHEW
Welcome to the club.

MATTHEW finishes his cleaning and turns to leave.
THRASH
How can I make them like me?

MATTHEW opens the door but stops to answer THRASH's question.

MATTHEW
You can’t make someone like you. All you can do is be yourself. Treat others how you want to be treated and don’t bully them if they happen to be different.

THRASH
Why am I a freak?

MATTHEW
You’re not. You’re just you.

Matthew?

THRASH
What?

I'm sorry.

Prove it.

MATTHEW exits. Lights slowly fade on THRASH.

Lights rise on MATTHEW and ANNE with their backpacks. They're walking to school the next day.

ANNE
And then you just left?

MATTHEW
Yeah.

ANNE
Dang. All I did with my science partners was build a solar system.

MATTHEW
I would have rather done that.

ANNE
Do you think Thrash will be mad that you told me he has a tail?
MATTHEW
I guess I trust you to not put my life in danger by telling him.

ANNE
I don’t know. I’ve failed you once already.

MATTHEW
In your defense I never did yell for help.

ANNE
Thought we were getting better at that.

MATTHEW
Sorry.

ANNE
It's fine. I'm pretty new to this superhero thing anyways.

MATTHEW
You don’t even have a name.

ANNE
Yes I do. Anne The Avenger.

MATTHEW
Catchy. Who are you avenging?

ANNE
The downtrodden and those in need.

MATTHEW
Which one am I?

ANNE
Both.

MATTHEW
That’s fair.

Silence.

ANNE
Matthew. What if I’m different?

MATTHEW playfully peeks at ANNE's rear end.

ANNE
No. Stop it.

ANNE and MATTHEW laugh.
ANNE
I don't have a tail. I mean, what if I have something about me that makes me different.

MATTHEW
We're friends.

ANNE
Meaning?

MATTHEW
Meaning I'll accept you for who you are.

ANNE
You sound too good to be true.

MATTHEW
Anne. I like you because you're you.

ANNE
You really mean that?

MATTHEW
Of course.

ANNE
Oh.

MATTHEW
Silence.

ANNE
You don't believe me.

MATTHEW
I want to. I just think if you knew all the facts it would be different.

ANNE
I don't think so. I'm a pretty accepting monster.

MATTHEW
Now you are. Maybe not later.

ANNE
You have nothing to worry about. I'm the one that's different here, remember?

MATTHEW
You don't know everything.

ANNE
Of course not. I still don't even understand long division.
ANNE
About me.

MATTHEW
Well, I want to. How about you tell me.

ANNE
I don't know. I'm afraid.

MATTHEW
You're afraid of me?

ANNE
Of what you'll think. And why are you looking at me that way?

ANNE fidgets with her hair.

MATTHEW
What way? I'm just looking at you.

ANNE
Please stop.

MATTHEW
You okay?

ANNE
No. I don’t know. I'm fine. It's just-

Bell RINGS.

ANNE
Dang it. That's the bell. I got to go!

ANNE quickly exits.

MATTHEW
Anne. Anne?

Lights fade on MATTHEW standing alone.

Lights rise on MRS. SHADDUCK in front of the class. She's waiting for the perfect time to begin.
After ANNE enters and sits MRS. SHADDUCK finds it.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Science!
MRS. SHADDUCK allows the word to swirl about and entice the STUDENTS with its grandeur. They're oblivious.

MRS. SHADDUCK
Today we are exploring the scientific world and today you will be the teachers and I the student.

MATTHEW enters.

MRS. SHADDUCK
You’re late. Thrash has generously volunteered to go first. As for the rest of you, get your listening ears armed and ready. Matthew, please get settled quickly and prepare to present with Thrash.

MRS. SHADDUCK sits at her desk.
MATTHEW sets his backpack down and finds a chair next to THRASH.

MATTHEW
We're going first?

THRASH
Seize the day, Matty.

MATTHEW
I really don't have anything to add to the presentation.

THRASH
Don't worry. I got this.

MATTHEW
About Saturday—

THRASH
You were right.

MATTHEW
About what?

THRASH
Me.

MATTHEW
I don’t understand.

THRASH
It’s okay Matthew. I got this.

THRASH takes a brief moment to collect his thoughts before getting
up with the rocket in hand. THRASH walks to the front of the classroom and MATTHEW follows. Gasps are heard as the STUDENTS see THRASH’s now unhidden tail. THRASH ignores the reaction and confidently begins the presentation. The STUDENTS stare in stunned silence throughout THRASH’s speech.

THRASH
Newton’s Third Law is that for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. Rockets embrace this law. The solid fuel, once ignited, will burn quickly creating a gas that accelerates out of the back--the action--and is forced forward--the reaction--causing the rocket to take flight. This then means for those who may be lost: rockets use fuel, physics, and go very fast. Questions?

Slowly a hand of a STUDENT is raised. Then another. And then another. One by one they rise until all STUDENTS have a hand raised to ask a question. THRASH attempts to quickly give answers like he’s conducting a press conference.

THRASH
Gabe.

GABE
Do you really have a tail?

THRASH
I do. Amanda.

AMANDA
Why do you have a tail?

THRASH
I was born this way.

GABE
Why are you different?

THRASH
Again. I was born this way. Any questions referring to our science project?

AMANDA
I think your tail is weird.
Not really a question.

Is your tail weird?

Nice correction. No, I don’t think it’s weird.

Did we mention this rocket is held together by glue?

Great point, Matt. Attention: glue was involved. Anne.

Do you like your tail?

Do I like my tail?

I don’t think he likes his tail.

Are you and Matthew best friends now?

What? Why?

Because you two are freak friends.

Okay. Really Gabe?

Mrs. Shadduck. Shouldn’t they have done a science project about themselves since they’re now freak friends?

That is enough!

The classroom goes quiet.

Thank you, Thrash and Matthew. Your rocket is wonderful. Please take your seats.

MATTHEW and THRASH sit. THRASH is unsettled from the questions.
MRS. SHADDUCK
Anne, Amanda, and Gabe. It is now your turn to present. Amaze and inform us. And I expect a polite audience.

ANNE gets up and crosses to the front of the class. AMANDA is at her desk collecting her notes. GABE begins to quietly chant a familiar word.

GABE
Freak. Freak. Freak.

THRASH
Stop it, Gabe.

AMANDA joins and the chant gets louder.

GABE AND AMANDA
Freak. Freak. Freak.

THRASH
Come on guys.

GABE AND AMANDA
Freak. Freak. Freak!

MRS. SHADDUCK
Class! Behave!

GABE and AMANDA don't stop and in fact get louder.

GABE AND AMANDA
Freak! Freak! Freak!

THRASH
Gabe. We’re supposed to be friends!

GABE AND AMANDA
FREAK! FREAK! FREAK!

THRASH stops his protest as the chant continues and he melts into his chair. He is a broken monster. MATTHEW wants to help but doesn’t know what to do. He looks to ANNE and through the noise says one word.

MATTHEW
Help!
ANNE takes a deep breath and stands on a chair with her hands on her hips posing like a superhero.

ANNE

Citizens!

The chant stops. All eyes on ANNE. ANNE pulls back her hair revealing her ears.

ANNE

I have pointy ears!

STUDENTS gasp at the reveal. There is a stunned silence. A moment passes. The STUDENTS are confused and don’t know how to react. ANNE begins to doubt her action and becomes self-conscious. MATTHEW sees this. MATTHEW stands on his chair.

MATTHEW

I have three horns!

MATTHEW exchanges a happy look with ANNE across the classroom. MATTHEW offers his hand to THRASH. THRASH takes it and is helped up onto his chair.

THRASH

I have a tail!

GABE like always gets his cue from THRASH and leaps onto his chair in a flourish and pulls back the long sleeves of his shirt revealing his bare arms.

GABE

I have scales!

THRASH and GABE grin at one another as GABE shows off his monster scales. AMANDA is the last one seated. She is nervously playing with her hair as the rest of the class look to her. After a moment AMANDA makes her decision and with dramatic flair stands on her chair.
and takes off her jacket revealing a small set of monster wings.

AMANDA

I have wings!

The class erupts in cheering and applause. They realize they have all been hiding something.

MRS. SHADDUCK

Class! Class! Enough! That is enough!

The happy energy in the room deflates. MRS. SHADDUCK has had enough. All are quiet, looking at MRS. SHADDUCK.

MRS. SHADDUCK

Now. Everyone. Listen carefully to what I have to say.

MRS. SHADDUCK climbs onto her desk, takes off her shoes, and lifts her foot in the air wiggling her toes.

MRS. SHADDUCK

I have hairy feet!

The classroom breaks into wild cheers of celebration. THRASH and GABE exchange high fives. ANNE and AMANDA hug one another. MRS. SHADDUCK dances on top of her desk. MATTHEW watches the jubilation and chuckles.

MATTHEW

We’re all freaks.

ANNE smiles.

ANNE

Huh. We’re all freaks.

We're all freaks?

THRASH

Yeah. We’re all freaks.

MATTHEW

We're all freaks.

MATTHEW AND ANNE
MATTHEW, ANNE, AND THRASH

We're all freaks.

The rest of the STUDENTS and MRS. SHADDUCK joyfully join the chant.

ALL

We’re all freaks. We’re all freaks. We’re all freaks. WE'RE ALL FREAKS!

Everyone stops at the same time.
ALL are beaming from ear to ear.

BLACKOUT

Lights rise on MATTHEW and ANNE with their backpacks on. ANNE has her hair pulled back in a ponytail. They're walking to school the next morning.

MATTHEW

No wonder your hearing is so good.

ANNE

Stop.

MATTHEW

I think your ears are neat.

ANNE

You think my ears are neat?

Yeah.

ANNE

Well, thanks. I guess.

MATTHEW

What? Can't someone give you a compliment?

ANNE

Sure. But I would prefer one that doesn't involve my ears.

MATTHEW

You are a masterful-puzzle-putter-together-monster.

ANNE

And that’s supposed to be better?
MATTHEW
Then I stick with my first compliment. I think your ears are neat.

ANNE
Okay. You win. Thank you for the compliment.

MATTHEW
You’re welcome. And I like your hair today.

ANNE
See! That is a perfectly good compliment right there.

MATTHEW
I just thought of it.

ANNE
Fine. I like my hair today too. Not caring if people see my ears has its perks.

MATTHEW
Is this the beginning of a new Anne?

ANNE
Not really. Just one that will change her hairstyle every once in a while.

MATTHEW
Amanda will be proud.

ANNE
Yes she will. So how does it feel?

MATTHEW
How does what feel?

ANNE
To be normal again.

MATTHEW
I still have three horns.

ANNE
I know. But now everyone in class has something different about them. Being different is now normal.

MATTHEW
Sound logic.

ANNE
So how does it feel, Matthew? You asked for help and look what happened.
MATTHEW
How does it feel having my classmates accept me for who I am all the while Thrash and Gabe ending their routine of making my life miserable?

ANNE
Yes.

MATTHEW
It feels amazing. It feels like I'm finally home.

ANNE
Good. Because you deserve it.

MATTHEW
Thanks. But please don't get too jealous when all my new friends want to hang out with me all the time.

ANNE
I'll keep a level head.

MATTHEW
You will always be my favorite.

ANNE
I'll remember the good times.

MATTHEW
Hey. Thank you for being my friend when no one else would.

ANNE
No problem.

MATTHEW
No. Seriously.

ANNE
You're welcome, Matthew three horn. Thank you for being mine.

MATTHEW
You’re welcome, Anne pointy ears.

ANNE
You’re pretty awesome.

MATTHEW
I know.

MATTHEW and ANNE smile brightly at each other.
ANNE
Mrs. Shadduck has really hairy feet.

MATTHEW
Right?

Both laugh.

ANNE
But we will accept her for who she is.

Hairiness and all.

MATTHEW

ANNE
We’re all freaks.

THRASH enter with his tail proudly showing.

THRASH
Good morning you two.

MATTHEW
What’s up Thrash?

THRASH
Just decided to walk to school today.

ANNE
And?

THRASH
And I saw you so I hurried to catch up.

MATTHEW
To do what?

THRASH
To say hi.

MATTHEW
Okay. Hi.

THRASH
Hi.

ANNE
And?

THRASH
And to give Matthew this book.
THRASH hands MATTHEW a book.

MATTHEW

*To Kill A Mocking Bird.*

MATTHEW waits looking to THRASH.

What?

THRASH

Oh, I'm just waiting for you to ruin the ending.

THRASH

The ending? It's good. It's one of my favorites. I hope you like it too.

Wow. Thank you, Thrash.

You're welcome.

MATTHEW and THRASH smile.

THRASH

Okay. And that's enough smiling from the both of us. Gonna go now. See you two in class. Huh. You look cute today, Anne.

THRASH exits.

MATTHEW

And there goes Thrash.

The new Thrash.

The real Thrash.

Who said I was cute.

Who gave me a book.

And didn't chase me.

And didn't tell me the ending.
ANNE
We’re living the dream.

MATTHEW
Yep.

The school bell RINGS in the distance.

ANNE
When do you not make me late?

MATTHEW
I never said my friendship was free.

ANNE
Let’s go!

ANNE hurries off and exits. MATTHEW is left alone. MATTHEW is admiring his book when ANNE reenters.

ANNE
Matthew! What are you doing? Come on!

MATTHEW
Coming!

ANNE waits for MATTHEW. They exit together.

BLACKOUT

End Of Play