

ONE LAST CHANCE

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SCENE 1

FADE IN:

INTERIOR ELEMENTARY SCHOool CLASSROOM DAY

The Camera PANS from right to left as the audio fades in. The teacher, MRS. WEISE, an up-beat middle-aged woman who is wise yet tender, the type of teacher that you enjoy when you're in her good graces, but you really don't want to see her get mad. She is warm and friendly and uses common sense in her teaching methods but is not above using creativity to get her point across.

Mrs. Weise is teaching at the front of the class. They are doing math. The students are seated in rows with their work books on their desks.

CUT to a close up of the teacher as she discusses the lesson at hand: long division.

MRS. WEISE

So remember the D.M.S.B.D. rule.
D stands for divide. M stands for
multiply, S stands for subtract and
B.D. stands for bring down...

CUT to the students as they absorb Mrs. Weise's lesson. Near the back we see JESSI, ZACK, MIKE and AMBER all sitting in a row. They are trying to pay attention to the lesson but Mike is bored. He spots a piece of crumpled up paper on Zack's desk next to him and carefully grabs it. The others are still focused on their Math as Mike quickly tosses the ball of paper at Zack and hits him in the back of the head. Zack ignores Mike. Mike picks it up again and this time throws it harder. That worked. Zack picks it up and leans over at Mike.

ZACK

Shhhh! I'm trying to listen.

MIKE

(sarcastically)

Why would you want to do that for?
You might learn something!

Zack glares at Mike.

ZACK

You know I'm failing Math.
Now quit it.

Mike goes back to pretending to pay attention and catches Jessi's glare as he does so. He decides it's her turn and quickly picks up the ball of paper and chucks it at her hitting her square in the head.

Jessi is instantly mad and picks it up and throws it back at Mike which misses and pegs Amber in the head.

AMBER

Hey! What was that for?

Mike cracks up and starts laughing. Zack responds by giving him a shot in the arm like he should know better.

JESSI

Oh! Sorry. I didn't mean to hit you-

CUT to a close up of Mrs. Weise who has stopped her lesson.

MRS. WEISE

Jessi, Amber, Mike and Zack.
We are doing math right now.
That should be your focus, nothing else.

CUT to a wide shot of the classroom, the bell rings and the students start to put their things away.

MRS. WEISE

You four can stick around.

CUT to a medium shot of the four singled out students as the class disperses. As they prepare to leave JOSH and LOLA come over and speak to the four in trouble.

JOSH

Hey! What happened?

Mike is about to respond when Zack interjects.

ZACK

Mike doesn't care about math so he decided to spice things up by starting a paper fight!

MIKE

Hey! He was talking to me, not you!

Mike shoves Zack who shoves back. This, again, attracts the attention of the teacher.

CUT to Mrs. Weise at her desk.

MRS. WEISE

Josh and Lola! You two can join our motley crew.

Lola looks shocked and looks to one of her friends to stick up for her.

LOLA

Uh! But I didn't do anything!

CUT to Mrs. Weise sitting at her desk again.

MRS. WEISE

Guilty by association my dear.

Lola looks defeated.

JOSH

Way to go Mike. Anyone else you'd like to get into trouble?

MIKE

Hey! Kiss my-

The boys scuffle and soon all six of them are arguing and trying to break up the melee.

PULL back to reveal Mrs. Weise as she breaks up the skirmish.

MRS. WEISE

Alright! That's enough. Cut it out.

They all stop squabbling and look rather embarrassed.

MRS. WEISE

Now then: what's this all about?

JESSI

Mike threw a piece of paper at me
and I just reacted to it.

AMBER

By throwing it at me!

JESSI

That wasn't intentional.
I was aiming for Mike!

MIKE

(egotistically)

Oh sure! Pick on the attractive one!

ZACK

You started it in the first place-

It quickly disintegrates into another yelling and shouting match. Mrs. Weise takes out her whistle which was hanging around her neck and blows it making a horrible noise which stops them in their tracks.

MRS. WEISE

You six, have known each other
for how long?

Amber, Jessi, Mike, Zack and Amber all look at each other like they know where this is going.

ALL 6 KIDS

(in unison sounding defeated)
Since Kindergarten.

MRS. WEISE

And, I understand you all live...

ALL 6 KIDS

On the same street.

MRS. WEISE

So you've been friends for how long?

ALL 6 KIDS
All our lives.

MRS. WEISE
And yet you show no teamwork skills
whatsoever! You fight, all the time.
I get notes from your other teachers
telling me how frustrated they are with
your juvenile behaviour.

MIKE
(egotistically)
But I never have anything to do
with it Mrs. WEISE. It's these 5 goofballs!

Zack gets very defensive at this comment.

ZACK
Oh Mike, will you cut the crap?!
You're as much to blame as anyone else.

MIKE
But *you're the smart one*, shouldn't you
know better than to *stoop to my level*?

JESSI
(exasperated)
Mike... cut it out will ya?

MIKE
Oh Jessi... You're the mature one, always
talking down to us like you're better than
everyone.

JESSI
(defensively)
I am not! I... I just...

MIKE
Hunh? What? You do what? Spit it out!

JOSH
Cut it out Mike. Enough is enough.

LOLA
(agreeing with Josh)
Yeah, Mike, give it a rest!

MIKE

(turning on them now)
Oh now isn't this a treat?
Now we hear from the little
innocent ones.
The good-i-two-shoeses!

Both Josh and Lola lower their heads in embarrassment.

AMBER

Mike. Just stop. We're not getting
out of trouble any faster with you
flapping your gums! Just shut up!

At this point Mrs. Weise again interjects.

MRS. WEISE

Well that was an interesting interchange.

There is a pause as Mrs. Weise looks at the lot of them.

MRS. WEISE

Now all of you listen up and listen good.
I am tired of your exploits.
We have had countless class trips,
assemblies and school functions wrecked,
ruined or destroyed by one or more of you
this year.

Mike gets defensive and stupidly jumps in.

MIKE

(in a raised, defensive tone)
Oh yeah! Name one!

The others show their disdain at Mike's interruption.

MRS. WEISE

I'll do better than that. I can name
three, just off the top of my head!

Cut to a medium shot of a group of kids ice skating. A
collection of them are joined together in a conga-line and
along comes Mike and Josh and they knock them down like
dominos. As this happens we hear the teacher's voice over.

MRS. WEISE (o.s)
First, there was the skating trip...

Cut to a medium shot of Jessi and Amber setting tables in the school kitchen. See the two of them have a dispute over how to fold napkins and where the utensils are supposed to go. As they argue Zack walks by with a tray full of 'glassware' which they inadvertently bump into which causes him to go tumbling off screen.

SOUND EFFECT
Crash!

MRS. WEISE (o.s)
Then there was the preparation for
Mr. Bondy's retirement dinner...

Cut to a medium-wide shot of a school library stage. There is a group of students sitting on the carpet watching others perform.

MRS. WEISE (o.s)
And finally, there was the recent
performance of A Midsummer Night's
Dream-

Cut to a closer shot of our group of six sitting not far from one another. Josh looks sheepishly around and carefully lifts his right side off the floor for just a second.

SOUND EFFECT
(subtly)
Phht!

Josh tries to hide the fact he passed wind by acting as natural as possible but his face starts to turn red as those around him are overwhelmed by the smell. Jessi, sitting to his immediate left is first to respond by trying to ignore it. In front of Josh is Zack who turns around and utters:

ZACK
(quietly)
Ah man, that's gross!

The rest of the group begins to become uncomfortable and a subtle murmur of discontent spreads across the group. Even the performers can't help but quietly react to the smell. Finally, Mike gets wind of the situation and his id takes over.

MIKE

OH MY GOD! THAT'S GROSS! WHO FARTED!

Josh gets very embarrassed as Jessi moves to her left hoping to escape the smell. Many others have tried to hide their noses as the teacher comes in to handle the situation.

Dissolve back to the classroom where Mrs. Weise stands with her arms crossed. An angry look is on her face as she waits for Mike or anyone else to respond.

MRS. WEISE

Well? Doesn't anyone have anything to say?

Pause.

Mike goes to say something raising his hand in the air as he is about to speak when the teacher cuts him off.

MRS. WEISE

Don't even bother Mike!
Here is the situation. The other teachers are asking to have you six split up amongst the 3 classes.

The group of students immediately begin to protest. Mrs. Weise raises a hand.

MRS. WEISE (cont'd)

Let me finish... I told them that you and your parents would not been keen on this as you've been together your entire school career. BUT something MUST be done.

Pan across the kids as they look at one another. They don't want to be split up but they don't know how to solve the problem.

MRS. WEISE (cont'd)
So, you have one last chance to
prove to everyone that the six
of you can get along and maybe
even work as a team.

Lola, overwhelmed with excitement jumps into the
conversation.

LOLA
What? What is it? We'll do anything!

MRS. WEISE
Well, tomorrow is the nature
studies trip. If you guys can
get along, behave and prove
yourselves capable of existing
as an effective part of the class,
then your slate is wiped clean.

MIKE
But what if we don't?

MRS. WEISE
Then I have no leg to stand on with
the other teachers and you'll be
split up. It's as simple as that.

Cut to a panning shot of each of the kids as they all
consider the seriousness of the situation.

MRS. WEISE
Now head on home, I'll see you guys
tomorrow!

Cut to the classroom doorway as the kids leave the room
talking amongst themselves about the challenge at hand.

FADE OUT.

END SCENE.

SCENE 2 - The next day

FADE IN:

EXTERIOR WOODED AREA DAY

Pan across the group as you see the students walking through the forest being lead by a NATURE GUIDE. They are all dressed in outdoor gear, appropriate for the time of year. You can tell that our main characters are doing their best to behave and are dispersed amongst the group of students.

Cut to a medium shot of the nature guide.

NATURE GUIDE
Come gather 'round everyone!

The students move closer to the nature guide who is holding a small tree branch in his/her hand.

NATURE GUIDE
Can everyone see this?

The students collectively say that they can.

NATURE GUIDE
Good because it might just save your life.

Awe fills the air as the students are full of wonder as to what exactly the nature guide means.

NATURE GUIDE
This is an amazing plant!
And it can be found all over
these woods. It's called
Amaranth or Amaranthus retroflexus.

Cut to Mike, amongst the group.

MIKE
Amara-whodi-whatie?

The crowd all chuckles.
Cut to a medium shot of the nature guide who continues.

NATURE GUIDE

Amaranth, is native to eastern and northern North America. It spreads itself out over an area but is not an evasive plant.

AMBER

What does that mean?

NATURE GUIDE

That means that, even though it spreads itself out, it doesn't destroy the local ecosystem. Many other plants, even in the same family will take over an area and eliminate all the other plant life. While the Amaranth gets along with everyone.

The crowd mutters to itself. Some find the information interesting while others don't really care.

LOLA

How can it save your life?

NATURE GUIDE

(looking excited at the question)
This plant is a virtual miracle!
If you're trapped in the woods and have no food, you can eat the bark.
And if you suffered from diabetes and found yourself without your insulin out here then you can suck on a branch and it would keep you from going into shock or an eventual coma.

Cut to Mike who has just about had it with the nature guide. He starts to wander off by himself. Josh sees him and motions him back into the group. The Nature Guide continues his talk.

Mike ignores him and Josh goes after him.

NATURE GUIDE (o.s.)

It's also amazing because of its magnetic properties. If you were lost and couldn't find your way, you could simply drop a branch of Amaranth into a puddle or area of water and the branch would align itself pointing north..

JOSH

(in a low tone)

Hey! What are you doing? You're going to get in trouble! This is our last chance remember?!!

MIKE

Yeah, yeah, I know! Okay.

They wander back over to the group as the Nature Guide is finishing his talk.

NATURE GUIDE (cont'd)

This is particularly handy around here as our main building is in that direction.

Cut to quick shots of Jessi and Amber mouthing 'what are you doing?' to Josh and Mike as they join back up with the group. Josh reassures them that everything is okay.

Cut back to a shot of the entire group.

NATURE GUIDE

Okay everyone, here comes the fun part: everyone get into your groups and look for examples of the different plants we discussed today.

Cut to Mike standing with Josh among the group.

MIKE

(sarcastically)

Oh what fun!

JOSH

Shhh!!!

Cut back to the Nature Guide.

NATURE GUIDE

You have 30 minutes, then you should head back to the main building.

MRS. WEISE

Don't be late kids as we have to get on the bus right afterwards and head back to the school.

NATURE GUIDE

Have fun everyone!

Cut to a wide shot as the students spread out in different directions in their groups.

Pan over to find our fateful 6 together. The girls are on task looking for the assigned examples of twigs and bushes but the boys start rough housing and chasing one another. Soon things get out of hand and Zack accidentally slugs Mike upside the head. He immediately realizes what he has done and apologizes but Mike sees red and starts chasing him. The others realize what is going on and give chase.

Cut to quick shots of the various kids running through the woods.

Finally, Mike gets a hold of Josh and he pleads for his forgiveness as the rest of the group catch up with them.

JOSH

(pleading)

No Mike please!

ZACK

Stop Mike! Leave him alone!

The girls catch up with them.

JESSI

Cut it out Mike, we're in enough trouble as it is!

MIKE

(turning his attention to the others)
Why don't you all just lay-off!

Cut to a wide shot of all them standing deep in the woods.

MIKE

You know, I'm really tired of
all of you guys constantly telling
me what to do! - I can take care
of myself!

The others all look at one another and then at Mike. They
are not used to him being at all emotional.

AMBER

(gently)

We're just trying to help.

JESSI

We're not trying to boss you-

JOSH

Yeah

ZACK

Yeah

LOLA

We care Mike.

MIKE

You don't *care!*

ZACK

Yeah, we do...

JOSH

And you seem to have this talent
for getting us ALL into trouble.

AMBER

So we have to look out for one
another.

Pause.

Cut to a pan shot of the group of them standing in the
woods quietly; the sounds of nature all around them.

Cut to a medium shot of Josh who starts looking around. He starts to look concerned as he realizes they are deep, deep in the woods.

JOSH
Does anyone know where we are?

Cut to a medium shot of the entire group.

MIKE
(without thinking)
Yeah, of course, we're-

JOSH
Yeah, that's what I mean.

JESSI
Well, we can't be lost we're not
that far from the school...

AMBER
Yeah... We're not lost are we guys?

Cut to Zack carefully considering their surroundings.

ZACK
I'm afraid we are.

MIKE
Can't we just go back the way we came?

JOSH
Yeah, follow our foot prints!

AMBER
What foot prints?

Cut to a shot of the forest floor. There are no foot prints.

JOSH
Aww man!

LOLA
I hate being lost.

Lola starts getting emotional and Amber comes over to comfort her.

AMBER

It's okay Lola, we'll find a way.
Guys, we have to find our way back.

JESSI

(with urgency)
What time is it?

MIKE

I don't have a watch.

JOSH

Me neither.

ZACK

It's 2:48.

JESSI

We're supposed to be back and
ready to leave in 12 minutes!

LOLA

How are we going to do that?
Does anyone have any idea where
we are?

JOSH

I don't think so.

Cut to a wide shot of the group all looking around, trying to figure out which way to go.

Cut to a wide shot of the entire forest. In the distance we hear Lola call out:

LOLA (o.s)

Hello? Can anybody help us?!

END SCENE.

SCENE 3

MAIN BUILDING EXTERIOR DAY

Pan from the forest to a medium shot of the main building and the bus waiting outside. Mrs. Weise is there talking to the children. The Nature Guide walks into frame and talks to her.

Cut to a two shot of the Nature Guide and Mrs. Weise talking.

NATURE GUIDE
Is everyone here?

MRS. WEISE
Not yet.

Mrs. Weise has a slight look of concern on her face as the other students start boarding the bus. She looks at her watch.

Cut to the forest where we find Lola and Amber sitting on a rock while the others wander around trying to find their bearing.

JESSI
(showing signs of stress)
Where are we?!

ZACK
There has to be some sort of clue
as to which way we came...

JOSH
I can't see anything.

MIKE
We need to stay together, that's
for sure. The last thing we need is
someone getting separated.

As he says this we see Jessi notice something and go out of camera range. No one notices she has left the group.

Cut to Amber and Lola, still sitting on a rock looking very concerned.

LOLA
Amber, I'm scared.

AMBER
I know. Everything's gonna be fine.

LOLA
No it's not! We're lost!

AMBER
Just try and relax. You're in good hands. There's no one I would rather be lost with than you guys. With Zack's brains, Mike's strength and Josh's agility I'm sure we'll be just fine. And then there's Jessi, she's the smartest person I know.

Cut to a wide shot of the entire group.

AMBER (cont'd)
Isn't that right Jessi?

Amber looks around for Jessi but she is nowhere to be found.

AMBER
Jessi?

LOLA
Where's Jessi?

AMBER
(with growing concern)
Guys, have you seen Jessi?

The boys turn their attention to Amber and Lola and come over to where they are seated.

MIKE
What? What are you talking about?
She was here just a second ago?

JOSH
Where could she have gone?

The girls get up and they all start looking around calling Jessi's name.

Cut to a shot of Amber as she continues to look.

AMBER
I hope she's okay.

ZACK
Of course she's okay - it's Jessi.

JOSH
Yeah, she's probably found her way back already.

LOLA
I hope nothing happened to her.

AMBER
I hope she's feeling alright.

MIKE
What? What's that supposed to mean?

Amber stops and hesitates before continuing to talk.

AMBER
Well... She didn't-

MIKE
(interrupting)
What is it?

AMBER
Well, she didn't want me to tell you guys but she just found out that she's a diabetic.

JOSH
A what?

ZACK
A diabetic, it means she has problems with her blood sugar levels. When did she find out? Why didn't she tell us?

AMBER

She found out a few weeks ago,
but she didn't say anything because
she's kind of embarrassed by it.

ZACK

That's not something to be
embarrassed about, it's a disease!

JOSH

Yeah.

MIKE

We better find her fast!

Cut to a wide shot of the group all frantically looking for her. They split up and move as quickly as possible. Within a short time Mike finds her, slumped against a tree looking distant and pale.

MIKE

Jessi, are you alright?
GUYS I FOUND HER! COME QUICK!

The rest of the group follow the sound of Mike's voice and join him.

LOLA

Jessi!

MIKE

Amber, what do we do?

Amber goes to Jessi's side. She looks at her closely and touches her forehead.

AMBER

This isn't good. My sister looks
like this when she's at the beginning
of an episode. We need to get her
some insulin fast!

LOLA

Doesn't she carry one with her?

AMBER

I don't know. She's still getting used to the routine of it all.

Amber searches Jessi's jacket and finds nothing.

AMBER

No, nothing. We better get her out of here fast!

MIKE

Alright, here's what we have to do: Zack, you find us a way out of here. Amber, you find some water and fill up Jessi's water bottle. Josh and Lola, you guys find some of that plant the nature dude was talking about.

JOSH

What are you gonna do?

MIKE

I'm gonna carry Jessi.

Cut to a wide shot of them all springing into action going in different directions to accomplish their tasks.

Cut to a medium shot of Mike approaching Jessi.

MIKE

Alright Jess, we're gonna getcha outta here!

Mike picks up Jessi and carries her off screen.

Cut to a shot of Mrs. Weise who again looks at her watch.
Close up: 2:57

Cut to Amber who has found a water source and fills up Jessi's water bottle.

Cut to Lola and Josh who find the Amaranth bush and collect a number of branches. Lola runs over to Mike and starts feeding the bark to Jessi. Meanwhile Josh takes a branch to Zack who joins Amber at the water source.

Cut to a close up of the branch in the water as they watch it point north.

Cut back to Josh, Amber and Zack. Zack looks up and points off screen.

ZACK
We go that way!

Cut to a wide shot of them all moving together and out of the woods. Josh and Lola run ahead as the others stay with Jessi.

Cut to a medium shot of the main building and the bus in front of it. Mrs. Weise is there as Lola and Josh come into frame.

MRS. WEISE
Where have you two been? We
are supposed to leave in 2 minutes!

JOSH
(trying to catch his breath)
It's Jessi!

MRS. WEISE
What about Jessi? Is she okay?

LOLA
(still catching her breath)
She had a diabetic episode.

JOSH
(adding)
And we got lost!

MRS. WEISE
(looking concerned)
Is everyone alright? We had people
out looking for you guys.

JOSH
She's fine, they're coming.

LOLA
Yeah, they're not far behind.

Cut to a wide shot of the rest of the group approaching the main building. We see the Nature Guide helping Jessi onto the bus with a first aid bag in his hand. The others board the bus and Mike stops Mrs. Weise before she gets on board.

MIKE
I'm sorry!

MRS. WEISE
Sorry for what?

MIKE
(sounding desperate)
For screwing up again! It's all my fault. You shouldn't punish the rest of the group.

MRS. WEISE
What are you talking about?

MIKE
We got lost because of me.
We were late because of me!

MRS. WEISE
Mike... you may have saved Jessi's life!

Mike looks at her in amazement.

MRS. WEISE
You may of got lost and you are late, but the six of you worked as a team and saved the day! Jessi is safe because of what you and Zack and Lola and Josh and Amber did. Whatever it took to get you guys here I'm glad it happened, because it's about time. Now get on that bus.

Cut to Mike getting on the bus. He's half way up the steps with the teacher right behind him when he stops.

MIKE
So, no splitting us up?

MRS. WEISE
Absolutely not!

Mike smiles the biggest smile of his entire life and happily joins his friends on the bus. The Nature Guide goes down the stairs after him.

MRS. WEISE
How's Jessi?

NATURE GUIDE
Just fine. We got to her just in time. Those are quite the group of students you have there.

MRS. WEISE
(beaming)
Yes they are...

Cut to a wide shot of the entire facility as the bus pulls out of the parking lot and down the road.

FADE OUT.

THE END.