

ACT THREE**Scene 1**

(Lights up on the Stockman's home. It is the next day. EILIF is sitting in the den in front of the TV playing a video game with earbuds around his neck)

(Petra enters from the garage / laundry room entrance. She is agitated and carrying a large book bag and a box of things from her classroom. She sets them down. She sees EILIF and composes herself)

PETRA

Hey dude, how are you doing? *(She picks up a little yellow rubber duck from a pile that is sitting on a table)* These are all over the front lawn *(She squeezes it)* Oh, it squeaks ... a lucky one ... hey ... where's Mom and Dad. Our camping gear is out in the garage and lots of laundry.

EILIF

(Playing a game) Do you believe in the devil?

PETRA

(Pauses and moves close to him) What? Why? No, I don't.

EILIF

Why not?

PETRA

I don't know. I think the devil is just a character that people made up to understand evil. Think about it. Devil is evil with the letter d in front of it.

EILIF

(He stops playing and turns to her to listen) Oh.

PETRA

But I DO believe there's evil. I think, by nature people have this instinct of self-preservation ... a territorial instinct ... an animal instinct. It makes us want to protect ourselves. Like birds and bears, we want to protect our nests and dens. I don't know, it's hard to explain. I think sometimes this animal instinct inside us can sort of morph and become evil, but only if you let it. I guess it sorta morphs into a desire to harm others ... kinda like cancer of the soul. It changes the cells of

our being. I don't know. But, loving one another and wanting to be good and to do good ... that's what makes us human and really that's what all religions are about.

EILIF

But Thor loves us. Animals love.

PETRA

Oh, wow, you got me there.

EILIF

Is that why we should follow the Ten Commandments like ... thou shall not lie?

PETRA

Yes! A lie can become the worst evil and cause harm to people.

EILIF

Petra, do you believe in God?

PETRA

Yes ... but not in a God that we should fear, like portrayed in your Bible lesson book. No, for me, God is love, and good deeds provide the nourishment for love to grow. That is the power of good ... the power of God.

EILIF

What about Jesus?

PETRA

Ah, well, Jesus set an example for loving others. He told stories, so people would understand.

EILIF

But evil won, he was killed.

PETRA

NO! No, evil did not win ... Jesus sacrificed himself so the world would know ... the power of love. So good could grow. When you love, you sacrifice your self-interest. Oh, c'mon, c'mon, you know good always wins in the end. Good is the superpower! There is always a battle for good and unfortunately good people get hurt. But there is always a seed of good that can grow from a sacrifice. And, if ... if there is a heaven, being good is the fast pass ticket in. *(Beat)* Oh, maybe you end up in purgatory. But I betcha sports are good in purgatory. Just kidding dude.

EILIF

They killed Archimedes when he did not obey and order.

PETRA

Oh, the great Greeks that changed the world. But don't worry no soldier is going to kill Dad. Um, wow, it really makes you wonder what great discovery Archimedes was working on before he stood up to the King's soldier who used deadly force as a first resort instead of a last resort. Well, Eilif, the more you learn, the more you learn that people can be just as stupid now as they were then.

EILIF

Why does Dad care so much about the truth?

PETRA

Because ... there is no trust if there is no truth, and for Dad finding the truth is like the scientific method, you know about that. What you find to be true is the solution to the problem.

EILIF

So, how ya know what is really true?

PETRA

Wow, so many questions, but that's good. You should always ask a lot of questions. That's how you find the truth. Oh, how can I explain? Well, sometimes it's obvious, like 2 plus 2 equals 4. That's true. Sometimes it's simple, but it's covered with tangled lies or it's like a buried treasure that you have to dig to find. Sometimes you just discover it, or it discovers you. Sometimes it moves you like a song or like when you see something amazing in nature. Truth sometimes is locked up and hidden away and it takes a person to make a sacrifice to open the door. Oh, Eilif, I know you're scared. You know, I am too I can't believe that my car was egged today.

EILIF

It was?

PETRA

Yes, but we've gotta be strong. That is how we help Mom and Dad. It'll all be okay. So, are they upstairs? *(Beat)* Oh, I have such a headache. I have to go to get another bag from my car. I'll be right back. *(She exits)*