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SAMPLE PAGES, OCTOBER 2003

### **Characters in sample:**

J.R. DANIELS - host of Jesus Loves Good Christians, an attractive man in his twenties with eerily wholesome pop-star good looks

TERRY JANE MICHAELS - co-host of JLGC, forty-something, Tammy Faye Bakker wannabe with Jan Crouch's hair

DIANE - director of Jesus Loves Good Christians

JESSICA MAGDALA - a young, overweight production assistant with a secret fetish for Jesus

MARCY SUNSHINE -a hyperactive, chain-smoking neo-Valley Girl in her early twenties seeking enlightenment

YELLOW SUNSHINE - Marcy's former hippie neo-pagan earth mama, now a converted Christian

JESUS - as himself.

ANNOUNCER- a 50's-style male announcer voice, booming with personality

### **Setting:**

Present day Dallas, TX on the set of televangelist show "Jesus Loves Good Christians"

### **Backstory:**

Jesus Loves Good Christians has now become widely powerful with the discovery of the Holy Holy Bloody Statue of Jesus Christ, which heals people of their 'sins and cellulite.' The scene opens with a taping of the show, proving the power of the statue with testimonials from characters on the show. The character Jessica is the 'good Christian' of the play {though she has an odd sexual fetish for Jesus Christ}, but her beliefs are seriously being challenged with the wide popularity of the bloody statuette. Towards the end of this sample we see Jessica face to face with Jesus Christ himself.

ACT TWO, SCENE THREE

(Blackout. 'Jolene' fades as lights rise of the set of another taping of Jesus Loves Good Christians, already in progress.)

J.R.

Hallelujah, hallelujah, I tell you it is a great day! Terry Jane, isn't it a great day?

TERRY JANE

Oh yes! It is a beautiful day! God bless this beautiful day!!!

J.R.

God bless indeed! Let us bask in the splendor of this beautiful day, because we have healed 1,345 PEOPLE!!! Just listen to what people are saying!

(Diane appears in a pool of white light. She speaks to the camera.)

DIANE

(crying)

I was obsessed with fame and greed! I didn't even see the warning signs - counting my money repeatedly, practicing my Oscar acceptance speech! But I have seen the light and I know now that Jesus doesn't want me to move to LA and become a rich and famous Hollywood director. Jesus wants me to stay right where I am. He wants me to make the best darn Christian show on TV - and that's what I'm getting paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to do!

(Diane disappears in the darkness. Sound of audience cheering, sympathizing.)

J.R.

Just listen to this next one, mother and daughter, Yellow and Marcy Sunshine, former pagans!

(Audience gasps. Yellow and Marcy appear in a pool of light, their arms around each other in an awkward embrace. Yellow is clearly an earth mama hippie and looks very odd in her Kathie Lee Gifford pants suit. Marcy wears an odd

grin and smokes a cigarette, of course.)

YELLOW

Yes, we used to follow the religion of 'the earth' as Satanists call it. I would do silly things like chart the cycle of the moon, plant herbs, practice Hatha Yoga. I used to drink green tea because I actually believed it would 'help' me.

(Yellow laughs loudly.)

MARCY

You should've seen how demonic we were! I mean when I turned eighteen - I didn't get a car or like lots of money like normal kids do, I got Chrysanthemum. A four and half foot glass bong that my dad, Hashish made. But back then I thought it was cool that my parents smoked up with me.

(to Yellow)

Remember the time we - -?

(Yellow and Marcy laugh hysterically then recover quickly.)

YELLOW

(seriously)

We were clearly possessed by the Devil. And if wasn't for my little angel, we would never have been saved!

MARCY

Yeah, I heard about the show from a friend who works there. I watched a couple of episodes and was like, WOW! I couldn't believe it was free! So I had my friend get me on the show and I was healed! Cured of all my sins, *and* I lost 10 pounds!

YELLOW

I didn't believe it at first when Marcy told me she had converted to Christianity but I saw the change immediately. Like when I told her to call me - she did! So I thought, well, maybe she's outgrown her rebellious 'teenage' stage, maybe she's ready for us to *finally* be friends -

MARCY

No, actually, I hadn't outgrown it. I was just "honoring my father and my mother: that my days may be long."

YELLOW

So anyway, I invited her to come home for Winter Solstice, and she actually did!

MARCY

Yep, yep.

YELLOW

I was just so happy to see her - I mean, after she left for college, I rarely saw her, unless she needed money for drugs.

MARCY

True, it's true.

YELLOW

When she came home, she didn't try to steal anything, she was just so polite and well behaved, and then right before the incantation of the Goddess in our Solstice ritual, she came right up to me and said -

(Marcy imitation)

'Yellow, you are living in sin!' And that was that! My precious, precious angel!

(Marcy winces a little at her mother's hug.)

MARCY

After Yellow converted, we decided to divorce Hashish.

YELLOW

(painfully)

He refused to convert! He's probably still on that Satanic yoga mat somewhere, chanting to the Devil!

(beat, sniffles)

It was a really hard thing to do - leave the only soul that completed me. Hashish and I have always been in love, I think we loved each other before we even met -

(Yellow stares out into space wistfully. Marcy jerks her arm.)

MARCY

Jesus is your savior!

YELLOW

Right! So I'm happy to announce that I've left my sinful past behind me completely - threw out all my tie dye and patchouli, burned my Donovan albums, and bought a push-up bra!!!

(She prances a little bit, showing off. The audience cheers.)

MARCY

Yellow stop.

(Yellow stops.)

YELLOW  
(smiling)

I am now a proud card-carrying Yanni fan and my daughter and I now have a wonderful, wonderful relationship. Thank you J.R., thank you!

(Yellow and Marcy smile. Yellow holds her hand up in the peace sign, but Marcy pushes her hand away, embarrassedly with a smile. Lights fade and they disappear in the darkness.)

J.R.

1,345 people have found the light, bathed in that healing stream of blood from the Holy Holy Bloody Statue of Jesus Christ that he put on this earth for us, that Jesus wants us to have. If you aren't one of the 1,345 people we've saved, I have to ask - - WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!! WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? The end of the world could come any second, don't be one of the losers left behind! Call our toll-free number now - 1-800-JESUS4U.

(Blackout. Beat. The sound of a phone ringing eerily. Lights rise on the administrative office at Jesus Loves Good Christians where Jessica is alone at her desk, staring out into space. The phone on her desk rings shrilly, but Jessica doesn't notice. She absentmindedly touches the small gold cross, which hangs around her neck. Jessica picks up the phone and hangs it up again. Silence. Jessica looks up at the ceiling.)

JESSICA

I'm probably not supposed to do this at work but -

(Jessica kneel at the foot of the desk, hands folded in prayer.)

JESSICA

Jesus, I am really trying to be a good Christian and live my life following your path but . . . I feel like I'm failing - miserably.

(beat)

JESSICA(cont'd)

As you know, Pearl is up in heaven with you. I know you'll take good care of her but I sure do miss her. I didn't think she'd leave us so soon - I didn't prepare myself. I didn't even get to say goodbye to her. Or tell her I'm - sorry. I didn't know - I didn't mean to - oh how could you have let this happen?

(beat)

I know I'm not supposed to understand the greater plan but this can't be the right answer! Is this what you really want for me - be another blind sheep like the hundreds that flock in everyday to cure themselves. Screeching, screaming, thanking God to get drenched in *blood*?! It is *real blood*!

(beat)

Maybe I'm just crazy. Or is it everyone else? I just - I need a sign. You said if I ever needed you, all I had to do was ask. Please - I don't know what I'll do if things keep going on like this.

(Jessica hangs her head, hands clenched together in prayer. The room stirs softly. Jesus suddenly appears, seated at the desk two rows behind her. He is dressed in a white loincloth, with the traditional beard and long hair.)

JESSICA

(beat)

Oh, what's the use?

(She returns to her seat. Jesus picks up the phone on his desk and dials. Jessica's phone rings a few times. Sniffling, Jessica answers it.)

JESSICA

Jesus Loves Good Christians, how may I direct your call?

JESUS

(into the phone)

It is I, do not be afraid.

JESSICA

(dully)

Uh, do you want the Holy Holy Bloody Hotline? I'll transfer you-

JESUS

No, no. I want to talk to *you* Jessica.

JESSICA

Who is this? How do you know my name?

JESUS

It's me, Jesus. Hi.

JESSICA

Uh, I don't know anyone named Jesus . . .

JESUS

You sure about that man?

JESSICA

(snapping)

Look mister, I don't know you so -

JESUS

You certainly seemed to last night.

(Jessica clutches the phone  
tightly to her ear.)

JESSICA

I - I don't know what you are talking about.

JESUS

Hey, I don't care. Lots of people use my image to get off -  
it doesn't freak me out or anything. I'm sorry if I scared  
you - I just wanted you to believe it was really me . . .

JESSICA

Who are you?

JESUS

Jesus. Of Nazareth.

JESSICA

(on the verge of tears)

Why are you doing this? You sick freak!

(Jesus hangs up the phone. Sound  
of dial tone. Jessica slams the  
phone receiver down and covers her  
face with her hands. Jesus walks  
over to her.)

JESUS

Jessica?

(Jessica looks up and gasps. Jesus smiles at her and puts a hand on her shoulder.)

JESUS

You don't have to be afraid -

JESSICA

. . . Hi?

JESUS

Hey. I was just hoping I could help - I'm sorry if I freaked you out.

(Jessica stares, mesmerized.)

JESUS

I'm actually a really nice guy once you get to know me.

JESSICA

You're Jesus?

JESUS

Yeah.

JESSICA

Uh - can I ask you a question?

JESUS

Yeah dude, any question - all questions.

(Jessica looks down at his crotch.)

JESSICA

Why are you wearing a diaper?

JESUS

No man, this is my *loincloth*.

JESSICA

(suspiciously)

How old are you?

JESUS

Thirty-three.

JESSICA

Am I dreaming?

JESUS

Nope.

JESSICA

I'm awake?

JESUS  
(chuckling)

Yes.

(He gives her a big hug. Suddenly Jessica pulls away, blushing embarrassedly. She continues to stare at him, with a curious smile.)

JESUS

Well?

JESSICA

How did you know about . . .

JESUS

About?

(Jessica gestures 'religious masturbation' with her hands, embarrassedly.)

JESUS

Oh. It's just something I can pick up on. But it's not a big deal, really! You're not the first person and certainly not the last.

JESSICA

(beat; quietly)

You don't think it's perverse or sinful to fantasize -

JESUS

Nah! I think it's perverse for people to repress their sexuality. We should be free to think and do as we please, as long as you don't hurt anybody.

JESSICA

(chuckling)

They never said *that* in church.

JESUS

Yeah, sometimes it's hard for the clergy to accept that we are all just dudes.

(Beat. Jessica continues to look him over.)

JESSICA

(blurts out)

I . . . I'm losing faith in you.

JESUS

I know. I'm sorry.

(Beat.)

JESSICA

Well, aren't you going to do something to win me back?

JESUS

What should I do?

JESSICA

You could stop this insanity! I mean this isn't what you want for us, is it? It will stop, right?

JESUS

Not until he proves his point.

JESSICA

Who?

JESUS

I've heard him called -

(imitates J.R.)

'tha filthy demon, that prince of darkness, scourge of the universe.'

JESSICA

(gasps)

Satan? This is Satan's work?!

JESUS

(chuckling)

Yeah. He wants to prove that all humans are inherently weak and stupid, they'll believe anything and create mass destruction and chaos in pursuit of 'truth.' But I stand firmly with my beliefs. I know that humans can love and I don't know. I think that's stronger than all the brute force and manipulation in the world. Satan, of course, will do just about anything to prove he's right. But I wouldn't worry too much about the whole thing. This is coming from the same guy who said he'd finally gained control over all the souls on earth with his new 'Pokemon' craze.

JESSICA

Well - what do we do? How do we stop him? You're just laughing it off like it's nothing!

JESUS

Well, it is nothing. It's only become what it is now because *people* gave it power. But there's no way Satan will be able to keep up with the demand. And you never know, people might wise up on their own. It has been known to happen. There are always people left to question it all. People who want to seek their own truth. People like you.

(Jessica nods, and sits back down, frowning.)

JESUS

(smiling)

What's the matter? You don't believe me?

JESSICA

I guess I don't have a lot of faith in my fellow human beings.

JESUS

Well, I know for a fact that you aren't all alone. There are many people in this world with warm hearts and open minds. People just waiting to make your acquaintance, be your friend -

JESSICA

Love me?

JESUS

Yes, love you.

JESSICA

(blurts out)

You know, I'm really in love with you.

JESUS

(smiles)

I know.

(Jessica reaches out and carefully touches his face, nervously.)

JESSICA

I've always loved you.

JESUS

I love you too man.

(Jesus pats her on the back.  
Jessica grabs him and kisses him.)