

ACT IScene 1

The New York City apartment living room of MICHELLE and JOHN. JOHN is sitting and MICHELLE is standing. There is a stereo in the room.

JOHN
Oh God, oh God, oh God. Oh ... God.

MICHELLE
You're overreacting.

JOHN
I'm not.

MICHELLE
You are, John. You ... take it from me, you are.

JOHN
It's not that--

MICHELLE
Just because it's Armageddon doesn't mean it's the end of the world. Let's dance.

(SHE pushes play on the stereo. Loud, raucous music, Immaculate Machine's "Broken Ship" plays. SHE dances with gusto, jumping up and down.)

JOHN
Michelle. *Michelle.*

MICHELLE
Why are you talking to me when I'm dancing?

JOHN
I'm--

MICHELLE
You know that never works.

JOHN
We need to talk.

(HE pauses the music.)

MICHELLE
Put the music back on.

JOHN
Let me say one thing.

MICHELLE
Fine. What?

JOHN
Armageddon *is* the end of the world.

MICHELLE
John.

JOHN
Literally. It is. That's what "Armageddon" means.

MICHELLE
Oh.

JOHN
Yeah.

MICHELLE
Okay.

JOHN
You understand?

MICHELLE
Yes.

(SHE looks like SHE's about to cry.
JOHN sees this and HE puts HIS
arms out to HER.)

JOHN
Oh, Michelle.

(SHE goes to hug HIM, but ducks
out of the way and hits play on
the stereo. The music starts and
SHE dances again.)

JOHN (CONT'D)
Oh, God.

(Lights down.)

Scene 2

Lights up. MICHELLE is dancing.
JOHN is sitting, glum. MICHELLE
turns off the stereo.

MICHELLE
Could you have heard it wrong?

JOHN
What?

MICHELLE
I'm saying, you said you *heard* Armageddon was here.

JOHN
Yes.

MICHELLE
Could you have heard it wrong?

JOHN
I don't think so.

MICHELLE
But you don't *know*.

JOHN
I'm not following--

MICHELLE
What was said? When you heard it. How did you hear it?

JOHN
Okay. I came home, I turned on the news, it was already
going, and the anchor said, "Armageddon is here."

MICHELLE
That's it? Nothing more?

JOHN
They went to commercial after that.

MICHELLE
Really?

JOHN
(Shrugging)
You've gotta pay the bills.

MICHELLE

Hmm.

(Slight pause)

I think you heard it wrong.

JOHN

What else could it have been?

MICHELLE

There's a--

JOHN

I mean, come on. Seriously.

MICHELLE

Please don't interrupt me.

JOHN

Sorry.

MICHELLE

There's a ... what do you call it? A demolition derby type thing that tours the country. It's very popular. You know what it's called?

JOHN

Armageddon?

MICHELLE

No. Carmageddon.

(Brief pause, quietly)

Smart ass.

JOHN

I guess it could be that.

MICHELLE

You see. You said the news was already going.

JOHN

I mean, I can't prove it's not.

MICHELLE

Right.

JOHN

I suppose I could turn on the news again.

MICHELLE

Don't. I feel we've been watching too much TV lately. I'd like us to cut down.

JOHN

Well, this is ... I feel like this is something I should know about.

MICHELLE

Don't end a sentence with a preposition.

JOHN

Leading grammarians have begun to question that rule in light of verbs that are inextricably linked to prepositions, such as "put up with."

MICHELLE

(A pause, then)

Even still. You know, you could call Tom.

JOHN

Sure. Tom.

(HE takes out HIS cell phone and calls.)

He watches the news all the time. He'll know if Armageddon is here or if Carmageddon is here. It's going to voicemail.

(Slight pause)

Tom has a really nice voice.

MICHELLE

Doesn't he?

JOHN

Hey, Tom, it's John. Michelle and I were hoping you could settle an argument for us. Give me a call please.

(HE hangs up.)

MICHELLE

We're good?

JOHN

We're good.

MICHELLE

Good.

(SHE turns on the music and dances.
This time JOHN joins HER. Lights down.)

Scene 3

Lights up. JOHN and MICHELLE are dancing. JOHN pauses the music.

JOHN

I just had a really good idea.

MICHELLE

About the end of the world?

JOHN

No. I just had a really good idea for a reality show.

MICHELLE

Ooh, tell me, tell me.

JOHN

So, you take the staffs of a bunch of bars. You've got your Irish pub, your sports bar, your gay bar, your trendy downtown watering hole. The whole gamut.

MICHELLE

Sure.

JOHN

And every week they compete in wacky, you know, made-up, sort of bar-themed games. And the two bars placing lowest have to go head to head in a drink-off.

MICHELLE

They all have to drink?

JOHN

No, they have to make drinks. Make an assortment of them.

MICHELLE

So it's not really a "drink-off."

JOHN

No.

MICHELLE

No, it's a ... a mix-off.

JOHN

Okay, a mix-off.

MICHELLE

And who judges it?

JOHN

I hadn't thought about ... okay, maybe a ... you get a college kid, a frat-boy type, a barfly, female, aging, you know the type. And then, I don't know, to add legitimacy, like a world class bartender. Someone who knows drinks. Someone with an accent.

MICHELLE

And the losing bar is out.

JOHN

Exactly. And every week there's a new type of drink. Like gin drinks one week, rum another.

MICHELLE

Shots, girly drinks.

JOHN

Sure. When it's all over, one bar is left standing. What do you think?

MICHELLE

I don't know.

JOHN

Oh, but you haven't heard the name of the show yet.

MICHELLE

Go ahead.

JOHN

(A pause, then)

Barmageddon.

MICHELLE

(A pause, then)

That's pretty good.

(HE hits the play button and THEY dance.
Lights down.)

Scene 4

Lights up. JOHN and MICHELLE are dancing. A knock on the door, and then it opens. MICHELLE stops the music. In comes TOM with CLEA and TRIXIE.

TOM

Hi guys.

MICHELLE

Hey, Tom.

JOHN

Hi, Tom. You didn't have to come over, I just ... did we give you a key to the door?

TOM

It was unlocked.

JOHN

Michelle.

MICHELLE

Yes, John?

JOHN

You left the door unlocked again. You know it's not safe.

MICHELLE

Well, I figured since it was Armageddon, who cares?

JOHN

No, you didn't. You didn't know it was Armageddon when you left it unlocked. You didn't even know what Armageddon means.

MICHELLE

Well, it might not even be that. It might be Carmageddon.

JOHN

Really, Michelle, that's what you want? A bunch of dirty demolition derby drivers coming in and out, willy-nilly?

MICHELLE

I'll make you a deal.

JOHN

With their greasy hands, their outfits dripping oil on our nice clean rug. I mean, if that's what you really want--

MICHELLE

John.

JOHN

Fine. A deal.

MICHELLE

If it's Carmageddon, I'll be extra vigilant about locking the door.

JOHN

I should hope so.

MICHELLE

But if it's Armageddon, we leave it unlocked.

JOHN

Deal.

(THEY shake on it.)

MICHELLE

So which is it, Tom? Armageddon or Carmageddon?

TOM

It's Armageddon.

JOHN

I knew it!

(Slight pause)

Oh, God. Oh, God. Oh, God. Oh ... God.

(TRIXIE clears HER throat.)

TOM

Sorry, this is my girlfriend Trixie and her friend Clea.
This is John and Michelle. John overreacts a lot.

JOHN

You think I'm overreacting to this? To the end of the world?

TOM

No. Not this time. But typically you do.

JOHN

I guess that's true.

TRIXIE

But on the bright side, you won't overreact ever again.

JOHN

I guess that's true too.

MICHELLE

Trixie.

TRIXIE

Yes?

MICHELLE

What's that short for? I've always wondered.

TRIXIE

Beatrice. Like Beatrice Potter.

MICHELLE

Oh, Peter Rabbit. I have that book around here somewhere. I always wanted to read it again. Ah, well.

CLEA

What were you guys doing? We heard music.

MICHELLE

Dancing. Just dancing.

CLEA

That sounds like fun.

MICHELLE

You should dance too.

CLEA

I don't know.

TRIXIE

I like dancing. I thought you did too.

CLEA

I do. But after a while, the music will get slower. You'll be with Tom, and Michelle with John. I'd rather not dance alone.

MICHELLE

Call some friends if you like.

CLEA

Should I? Okay, thanks. Really.

JOHN

Sure.

(MICHELLE turns on the music as
CLEA ducks out into the hall.
The COUPLES dance. Lights down.)

Scene 5

Lights up. CLEA is downstage, in the hallway in front of the apartment. Music is playing in the background and the COUPLES are dancing in low light. CLEA is on HER cell phone.

CLEA

Hey, Charlie ... nothing, I'm just at this party ... I dunno, friends of Trixie's boyfriend ... yeah, I think they're newlyweds who met in the military ... well, they said something about an Army wedding. That or a demolition derby party ... no, it's not good at all ... well, no, you should come *here*. They told me to invite people. I'm serious, so come. Bring Janis ... sure, Monty too. Whoever you ... What? ... No, I don't watch the news, but I TiVo'd it. You can watch it at my place tomorrow, 'k?

(Lights down.)

Scene 6

Lights up on the apartment. ALL are dancing. TOM stops the music.

TOM

The hills of Megiddo. Or Mount Megiddo to be more ...

TRIXIE

Tom?

TOM

That's what Armageddon means, literally. The battle at the end of the world begins on Mount Megiddo. The Bible names it as the place for the final battle between good and evil. The end of the world. And today, a battle started there. They call them hostilities now, but I doubt anybody was truly hostile about it. Just soldiers following orders.

MICHELLE

Which soldiers?

TOM

Well, ours, of course. I can't speak for the hostility of the enemy soldiers.

JOHN

Whom are we fighting?

(A pause.)

TRIXIE

Tom?

TOM

I swear I knew it this morning. Iran, I think. Or Syria.

Or Iraqi insurgents. TOM (CONT'D)

Al Qaeda? MICHELLE

Maybe. TOM

Breakaway PLO members. JOHN

Perhaps. TOM

Lost North Korean soldiers? TRIXIE

Possibly. TOM

Neo-Nazis? JOHN

Sandanistas? MICHELLE

Basque Separatists? TRIXIE

I can't say for sure. We'll win, though. That's all that's important. TOM

(Slight pause)

Wait a second. When we asked you before if it's Armageddon, did you think we meant it literally? MICHELLE

I thought-- TOM

Because we didn't mean it literally. We don't care about one battle. We care about the end of the world. MICHELLE

I thought you meant the battle. TOM

That's a relief. JOHN

MICHELLE

Yes.

(SHE goes and locks the door.)
Since it's not the end of the world.

JOHN

Thank you.

TOM

Oh, it still is the end of the world. The battle was just the first step.

MICHELLE

How do you know?

TOM

What was that phrase, Trixie? The one we heard on the court show? I liked it so much.

TRIXIE

A preponderance of evidence.

TOM

Isn't that smart?

JOHN

What evidence?

TOM

Well ... for starters, the polar ice caps have melted. Both north and south. The ozone layer is on its last legs, with more holes than actual layer. Four new strains of flu with a ninety percent infection rate have been discovered. All of the countries that have the bomb have reported theft in their facilities, including, but not limited to, weaponized anthrax, zyklon B, smallpox, and three thousand kilograms of weapons grade plutonium, tritium and palladium. Tensions have flared between India and Pakistan, Iran and Iraq, Israel and Lebanon, Japan and China, Greece and Cyprus, Canada and French Canada, and the U.S. and everyone else.

MICHELLE

(A pause, then)

That sounds pretty bad.

TOM

Oh, and the sun just burned out. Inexplicably.

(Pause. A knock at the door.)

MICHELLE

Yes?

CLEA (OFF)

It's Clea. I called some people. They're on their way.

MICHELLE

Good.

(SHE goes and unlocks the door.
CLEA enters. Silence.)

TRIXIE

It had to happen some time, right?

(JOHN and MICHELLE shrug. TRIXIE
turns on the music. THEY all
dance. Lights down.)