

Reasonable Assurance

Devised By Ensemble

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REASONABLE ASSURANCE

Introduction

A large space. Massive stacks of paper rise from the floor in random towers.

The FULL ENSEMBLE enters.

ENSEMBLE

(Distributed among everyone.)

I think, a geologist.

A princess.

A Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle.

A witch.

A scientist.

A Cowboy/girl.

A trainer at Sea World.

A movie star, you know, generally being famous.

A stay at home mom, but I didn't really want to have babies or do housework, mainly I just wanted be a person who stays at home.

A brain surgeon. Actually, I think I just wanted to be like Oprah. Or an archeologist.

A Dancer.

A Singer.

An Actor.

I wanted to write.

I wanted to teach.

It was always just assumed that I would go.

My parents didn't go. They didn't want me to end up like them.

There was all this pressure to go.

Of course you go to college.

ADJUNCT 1

I did my undergrad at NYU and I originally went for film school, wanted to be a film editor. And then I discovered that it involved getting a really irregular paycheck. I wanted a job that had a reliable income.

ADJUNCT 2

How I came to teaching? I moved back to Pittsburgh with my daughter because my Dad needed me. I had been living in Manhattan for twenty years. I figured by that time that New York had offered me all that it's going to, frankly.

ADJUNCT 1

So, I switched over to the English department, and figured I would become a college professor. Because that's like an ordinary job. You have an office and you write books and people pay you to do that. And, you know, it sounds awesome.

(CONTINUED)

ADJUNCT 2

By that time I'd taken care of my dad for a couple of years like twenty-four seven, and it had gotten to the point where I'd put him in a nursing home, which I hated, but I had to do it. And then my daughter started first grade. So now my time was free a little bit. And my friend at Point Park said, "why don't you come and teach for me?" And I said, "teach what?" And he said, "teach acting."

ADJUNCT 1

The chair of the department made all these promises, which turned out to be lies. And I was here and teaching part time.

Game Show 1

Everything flips into hyper-camp game show, cheesy music.

Everyone, except for JANET and LOUISA, cheers a little too loudly.

One ensemble member becomes the announcer PERKINS STAFFORD. One ensemble member, soon to be SALLIE MAE, exits.

PERKINS STAFFORD

Heeere it comes! From the Carnegie Heinz Frick Grabble Mellon UPMC PNC Studios in sunny Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, it's THE PRICE IS...RRRRRRRRRRREASONABLY ASSURED!

Everyone cheers.

PERKINS STAFFORD

Duquesne University, come on down! Founded in 1878, with an endowment of \$268 Million, Duquesne is a private institution in the Roman Catholic tradition.

One of the ensemble members becomes DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY.

PERKINS STAFFORD

University of Pittsburgh, come on down! Founded in 1787, with an endowment of \$3.49 billion, Pitt is a state-related research university founded on the edge of the American frontier.

An ensemble member becomes UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH.

PERKINS STAFFORD

and Point Park University, Come on down! Founded in 1960, with an endowment of \$31.4 million, Point Park has a strong liberal arts tradition, and is located in the heart of Downtown Pittsburgh

An ensemble member becomes POINT PARK UNIVERSITY.

PERKINS STAFFORD

You are the first three contestants on the Price is Reasonably Assured. And now, here's your host SALLIE MAE!!

Sallie Mae enters, waving and smiling.

SALLIE MAE

Hey, everybody! Hi Mom! Say hi to my friend Perkins Stafford!

PERKINS STAFFORD

Hi Sallie!

SALLIE MAE

Welcome to the show! What a great audience! I can already feel it, this is going to be a special night.

Everybody cheers.

SALLIE MAE

Hey Perk, let's get it going with the first prize up for bids today on the Price is Reasonably Assured!

Janet stands in the middle of the stage.

PERKINS STAFFORD

Alright, Sallie! First up we have a brand new, freshly groomed potential instructor! This model comes with fully defended dissertation and a dependable weight of unshakable student debt. Willing to move anywhere in the country, or on the Persian Gulf, at the drop of a call for applications, you can't beat a PhD from prestigious Brown University.

Everyone claps, eying Janet like a new car.

SALLIE MAE

Great! So the potential instructor goes to whoever bids closest to the actual retail price without going over your own budget. Duquesne, we'll go first to you.

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

Fifty thousand dollars.

(CONTINUED)

SALLIE MAE

That's fifty k?

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

Ah, yes.

SALLIE MAE

Okay, good luck. University of Pittsburgh, you're up.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Oh. Hmmm. I don't know.

SALLIE MAE

Ask them!

*University of Pittsburgh looks back at the crowd
for guidance.*

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Um. I'll do. Forty-five.

SALLIE MAE

Dollars?

Over-the-top laughter.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Thousand, annual salary.

SALLIE MAE

Okay, forty-five thousand dollars a year. Point Park?

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

Thirty thousand dollars!

SALLIE MAE

Alright! Thirty Thousand.

A buzzer sounds.

SALLIE MAE

Oh no! It sounds like everyone is over budget! Come on!
We're in a recession. Why don't you all check your
books again.

*Everyone is very, very sad. They check their
books.*

SALLIE MAE

Let's try again. Duquesne?

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

Oh. Actually. I'm sorry. We just filled the position internally.

SALLIE MAE

Okay. Pitt.

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Um, I- I- think we're actually good too. We just hired a Vice Chancellor for Economic Partnerships. We have to hold off.

SALLIE MAE

You sure?

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Yes.

SALLIE MAE

Alright, and Point Park.

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

Ah. How about Two Thousand and Ninety-one dollars.

SALLIE MAE

Two thousand and ninety-one?

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

Yeah. Per class.

SALLIE MAE

Per class!

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

Yeah, and no benefits with a semester-long contract?

SALLIE MAE

That would put you....UNDER BUDGET! Great!

They all turn to Janet.

JANET

I guess. Yes. That could work for now.

SALLIE MAE

Excellent! Point Park University! You win! You move on to the next round!

Everyone Cheers.

Statistics 1

The full ensemble comes back onto the stage.

ADJUNCT 1

Adjunct faculty have been a part of post-secondary institutions for a very long time.

ADJUNCT 2

The need for classroom instruction at most universities fluctuates from semester to semester.

ADJUNCT 1

A class gets dropped here.

ADJUNCT 2

Not enough students.

ADJUNCT 1

A class gets added there.

ADJUNCT 2

High demand.

ADJUNCT 1

Traditionally, adjunct faculty existed to help accommodate this need for flexibility.

ADJUNCT 2

The word adjunct means

ADJUNCT 1

supplementary,

ADJUNCT 2

Non-essential,

ADJUNCT 1

or added to something, typically in an auxiliary way.

ADJUNCT 2

They were often instructors that had other jobs, or maybe were retired.

ADJUNCT 1

Adjuncts also might be instructors who work full-time in another field, sharing their experience and connections by teaching a class at a college or university.

ADJUNCT 2

In 1969, only 21.7% of faculty at colleges and universities in the United States were non-tenure

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ADJUNCT 2 (cont'd)

track, often adjunct faculty. The remaining 78.3% of faculty were tenured or tenure-track.

ADJUNCT 1

Tenured and tenure-track faculty enjoy things like.

ADJUNCT 2

A guaranteed course load.

ADJUNCT 1

Job security.

ADJUNCT 2

Retirement.

ADJUNCT 1

Health care.

ADJUNCT 2

A voice in university governance.

ADJUNCT 1

But something changed.

ADJUNCT 2

The rise in student enrollment in the 1970's was greeted by massive budget cuts both then and in the 1980's. These cuts continued periodically through the following decades.

ENSEMBLE

Thanks again, Reagan.

ADJUNCT 1

Academia was confronted with an unprecedented number of students and less resources with which to educate them.

ADJUNCT 2

It found a clever solution.

ADJUNCT 1

More students

ADJUNCT 2

means more PhD's,

ADJUNCT 1

which means more future professors.

ADJUNCT 2

Which means these jobs

ADJUNCT 1

will be in high demand.

ADJUNCT 2

And who controls the demand?

ADJUNCT 1

The number of adjunct faculty steadily rose.

ADJUNCT 2

As has the number of corporate-minded administrative positions.

ADJUNCT 1

(becomes very haughty)
For the health of the institution.

ADJUNCT 2

(also very haughty)
It's just good business.

ADJUNCT 1

Right now, approximately 70% of all college and university faculty in the United States are non-tenure track, most of these are called adjuncts.

Student Scene 1

A park bench.

JANET

Hey.

LOUISA

Hi. What a pretty day.

JANET

Isn't it?

LOUISA

I'm so glad you asked to meet out here.

Beat.

JANET

How are you?

LOUISA

Um. I'm- I was wondering if I could talk to you about my final essay a little bit.

(CONTINUED)

JANET

Okay.

LOUISA

Um. So, I'm thinking, because we're looking at systems of oppression.

JANET

Yes.

LOUISA

I was thinking about writing it on, um, one of the places where I worked last semester.

JANET

Okay.

LOUISA

It was working at this coffee shop, and they wouldn't give us our schedules until the week before and they refused to work around some of my classes.

JANET

Mmmhmmm

LOUISA

Would that work?

JANET

Absolutely.

LOUISA

Great. They ended up firing me.

JANET

I'm so sorry that happened.

LOUISA

Yeah, it sucked.

JANET

Managing multiple schedules is so hard.

LOUISA

Yeah, I can't wait to have just one boss. I bet it's awesome.

JANET

I'm told it's great.

Pause.

(CONTINUED)

LOUISA

Oh, you have another job?

JANET

I do, yes. (beat) I teach at Duquesne.

LOUISA

Oh. Okay.

JANET

It's not too far from here.

LOUISA

Mmmhmmm.

JANET

So...

LOUISA

But you're here all the time.

JANET

I'm sorry?

LOUISA

Do you go back and forth?

JANET

Ah, yeah some days I teach there, and some days I teach you guys. There's a few days where I'm there in the mornings and I come back here in the afternoon.

LOUISA

Okay. Is that like hard?

Pause.

JANET

Not really.

LOUISA

That seems really stressful.

JANET

I mean, you know, no one finds their job fun one hundred percent of the time.

LOUISA

Yeah, yeah, no. I get it.

JANET

Right.

(CONTINUED)

LOUISA

So, you're part time here?

JANET

Ah, yes.

LOUISA

Is that why you don't have an office?

Beat.

JANET

What are you talking about? We have this beautiful bench.

Louisa forces a little laugh.

Pause.

JANET

Yes. That's why. The offices are for folks who need them full time.

LOUISA

Oh.

JANET

This coffee shop sounds like a good topic to explore. Just remember to be clear. This sounds like a really interesting paper.

LOUISA

Good.

JANET

Is there anything else?

LOUISA

Great. Yeah. I guess, as long as that sounds like it would work, that's all I needed.

JANET

Okay. I gotta go, actually. I have a class in ten minutes. I'll see you tomorrow.

LOUISA

Bye.

Statistics 2

The full ensemble moves around the space.

ADJUNCT 1

In the past thirty years, the real median household income in the United States of America has remained almost static.

Louisa stands in the center of all of this.

ADJUNCT 2

At the same time, since 1978, the cost of food has increased by 220%.

ADJUNCT 1

The cost of shelter has increased 375%.

ADJUNCT 2

The cost of medical care has increased 600%.

ADJUNCT 1

And since 1978, the cost of college tuition has increased 1,120%.

Louisa reacts.

ADJUNCT 2

1,120%. As a result, student debt is at an all time high.

ADJUNCT 1

Currently, the average debt total for students at graduation is approximately \$27,500, according to the Pew Research Center.

ADJUNCT 2

It is estimated that one in five American households is paying off student loan debt.

ADJUNCT 1

Coincidentally, current annual tuition and fees at Point Park University are just under twenty-seven thousand dollars.

ADJUNCT 2

Coming in at \$26,170.

ADJUNCT 1

Before room and board.

(CONTINUED)

ADJUNCT 2

With 5 classes available each semester, that comes to \$2,617 per class.

ADJUNCT 1

A class of twenty-five students then earns the university \$65,425.

ADJUNCT 2

three percent of of that sum, \$2,091, goes to a beginning adjunct instructor for that same class.

ADJUNCT 1

It would take over six of these classes to make the \$454,513 salary of Point Park's president.

ADJUNCT 2

That's more than the president of the United States.

ADJUNCT 1

And Point Park's president is on the mid to lower end of university presidents in Pennsylvania.

Pause.

ADJUNCT 2

That means that an adjunct must teach eight classes each year just to live at the poverty line in Pittsburgh. Or supplement their income in some other way.

ADJUNCT 1

Because of availability and a cap on the maximum number of classes at one school, these classes are frequently spread across several institutions in the area.

ADJUNCT 2

And as a contracted worker, an adjunct has no guarantee that these classes will be available the next semester.

ADJUNCT 1

An adjunct is an "at will" employee of a university. Their employment is automatically terminated at the end of each semester. They must be rehired to continue working.

ADJUNCT 2

Their class load can and does vanish without any warning or compensation.

Student Scene 2

A coffee shop. Janet is behind the counter.

JANET
Medium Americano!

Louisa enters.

LOUISA
Janet?

Janet looks at Louisa.

LOUISA
Hey!

JANET
Hi.

LOUISA
I didn't know you worked here.

JANET
Yeah.

LOUISA
That's so cool. I was actually a barista too.

JANET
Yeah, you said.

Pause.

JANET
What are you doing in Lawrenceville?

LOUISA
I had an audition a few blocks away. It's wild how little I know about the city outside of Oakland and Downtown.

JANET
Yeah.

Pause.

LOUISA
Um. Hey. This is actually kind of a great coincidence. Do you have a sec? Like, can I just talk to you real fast?

(CONTINUED)

JANET

Sure.

LOUISA

This will only take a second. It's just a quick question.

JANET

Okay.

LOUISA

So, I was recently thinking about what my plans are gonna be for after I graduate, you know, senior year,

JANET

Uh-Huh.

LOUISA

Getting down to the wire, and, ah, I was thinking a lot about grad school recently, and um, I know you went to a great grad school, and ah, now you're working at a great college And, I mean, your Women Studies class, was my favorite course.

JANET

Okay.

LOUISA

Really, I was just, ah, asking if, um, you might consider writing me a letter of recommendation for my application to Brown.

Pause.

JANET

Okay.

Pause.

JANET

Yeah. Sure. I can do that, if you need one.

LOUISA

Thank you. Um, that's awesome. No. Thank you so much. Ah.

JANET

mmmmhmmmm.

LOUISA

Ah, so, I can be in contact with you via email, and I can let you know-

JANET

Have you really thought about all of the different paths you could take instead?

LOUISA

Um, yeah, but I was just thinking, you know, education, a masters in education. I want to teach. I actually have been really inspired... by what you do.

Pause.

JANET

Okay.

LOUISA

Yeah.

JANET

I don't know if I'm the best example to follow.

LOUISA

But, you're teaching at a bunch of really great colleges.

JANET

Yeah, and I also don't have health care.

LOUISA

What?

JANET

Nevermind. Listen, if this is what you want, I will do this for you. I just want you to think about some other options, alright. Can we maybe talk some other time about this?

LOUISA

When?

JANET

Just send me an email, we'll figure it out.

LOUISA

Um. So, you're saying that-

JANET

I'm just- I want you to consider other options. Alright? (beat) Food for thought.

Long Pause.

LOUISA

Thanks. Ah.

JANET

Can I get ya anything else?

LOUISA

Ah, no, that's alright.

JANET

Great.

Janet exits.

LOUISA

Alright.

Transition 1

Adjunct 1 and Adjunct 2 take of their regular positions.

ADJUNCT 2

You realize that in the summer time we can't even collect unemployment.

ADJUNCT 1

The legal terminology that they use is reasonable assurance.

ADJUNCT 2

Oh, yeah, reasonable assurance. You have a reasonable assurance of employment during the school year.

ADJUNCT 1

I was talking once to this tenured faculty member in my department. She said, "Oh, at least one great thing about being an adjunct is that you don't have to come to the faculty meetings." You know, being disenfranchised from her point of view just seemed like, "Oh, I guess that's just less work."

ADJUNCT 2

You should have asked her if she wanted to switch paychecks.

Laughter.

ADJUNCT 1

You know, in any system of oppression, however extreme it is, it's able to function because it's normalized. It's those people who have gotten used to the way that things are in such a way that they'll convince

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ADJUNCT 1 (cont'd)

themselves that people want to be wherever they are in the hierarchy.

ADJUNCT 2

And the trouble is that the tenured faculty could be, and sometimes are, our greatest allies.

Game Show 2

The manic music comes back and we're back on the game show. Sallie Mae and Point Park University take the stage.

SALLIE MAE

And we're back!

Point Park University cheers.

SALLIE MAE

So, you said your name is Point Park?

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

Yeah! Go Pioneers! Or Bison! Or Pineapple!

SALLIE MAE

Oookay. Tell me a little about yourself.

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

Well, I'm from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I'm really into the arts. I'm definitely more urban with about 4000 students. I'm about 70% white and 60% women.

The ensemble looks at each other.

SALLIE MAE

Well, great. Thanks for playing the Price is Reasonably Assured. We're going to move on to the next round. Perk, what do we have?

PERKINS STAFFORD

Well Sallie, this one is a crowd favorite. So I hope you're ready for some excitement.

SALLIE MAE

I think we are.

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

Yes, yes, yes, we are!

PERKINS STAFFORD

It's... FINALS!!!!

Everyone cheers, except Janet.

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

Oh! What do I do? What do I do?

SALLIE MAE

Nothing, you're work is done. You've already won. Just sit back and enjoy. Start thinking about your summer vacation.

One ensemble member becomes a TENURED PROFESSOR. The two other ensemble members hold large stacks of paper.

SALLIE MAE

Go! Grade those papers!

The Tenured professor and Janet move papers, one at a time from one stack to another place on the floor. It becomes clear that their goal is to move all the papers.

Janet's pile starts to move further and further back. The work becomes harder and harder for her.

The tenured professor stops.

TENURED PROFESSOR

I'm tired.

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

Take a sabbatical.

TENURED PROFESSOR

Sweet!

Janet watches this.

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

You want another class?

JANET

Yes, thank you.

Janet goes on to move the papers from both her own pile and the Tenured Professors' pile. Now both piles are also moving around the space.

This melts into a dance.

Transition 2

During the following Janet and the Tenured Professor perform the "Cherish, Delaney, and Taylor Dance."

ADJUNCT 1

My experience of being an adjunct, it's a lot of small humiliations. Even something like not having somewhere to hang your coat. That's sort of a small inconvenience, you can find somewhere to put your coat, you have a chair in a classroom. But every day you're walking into work and you're being told that you're not even worth a coat rack, you know. It's a million little things like that. Like even when I had my office. They put my name on the door in temporary tape so they could remove it. A million little things reminding you that you're disposable.

ADJUNCT 2

I have a friend who calls it-

ADJUNCT 1

Yeah.

ADJUNCT 2

He calls it death by a thousand paper cuts.

Pause.

ADJUNCT 1

It took the adjunct at Duquesne. What was the poor woman's name?

ADJUNCT 2

Margaret Mary Vojtko.

Janet ends on the floor.

ADJUNCT 1

That's right. She died pretty much penniless, no health care, especially working for a Catholic university. I mean the irony is just incomprehensible. I mean, that went viral, with all the adjuncts and everybody. And all the adjuncts in the United States said, let's wake up. And what's the first step?

ADJUNCT 2

Yes. Margaret being buried in a cardboard box in the Duquesne chapel.

(CONTINUED)

ADJUNCT 1

Did you say literally a cardboard box?

ADJUNCT 2

Yeah. When you don't have the money to buy a fancy casket, it's like sort of plasticized cardboard. They put a sort of fake wood grain on it. It's grim, grim business. And she was a devout catholic, even more devout than I am entirely comfortable with, frankly. So, it's especially hard to think about how all the priests on campus knew her, and this still happened. Anyway, even earlier than that I remember the first time I decided that I was going try and stop undergraduate students of mine from going to graduate school. I decided that this is not something that I could in good conscience do.

Student Scene 3

Outside on a Park Bench. Janet sits.

Louisa approaches.

LOUISA

Hi.

JANET

Hey, Louisa. Happy Summer!

LOUISA

Thanks. Is it alright if I sit with you?

JANET

Absolutely, have a seat. I just finished my last paper until summer session starts.

Beat.

LOUISA

Hey, I'm sorry about the other day.

JANET

Huh?

LOUISA

While you were at work.

JANET

Oh, yeah. That just caught me a little off guard.

LOUISA

I got excited.

(CONTINUED)

JANET

It's alright. Time and a place.

LOUISA

Totally.

Pause.

JANET

I'll still write the letter. Just email me.

LOUISA

Thanks.

Pause

LOUISA

Do you really think I should not go to grad school?

JANET

I think you should think about what you really want to do, and that might involve grad school.

LOUISA

But it might not.

JANET

What do you want to do?

LOUISA

I *wanted* to be a professor, like you.

Pause.

JANET

Yeah, that involves grad school.

LOUISA

I know.

JANET

Wanted?

LOUISA

I've been doing some research.

JANET

That's good. What did you learn?

LOUISA

That I would have more debt.

JANET

Yup.

LOUISA

And I probably would be, um-

JANET

More like me than you had hoped?

LOUISA

Yes.

JANET

I'm glad you're thinking about it.

LOUISA

Why didn't you just tell me about what it's really like?

JANET

I don't know. I don't like to talk about it with my students. It's not easy.

LOUISA

It's not right.

JANET

Yeah.

Pause.

LOUISA

Anyway, with my loans right now, I think I'm going to wait, take a year or two.

JANET

That's smart.

LOUISA

I'm actually looking for barista jobs, if you know of any openings.

JANET

I'll keep my eyes peeled.

Game Show 3

Everything flips back to the manic world of the game show. Sallie Mae and Point Park University take the stage.

Janet and Louisa are caught back up in the middle of all of it.

(CONTINUED)

SALLIE MAE

Point Park, I am so excited we are down to our final round here on the Price is Reasonably Assured.

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

Gah!!

SALLIE MAE

I know. Perk, what are we going to do next?

PERKINS STAFFORD

Well Sallie, you better start your training because we're about to play a round of the I.O.U. Obstacle Course!

The two remaining ensemble members guide Janet and Louisa to opposite ends of the space.

SALLIE MAE

Okay, Point Park, I'm sure you know how this is played.

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

I do!

SALLIE MAE

But for the folks at home, this is a game of debt and guidance. Can your undergrad make it to graduation safely?

POINT PARK UNIVERSITY

I hope so!

SALLIE MAE

Either way, you win!

Point Park University cheers.

SALLIE MAE

Ready.

Louisa's ensemble member places a blindfold of receipt paper over her eyes.

SALLIE MAE

Set. Go.

JANET

Louisa?

LOUISA

Yes? Janet?

JANET

Head towards my voice...

(Janet guides Louisa across the space, telling her to avoid the obstacles and where to take her next steps.)

Throughout this, Janet and Louisa are interrupted by Perkins Stafford and Sallie Mae saying the following things. Each time Perkins Stafford says a new thing, Sallie Mae hands Point Park University a new stack of paper to place in Louisa's arms as she crosses the space. This is her debt. It grows very large and heavy.

A messed up version of "Pomp and Circumstance" plays.

PERKINS STAFFORD

Have to live in the dorms!

SALLIE MAE

Just ten thousand more!

PERKINS STAFFORD

You need an internship to graduate and can't work for the summer!

SALLIE MAE

We've got you covered.

PERKINS STAFFORD

Your car breaks down!

SALLIE MAE

It's on us.

PERKINS STAFFORD

A 5% tuition increase!

SALLIE MAE

We've got big plans.

PERKINS STAFFORD

You need to take medical leave!

SALLIE MAE

Too bad it was so late in the semester.

PERKINS STAFFORD

You loose your a job!

Louisa finally reaches the other side of the space. Janet greets her and takes off her blindfold.

(CONTINUED)

SALLIE MAE

Don't worry! You have all the time in the world to get that back to us.

Sallie Mae and Janet watch Louisa leave with all her debt.

Transition 3

ADJUNCT 2

So, for example, at Georgetown, a group of students got together to try and persuade the administration not to use Georgetown branded apparel that was made in sweatshops. The administration told them to go away. And so the students did this series of escalating actions. They had an occupation of the president's office. They went on a hunger strike. Eventually, all that student activism so freaked out the administration that they not only agreed to never use sweatshop labor to make their apparel, they agreed to this just employment policy for every employee at the university, and every employee of every subcontractor at the university. So, administration on every campus in the country is fighting adjunct organizing, except at Georgetown. At Georgetown, the union showed up and they just got a letter from the administration that said, "Go ahead and organize, and if they vote yes, then we'll recognize and bargain with them, and they'll have a contract." That's just student pressure.

ADJUNCT 1

The thing about a school like Point Park is that the vast majority of its revenue comes from undergraduate tuition, about 87 percent. Having students that are angry and organized, those two things, that messes up the machine. That's a way that we can push back and put faculty and students at the forefront of their priorities not waterfalls and buildings and statues.

ADJUNCT 2

And buffalo, there's a new buffalo, or bison.

ADJUNCT 1

Oh yeah, that bison.

They both chuckle.

ADJUNCT 2

The school is terrified of students.

Closing

The ensemble moves around the space.

ENSEMBLE 1

You changed my life by making me realize how much you have to just deal with things.

ENSEMBLE 2

I don't need to listen to you. I'm sorry that you don't think I have the right body for ballet.

ENSEMBLE 3

I cannot tell you how much you have inspired me and helped me to stay true to who I am.

ENSEMBLE 4

You taught me how important it is to be a strong ensemble member and that you have to trust your scene partner as much as you would trust a friend.

ENSEMBLE 5

You knew how I get trapped in my head and paralyzed by perfectionism. You watched me sit there, awkwardly stirring a cappuccino in the sun, unable to explain why I didn't think I fit in the class.

ENSEMBLE 6

I spent my whole life trying to prove why it was okay that I did this, it was normal and not so taboo.

ENSEMBLE 2

When I dance I have fire, I have passion, I have strength. I know I have big, muscular thighs, bad turnout, and only adequate feet.

ENSEMBLE 1

I always thought that by the time you reached a certain age things became easier or simple. Where you didn't have to deal with people walking over you. I was wrong.

ENSEMBLE 4

You pushed me to be stronger and think harder as an actor, and as a person.

ENSEMBLE 2

But I'm not like you. You have truly changed my life. I will never dance for anyone but myself again.

ENSEMBLE 1

Even though it was a huge waste of my time I couldn't be mad at you because it wasn't your fault.

(CONTINUED)

ENSEMBLE 3

Now that I am living my truth.

ENSEMBLE 5

You said to me--everyone always says to me--"But you can do it, and you already do." It was the only time, out of hundreds, in which I did not want to strangle the person who said that to me.

ENSEMBLE 6

Through movement, you showed me the true meaning and value of many things.

ENSEMBLE 5

You were right, of course. Everyone always says it, and they are always right.

LOUISA

You never told me,
"No, there's not enough time,
No, they don't pay me enough,
No, you're not important enough."
I can't pinpoint one moment
The truth is,
You have never done something so erratic
that in a moment
Everything changed.
Instead it's in the little things:
The emails
The understanding

Pause.

LOUISA

Teaching is an artistic endeavor.

END OF PLAY