



Jim

From *Prodigal Son*

By John Patrick Shanley

Age Range: Young Adult

Style: Dramatic, Contemporary

Monologue:

“Why is it your school? Why am I always in the wrong? Why do I have to listen to you when you have zero to say? Because I’m young? All my life I’ve been young. So I never get a turn? This school is lost, if you asked me. You’re lost. But everybody talks to me like I’m the one. I should change. Why should I change? I’ve never got to find out who I am and you want me to change? That’s crazy! You tell me I’m bad before I even get to be anything. What the hell is that? Original sin or something? I read Plato. I read him on a park bench in the Bronx and let me tell you something. Plato wasn’t afraid, Diogenes wasn’t afraid. Socrates wasn’t afraid of anything. They were men. Why are you the headmaster and I’m the student? Do you understand? I have to earn your respect but you don’t have to earn mine? What is that? It’s you that wants the A before we even start. But when I say I want the same thing, I’m nuts, right?! I’m not going to cry. I’m going to find my place in this world. Count on it. This school has been a miracle for me but not because of you. Because somebody, Mr. Hoffman, finally saw me. And more than that. Somebody, a grown person, decided I was good before I was good. You want to throw me out of that? Then you know what I say: I’ve never met your God and I don’t want to.”

Play Synopsis:

Prodigal Son is a play by John Patrick Shanley about a 17-year-old boy from the Bronx who transfers to a private school in New Hampshire in the 1960s. The play explores the boy's struggles to find his place in the world, and the faculty members who must decide if he is a star or a disaster.

Read the Play Here:

https://www.stageplays.com/PDF/prodigal_son.pdf