

DEATHSURGE COUNTY HIGH

By Roan Lucas

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CAST LIST

CAMERON GREER - Nonbinary, human. A high school sophomore with autism and a “human flesh disability.” Medically described as ‘a soft worm.’

COACH STEELFIST - Female, mutant. A high school gym teacher with a giant steel fist. Should probably see an anger management therapist.

SKULLBASHER - Male, mutant. A half-human half-shark jock. He bashes skulls.

MURDER MEOW - Female, mutant. A half-human half-cat who is also the class president. Speaks exclusively in cat puns, most likely as a coping mechanism.

MR. SHARP - Male, mutant. The school’s guidance counselor. Not good at his job.

BROADCAST BANDIT (B.B.) - Nonbinary, mutant. A high school sophomore with telepathic radio powers. Wants to be popular, but is held back by the fact they’re kind of annoying.

DEATH LASER - Male, mutant. Cheated on Murder Meow. Everyone hates him.

RANDOM STUDENT - Any gender, mutant. One time they caught lymphoma.

SKULLBASHER’S POSSE - Any gender, mutants. A posse of jocks who follow Skullbasher around. They worship the ground he stands on.

STUDENT BODY - Any gender, the ensemble cast of mutants. They fill out the school and also engage in elaborate acts of (stage-choreographed) violence.

SCENE 1

A high school straight out of Mad Max: Fury Road. The lockers are torn to shreds, red liquid crusts the ground, and the walls are just covered in a wondrous tapestry of graffiti and scratch marks. It's beautiful, in a garbage kind of way.

CAMERON GREER, 15 year old survivalist extraordinaire, enters. They're, to put things lightly, a complete mess. Ash-covered face, ripped clothes, cracked glasses; the whole works. They stand center stage and pull out a pen and paper.

CAMERON

September 26th, 2052

Dear Diary,

It's me again, Cameron. Your favorite little survivalist. Yeah, my guidance counselor said it might be a good idea to keep a journal to track down my thoughts and feelings. Of course, my feelings don't really matter when I'm trying to outrun a two-headed dog or a frog that barfs acid, but hey, mental health is important too.

They remove a bandage from their backpack, and wrap it around their bruised arm.

CAMERON

Look at that. Anxiety's better already. So let's see, what to write about today? I've been thinking a lot lately, and I've come to the conclusion that most people peaked in the fifth grade. Think about it. Exceptional GPA, a twelfth grade reading level, and you know exactly where you'll be in five years. Tenth grade! It's so easy! I'm realizing I might be projecting here, but for me personally, fifth grade? Height of my life. I was on the top of the world. Knew exactly where I was and where I was going. Things were looking up for Cameron Greer.

Pause.

CAMERON

Then the apocalypse happened.

ALARMS! WARNING SIGNS! CHAOS EVERYWHERE! THE STUDENT BODY rushes in from all sides, engaging in all out mutant war. There are improvised weapons, claws, biting, stuff gets NASTY. Defenseless and afraid, CAMERON crawls about, doing their best to not get caught in the crossfire of the fighting.

CAMERON

Don't worry! Everyone's fine, mostly. The economy collapsed for a little bit and a bunch of wars broke out but like! We, the human race, are still out here living our lives, minus the 40% or so who, you know, aren't anymore. Thing is-

CAMERON grabs a locker door from the ground, blocking an oncoming attack.

CAMERON

- after the dust cleared and the radiation poisoning "mellowed out"- CDC's words, not mine- the Earth was left sort of, oh what's a nice way of putting it? Uninhabitable for human life. Remember that frog that barfs acid I mentioned earlier? Yeah, we have those instead of pigeons now. Really get in the way of a nice stroll in the park. The human race had to adapt, and evolution was moving way too slow for our rapidly decaying bodies, so we improvised! And that improvisation led right to mutants! AH!

CAMERON looks up, seeing a very strong looking mutant- SKULLBASHER - about to, you guessed it, bash in their skull. They scream, but are cut off by a sharp whistle blow. Everything stops, including SKULLBASHER. It's a good thing too, because if they had gone any further, CAMERON's head would be guacamole.

COACH STEELFIST enters. She's a woman so strong she looks like she could deadlift her own ego, which is saying a lot. Everyone stands in attention except for CAMERON. Seeing what they're doing, CAMERON also fumbles their way into a salute.

COACH STEELFIST

ATTEN-SHUN! That'll conclude our morning scrimmage. Outstanding work, for the most part. Now get your butts to class.

The students mill about for a bit.

COACH STEELFIST

I SAID NOW!

Everyone scrambles to get to class.

CAMERON, meanwhile, doesn't.

CAMERON

So yeah! Basically everyone's a mutant now. Super strong, super fast, virtually indestructible, and hey, if you're lucky you might get yourself something fun like cat ears.

MURDER MEOW, a girl with cat ears who's milling about by a locker, does a lil' meow.

CAMERON waves to her, then turns back to the audience.

CAMERON

I hate her. So journal, you probably feel my boney, dry little hand pressing into your pages and the first thing you think to yourself is, "Hey, wait a minute! This kid doesn't seem like a mutant." Yeah, the thing about that is that there is this nifty little neurological condition that makes the body refuse any mutations. You heard me. Even the basic stuff every mutant has like radiation immunity or the ability to eat a car battery raw. Gone. Impossible. Total non-option. Luckily, this neurological condition is super rare. Only 1% of the population has it. And well..

COACH STEELFIST

CAMERON GREER!

CAMERON

Ya' boy lucked out.

COACH STEELFIST marches up to CAMERON, infuriated.

CAMERON

Coach Steelfist! Hi! Wow, can I just say you are looking so.. veiny?

COACH STEELFIST

Cut the flattery, kid. This ain't about my massive, bulging, sexy muscles. As much as I'd like to be.

COACH STEELFIST kisses her bicep.

CAMERON

Ma'am, we are in a school environment.

COACH STEELFIST

This is about you, Greer! WHERE! IS! THE! HUSTLE?

CAMERON

(shouting over COACH STEELFIST)

LEGALLY, the hustle is nowhere, Coach. Don't you remember? I'm excused from morning scrimmage on the account of the fact that I die when I am killed. I have a doctor's note and everything.

They pull a note from their pocket, which
COACH STEELFIST quickly snatches up.

COACH STEELFIST

Let me see that, pointdexter. Ahem. "Dear Schoolboard of Deathsurge County High, Cameron is hereby excused from all mutant related activities on the account that they are very weak, frail, and sickly. They are essentially made out of glass and paper and could die if someone breathed on them a bit too hard. If I had to compare Cameron's physiological and mental state to some other living creature, it would be a chihuahua, though perhaps that is a bit too generous as they are more akin to a very soft worm. Moreso,"

CAMERON

Okay, you can stop now.

The students snicker to themselves.
CAMERON's embarrassed.

COACH STEELFIST

So, you're not gonna join in the scrimmage just coz' some medical "professional" said you were a soft worm?

CAMERON

Well, you know, they could've phrased it to be a bit nicer but-

COACH STEELFIST

BEING A SOFT WORM AIN'T AN EXCUSE, MAGGOT! Everyone's gotta join the morning scrimmage. It's what the school was made for!

CAMERON

The school was made for violently beating your classmates in the hallway with a wide array of improvised weapons?

COACH STEELFIST

DAMN RIGHT IT WAS, RUNT! See, look at this guy. HEY! SKULLBASHER! GET OVER HERE!

SKULLBASHER walks over like he owns the place. It's immediately apparent that this guy is kind of a celebrity. Students fawn over him, wave to him, one person even faints. This guy's the top dog.

SKULLBASHER

Sup.

COACH STEELFIST

Kid, do you know how Skullbasher got his name?

CAMERON

Is it because he bashes / skulls?

COACH STEELFIST

It's because he bashes skulls! Something that you should be doing too!

CAMERON

First of all, I don't think I could break someone's skull with my current upper-body strength. The cranium is pretty strong, actually, despite what movies might lead you to believe-

COACH STEELFIST

Get to the point already!

CAMERON

And second of all, he almost bashed my skull in, which would be fine if I had reinforced steel or a laser forcefield up there, but unfortunately only mutants have that, and as I have mentioned *many* times before, *I am not a mutant!*

COACH STEELFIST

Quitter talk! I wanna see you here bright and early tomorrow for the scrimmage, and if you ain't giving it your all then you're DEAD MEAT, babycakes. ALRIGHT, ENOUGH STARING, LADIES! GET TO CLASS!

The students continue to mill about. COACH STEELFIST punches the wall.

COACH STEELFIST

I SAID GET TO CLASS!

Everyone scatters, except for CAMERON and SKULLBASHER exit. SKULLBASHER walks over to CAMERON, and feels up their arm.

CAMERON

Can I help you?

SKULLBASHER

Your bicep has a circumference of about eight inches. With a protein heavy diet and a strict weight lifting schedule you could increase that, but not by much. As of right now I could probably snap it in two equal parts like a pretzel stick, or a baby carrot.

CAMERON

... Thanks.

SKULLBASHER

You're welcome, soft worm.

He exits.

CAMERON

(grumbling)

I am not a soft worm.

CAMERON grumbles to himself. MURDER MEOW steps up behind them.

MURDER MEOW

Meowdy there, Cammy Cat!

CAMERON

Ah! Oh, Murder Meow. It's just you.

MURDER MEOW

Say, I ofurheard your little alter-cat-tion with Coach Steelfist. Real sowwy to hear about that.

CAMERON

Yeah, well, you know. Another day at Deathsurge County High. Go Snakewolves, or whatever.

MURDER MEOW

Nyaw, that bites. Maybe you can go talk to Mr. Sharp about that? I mean, he is the guidance nyansouler.

CAMERON

Hey, that's a good point. You know, maybe you're not as annoying as I thought.

MURDER MEOW

What was that, nya?

CAMERON

Nothing. See you around!

CAMERON exits, quickly.

SCENE 2

The guidance office at Deathsurge County High. Like the rest of the school, it looks like it came out of Mad Max, though with the small adjustment of a few motivational posters on the wall. The floor is covered in a variety of weapons. MR. SHARP (first name Razor) sits at his desk, clicking away on a clunky computer set-up that every American public school has. You know the type. CAMERON enters, and he looks up.

MR. SHARP

Cameron! Hello! Come on in.

CAMERON

Hey, Mr. Sharp.

They walk in, trying their best to avoid all the weapons scattered on the floor.

MR. SHARP

So sorry about the mess. I was just having a meeting with another student about what weapon they plan on taking an elective in. She was thinking a mace but let me tell you, that girl can do wonders with a machine gun. You know how it is.

CAMERON

Do I?

MR. SHARP

So, what can I help you with?

CAMERON

Yeah. This morning, during the daily scrimmage, I sort of almost died.

MR. SHARP

Yeah, that'll happen sometimes.

CAMERON

And since I'm a human, if I die there's no like, regeneration for me. It's just... over.

MR. SHARP

Oh, yeah, that is a problem.

CAMERON

And when I told Coach Steelfist, she ripped up my doctor's note and told me to, and I quote "stop being a soft worm." Now, don't get me wrong. I understand my position here. Only human at a school of mutants. But it would be nice if the school's environment wasn't so hostile towards me.

MR. SHARP

Oh, yes, yes. I totally hear you. Completely understand.

CAMERON

Oh, thank you. I was honestly really worried bringing this up with what happened with Steelfist-

MR. SHARP

No. No. Never be ashamed of speaking up for yourself. You know what that is? Self-advocacy, and self-advocacy is a very important skill to have. And hey, I get it. It's hard to have a human flesh disability. Trust me, as someone who took an entire hour-long non-mutant tolerance seminar, I understand.

CAMERON

An hour-long what?

MR. SHARP

I want to make sure you feel as comfortable as possible at this institution of learning. So! Let's talk about this. How are we going to solve this little problem of yours?

CAMERON

I'm so glad you asked. I was thinking we could-

MR. SHARP

You know what? I just remembered. I think your IEP qualifies you for something that can help you out with this. Did you know that you are eligible for a Hyper-ized Mech Suit?

He runs off stage.

CAMERON

A Hyper-ized what now?

MR. SHARP

A Hyper-ized Mech Suit!

He returns with a giant cardboard suit of armor.
The trashier it looks, the better.

CAMERON

Oh, wow. That is...

MR. SHARP

Pretty cool, right?

CAMERON

Yeah, it's... really something else. Hey, look, I really appreciate this, but it seems a little... inconvenient?

MR. SHARP

Hey, don't worry! You'll only have to wear it for a year until your body gets used to the bludgeoning and stabbing and radiation.

CAMERON

Yeah, my body can't get... used to those things.

MR. SHARP

Really? Huh, I knew I was forgetting something from that seminar.

CAMERON

It's like, look, it's not just the giant laser in the cafeteria or the constant death battles. Going through this school is like walking through a minefield.

MR. SHARP

Are you talking about the minefield we have outside the cafeteria?

CAMERON

Yeah, and the one by the football field?

MR. SHARP

Oh! I always forget about that one.

CAMERON

That's concerning.

MR. SHARP

Anyways, it's fine. The Hyper-ized Mech Suit can handle all sorts of situations. What else?

CAMERON

Well for the starters, the piranha pit in the 300 Hallway.

MR. SHARP

We'll add rocket boosters. It'll fly you right over.

CAMERON

The spikes in the gym walls.

MR. SHARP

Soft cushioning on the suit.

CAMERON

Most of the classes require some level of psychic communication to pass certain assignments.

MR. SHARP

There's a special helmet for that.

CAMERON

Half the cafeteria menu is molten rocks.

MR. SHARP

Teeth modifications!

CAMERON

I can't digest molten rocks.

MR. SHARP

Stomach modifications!

CAMERON

You can do that?

MR. SHARP

We can try!

CAMERON

Ew. Okay, look. I am going to propose something. And this might sound like a bad idea.

MR. SHARP

There are no bad ideas.

CAMERON

But what if we got rid of the death traps?

MR. SHARP

There are some bad ideas.

CAMERON

I just don't get why I have to be the one who has to make changes to myself when we could easily just get rid of the external factors here.

MR. SHARP

Cameron, you have to understand. All the booby traps and violent creatures - we implemented them for training back during the war.

CAMERON

Which was five years ago. And also is over.

MR. SHARP

But they've become a part of this school's culture!

CAMERON

In five years?

MR. SHARP

Deathsurge County High just wouldn't be the same without them.

CAMERON

Counter point: I have at least twelve near death experiences a day.

MR. SHARP

Alright, I think you're overexaggerating here just a bit. Like, come on, are the daily locust swarms really hurting you that much?

CAMERON

Yes! I almost lost a finger yesterday!

MR. SHARP
Why can't you just regrow it?

CAMERON
Because I physically can't!

MR. SHARP
You sure?

CAMERON
Yes!

MR. SHARP
Wow, I really should've paid attention to that seminar. You know, I think you should really give the Hyper-ized Mecha Suit a chance. Like, here, I'll give you a demonstration.

CAMERON
Please don't.

It's too late. MR. SHARP is already climbing into the suit, getting his whole body in there.

MR. SHARP
See, look at this! Fits like a glove! Here, and if you will just turn it on for me.

CAMERON
Mr. Sharp, I really think we should-

MR. SHARP
C'mon, what're you so scared for? Just press the button on the back. C'mon.

CAMERON hesitantly reaches behind him and turns on the button. The suit powers up.

MR. SHARP
See! Look at this! Hyper-ized motor function, super invincibility, and-

The suit smashes its fist against the desk.

CAMERON
Uh...

MR. SHARP

Ah! It appears we're having a slight malfunction! Nothing out of the ordinary. This sometimes happens with these types of- Oh no! Hey, stop that! Cameron, help!

Ad-libbing sounds of panic, MR. SHARP continues to clumsily walk around the room destroying everything with the glitching Mech Suit. CAMERON dives around him, doing their best to turn the suit off. Eventually, they grab a weapon off the ground and just go to town on the suit. It goes down, as it collapses into MR. SHARP's chair.

MR. SHARP

Well! That could have gone better. Yeah, something must have gone wrong with the springlocks. Lots of crossing wires, you know? Ha, good thing it was me and not you, huh? You'd be toast!

CAMERON

Uh huh. Hey, Mr. Sharp, I think I'll pass on the Hyper-ized Mech Suit, thanks.

MR. SHARP

You know what I think your problem is, Cameron?

CAMERON

What's my problem?

MR. SHARP

You're a self-defeatist.

CAMERON

I'm a what?

MR. SHARP

A self-defeatist. You get so into your own head. Like, you believe you can't withstand gamma radiation, so you can't withstand gamma radiation. Get me?

CAMERON can't even respond to that. They sit in a stunned silence.

MR. SHARP

Hey, look. Just repeat your daily affirmations. I can do this. I believe in myself. I am powerful. I am responsible. I am capable.

CAMERON

Alright, I think I'm gonna go.

MR. SHARP

Not so fast, Cameron. Your affirmations.

CAMERON

... I can do this. I believe in myself. I am powerful. I am responsible. I am capable.

MR. SHARP

Perfect. Have a great day, and I really hope this helped some.

CAMERON

It definitely did... something. Bye, Mr. Sharp.

MR. SHARP

Seeya, Cam Cam!

CAMERON gets up and leaves. MR. SHARP
is still in his chair, trapped by the suit.

MR. SHARP

Hey! Wait! Could you come and get me out of this thing? Hello? Hellooo?

Nobody comes.

SCENE 3

The waiting room outside of MR. SHARP's office. CAMERON walks out with a huff, absolutely exhausted. They sit down on a chair, burying their face into their hands.

In the chair next to them sits BROADCAST BANDIT (or B.B.), another student who looks pretty normal save the long, metal antenna jutting out of their forehead. They take immediate interest in CAMERON.

CAMERON, unaware of this stranger, groans loudly.

B.B.

Hey, are you-

CAMERON groans again, this one both louder and longer.

B.B.

Hi. Are you-

One more groan, this one the loudest and the longest.

B.B.

HEY!

CAMERON

Ah! Oh, sorry. I was just lamenting over the inherent cruelty of life. Hey, what's up? I'm Cameron.

B.B.

That's cool. You're the human kid, right?

CAMERON

In the flesh.

B.B.

Haha. I get it. Because you still have flesh. Do you lament a lot?

CAMERON

You know, it used to be just a casual hobby, but lately I've been thinking about going pro.

B.B.

Haha! Wow, you're- KSSH - JUST LIKE ME - KSSH - and only 50% off! What a steal! - KSSH!

CAMERON

Uh... excuse me?

B.B.

Oh, sorry. That happens - KSSH - Sometimes when you touch my body - KSSH - At 7 PM Eastern Standard Time!

CAMERON

Okay?

B.B.

My name's Broadcast Bandit, but most people call me B.B. because they can't be bothered to remember my name. Back during the war they gave me this antenna thing here to help me pick up enemy signals, but now it mostly picks up local radio stations - KSSH - Q87.1, All the Latest Hits - KSSH. It's very nice to meet you!

CAMERON

Nice to meet you too. So, what brings you to Mr. Sharp's office?

B.B.

Same thing as - KSSH - You, you, you, you~ - KSSH -, actually! They gave me this antenna and nothing else, so all the other mutant stuff sort of - KSSH - Died, just like my marriage - KSSH -. I'm basically a soft worm, so we're kind of like a - KSSH - Two for one deal! Oh wow! - KSSH -.

CAMERON

Really? That's- well, okay, I wouldn't go calling us soft worms-

B.B.

Oh. Sorry. That's just what people around the school have been calling you. My antenna lets me listen to everything they say. It's both a blessing and my own personal hell.

CAMERON

Yeah, I can imagine.

B.B.

Did you know that Deathray is cheating on Murder Meow?

CAMERON

Wow. Okay. That's awkward. You know, it's kind of invasive to always be listening in on other people like that.

B.B.

Sorry. I originally did it because I thought if I knew every detail of everyone else's lives, they would like me more. But it turns out most people just think it's creepy.

CAMERON

Yeah, I can see why. Well, it's nice having someone I can talk to about this stuff. I mean, it's insane, right? These people literally used to be humans.

B.B.

Once you get the ability to shoot lasers from your eyes, most people tend to forget what it's like slumming it up in normie land. Not me, though. I keep it real.

CAMERON takes a long look at B.B, They
very much do not look like they keep it real.

CAMERON

And Coach Steelfist thinks we're all a bunch of soft worms for calling out the blatant mutantism!

B.B.

(aside)

Note that they said "mutantism." That's a word from the future to describe the systemic power that mutants hold over regular humans. Worldbuilding, folks.

CAMERON

What was that?

B.B.

Nothing! Honestly, Cam, I've been doing pretty okay being normal. For the most part I just try to get myself stuffed in a locker before morning scrimmage. I don't mean to brag, but sort of I've mastered the art of getting on people's nerves.

CAMERON

Really, how?

B.B.

KSSH - Want a break from the ads? If you tap now to watch a short video-

CAMERON

(shutting them up)

Okay, okay. I think I get it. It's just... frustrating we have to live like this, you know?

B.B.

Oh. It sucks - KSSH - Bad, I'm bad, you know it! - KSSH. But it's not like the teachers are doing anything about it. I guess all we can do is lament.

CAMERON

Well you're just a bucket of sunshine.

B.B.

Do you know what I always do when I'm sad?

CAMERON

What's that?

B.B.

Listen to the morning report.

CAMERON

Oh, we don't need to-

B.B.

(fully ripping off NPR)

- KSSH - Hello, and welcome to This Mutated Life, with Tigereye Bloodgun. I'm Tigereye Bloodgun, bringing you more small, quaint tidbits that you can tell your friends at work, or perhaps a casual dinner party, in order to impress them and feel like you're smarter than you actually are. Today's episode: famous rebellions throughout history.

CAMERON

Well, this might as well happen.

B.B.

On this day in 2049, the first ever Human Human Rights Protest happened on the steps of the Green House, then called the White House due to the fact that it hadn't yet experienced large amounts of radiation decay. The protest was a massive, massive-

CAMERON

Wait, B.B., what did they just say?

B.B.

The fact that the White House became the Green House was a perfect metaphor for the slow decline and eventual collapse of the American imperialist structure?

CAMERON

No, no. The other thing.

B.B.

The Human Human Rights Protest?

CAMERON

Yes! That! B.B., don't you get it? If we can't work within the school rules, then we'll just have to break them and make our own! We should do a walk out. Let me hear the rest of the report.

B.B.

KSSH - The rally was a massive, massive failure. Genuinely some of the most piss-poor marching that this country has ever seen. Absolutely zero bills were passed, and flights out of Washington were backed up for the next week. Later on in a press conference, the president had this to say on the movement: "Wow, that really just happened, el oh el. Anyways, stay easy y'all."

CAMERON

Okay, you can stop it now.

B.B.

We will now be counting down the Top 10 Most Embarrassing Moments of the Protest.

CAMERON

I said stop!

B.B. complies.

CAMERON

Wow, journalistic integrity has really gone down the drain lately.

B.B.

I appreciate the transparency, personally, and that's not just because I think Tigereye Bloodgun is the #1 hottie of public radio. Are you sure you still wanna do the walk out?

CAMERON

Honestly, B.B. I know the odds are against us, but I really feel if we can just get enough people together to stand up for what's right, we can make some change. Real change! So, are you with me?

B.B.

Hmm. I don't know. I'm sort of in my 'nerdy everyman' arc right now. I feel I need a proper Joker-esque push to lose faith in the system and turn into a full-on insurgent of chaos.

CAMERON

You know, a lot of people really like bad kids. Just saying, if the walk-out goes well you could come out pretty popular, not just with the school but with everyone. You could even get an interview with Tigereye Bloodgun.

B.B.

Hoo mama! You've got a deal. KSSH - Now you've got a friend in the jewelry business! - KSSH.

CAMERON

I'll take that as a yes! Come on, let's go.

CAMERON runs off stage, followed by B.B.
They pause, before returning back to their seat
and listening.

B.B.

Oh my god, Deathray just said he cheated on her with not one, but two other girls!

CAMERON

Broadcast!

B.B.

Coming!

They exit.

SCENE 4

CAMERON and B.B. enter, carrying with them a packet of flyers. Some students walk by, none of them paying any attention. A student walks by CAMERON. They try to get their attention.

CAMERON

Hi! We're planning a student walk-out tomorrow at noon. Would you be willing to-

The student ignores them. Another student walks on by.

CAMERON

Hi! Our walk-out is for a really good cause. Not just for non-mutants but for everyone!

The other student ignores them.

CAMERON

Ugh, this is impossible. I thought high schoolers were all about sticking it to the man.

B.B.

Only if it's - KSSH - Trending now! - KSSH - Have you thought of a hashtag yet?

CAMERON

No, I didn't think I'd need one-

B.B.

#SoftWormRights.

CAMERON

Yeah, no thank you.

B.B.

Historically gurilla marketing tactics have always been fairly effective. Subtly plug your product, and let the invisible hand of propaganda do its dirty work.

A slightly sleepy student wanders by. B.B. jumps in front of them, shoving a pamphlet in their face.

B.B.

HI! COME TO OUR STUDENT WALK-OUT! IT'S TOMORROW! YOU SHOULD COME! - KSSH - COME ONE, COME ALL - KSSH -.

The student runs away.

CAMERON

Whoa, okay, okay. Let's take several steps back.

B.B.

Hmm. You're right. Maybe that was too subtle. I'll up the ante next time.

CAMERON

Yeah, I think we're good there. I just wish there was a way we could get a bunch of people on board fast.

B.B.

Unfortunately we're in a bit of a tough spot here, Cam. We - KSSH - wish that I could be like the cool kids - KSSH - but at the end of the day we're just - KSSH - a creep, I'm a weirdo. - KSSH -.

SKULLBASHER and his posse of jocks enter.

CAMERON

Yeah, if only we had some more leverage.

B.B.

We could ask Skullbasher.

CAMERON

Oh, that could be a smart move- WHAT? B.B.! He threatened to snap my arm in two equal halves like a pretzel stick!

B.B.

Or a baby carrot?

CAMERON

Or a baby carrot!

B.B.

That's just how he makes friends. I don't think he's so bad when you get to know him. Out of all the people who shove me into lockers on the regular, he's the most gentle.

CAMERON

Well that's a relief. Listen, I hear what you're saying but with what we're trying to accomplish with the walk out, I just don't think that Skullbasher is-

SKULLBASHER

Did somebody say my name?

CAMERON

- is! So! Cool and muscular and attractive.

SKULLBASHER

This is true. I am those things.

CAMERON

Yeah, love the confidence, bud. Anyways we were about to leave so-

CAMERON turns around, only to see B.B.
subtly encouraging them. They sigh.

CAMERON

Actually, we were wondering if you maybe wanted to come support our walk out? Having you on our side would be a big help to the cause and-

SKULLBASHER

A... walk out?

CAMERON

Yeah! To make the school more accessible.

SKULLBASHER

Can I see that?

CAMERON

S-sure!

CAMERON hands him the flyer.
SKULLBASHER squints at it

SKULLBASHER

... Making morning scrimmages optional?

CAMERON

It's one of our biggest goals.

SKULLBASHER

But everyone does the scrimmage.

CAMERON

Yes, but you know, they're really dangerous and a lot of people can and do get hurt.

SKULLBASHER

So... you wouldn't have to... scrimmage? At all?

CAMERON

Yes! I mean, you remember! Back before the wars, schools didn't have any battle royales. Just saying, something to think about.

SKULLBASHER is at the cusp of a life-changing realization before he is interrupted by-

COACH STEELFIST

SKULLBASHER!

COACH STEELFIST enters, fuming.

COACH STEELFIST

What's the hold up, man? Practice started two seconds ago!

CAMERON

Okay, that's barely late-

COACH STEELFIST

Not an excuse! Get your butt over to footbrawl practice NOW!

CAMERON

I'm sorry. Footbrawl?

COACH STEELFIST

Yeah! Footbrawl! You know, the sport where teams of five work together to fight the giant snakewolf that burrows under the school.

CAMERON

Still not tracking.

COACH STEELFIST

Because you're brawling a monster that lives under your feet! That's the name! That's why we call it footbrawl!

CAMERON

That's stupid.

COACH STEELFIST

Well nobody gives a flying foie what you think, soft worm!

SKULLBASHER

Sorry, coach. I was talking to them about their... walk out.

COACH STEELFIST

Walk out? What in the-

COACH STEELFIST forcefully rips the flyer from SKULLBASHER's hand.

COACH STEELFIST

"HUMAN HUMAN RIGHTS WALK-OUT: September 27th, 2053, at the parking lot by the quicksand pit. Stand up and fight for our non-mutant classmates" I see you scribbled out the "s" here-

B.B.

Yeah, we technically only have one.

COACH STEELFIST

"No more lava pits. No more death traps. No more scrimmages-" Who the heck do you think you are? Spreading this- this worm propaganda everywhere!

CAMERON snatches the flyer back.

CAMERON

It isn't worm propaganda, Coach. I'm demanding for some accommodations around here. And you know- I don't think I'm the only one. There are a ton of kids here who would probably be better off without all the hazards this place presents. Like look at B.B.! Their safety here is just as important as everyone else's.

COACH STEELFIST

Please! Soundcloud over here's barely a student.

B.B.

It's true. The school only registers me as half a person to save money on buses.

CAMERON

Aw, dude.

COACH STEELFIST

Oh, oh this is too good. You really think just cause you're some precious little sandflake-

B.B.

(aside)

Note how she didn't say snowflake. Well, that's because it's the future. Global warming is real, kids. Look it up.

COACH STEELFIST

-you think you deserve special treatment.

CAMERON

It isn't special treatment! It's equity!

COACH STEELFIST

Jokes on you, kid. I don't even know what that word means! Jeez, Skullbasher, get a load of this-

SKULLBASHER

Actually, I- uh-

COACH STEELFIST turns to find
SKULLBASHER who seems deeply
uncomfortable.

COACH STEELFIST

Actually you what?

SKULLBASHER

I think that Cameron may have, um, some- some good-

COACH STEELFIST

Some what? Come on, you're a big boy. Spit it out.

SKULLBASHER says nothing.

COACH STEELFIST

Yeah, that's what I thought. Now, do you want everyone on the Footbrawl team thinking you're a soft worm?

SKULLBASHER

No, coach.

COACH STEELFIST

And do you want your daddy thinking you're a soft worm?

SKULLBASHER

No, coach!

COACH STEELFIST

That's right, because you're not a soft worm! What are you?

SKULLBASHER

I'm- I'm-

COACH STEELFIST

WHAT ARE YOU?

SKULLBASHER

I'M SKULLBASHER!

COACH STEELFIST

AND WHAT DOES SKULLBASHER DO?

SKULLBASHER

HE BASHES SKULLS!

SKULLBASHER lets out a howl as he runs up and down the hallway.

He finds some random student and bashes their skull in. COACH STEELFIST cheers.

COACH STEELFIST

That's my boy! Now get on the field!

SKULLBASHER exits. CAMERON attempts to follow.

CAMERON

Hey, wait, Skull-

COACH STEELFIST

Nuh-uh! You're not getting anymore soft worm ideas in that kid's head. And your stupid walk out? Cancelled!

She takes the flyers from CAMERON's hand and stomps them into the ground. COACH STEELFIST exits.

CAMERON

Y-you can't cancel a walk out! It's an act of dissent!

(shouting offstage)

The masses will not be silenced!

B.B.

I don't think she can hear you anymore.

CAMERON

Yeah, yeah I know.

B.B.

- KSSH - Is it too late now to say sorry? - KSSH -

CAMERON

No, no. It's fine. I just don't get how we're going to get the word out about this walk out now.

MURDER MEOW approaches.

MURDER MEOW

Meowdy, Cammy Cat!

CAMERON

Ah! Murder Meow, you have got to stop sneaking up on me like that.

MURDER MEOW

Sowwy, I've always had a bit of a purroblem with that. My purrents tried to bell me once.

CAMERON

That's disturbing.

MURDER MEOW

(like a normal person)

Yeah, my family is deeply dysfunctional.

(back to cat puns)

But enyaugh about me! Do you need any help getting the word around the kitty town about your lil' pawlk out?

CAMERON

Yeah, actually. Would you be willing to help with that?

MURDER MEOW

Totally! As class purreresident, I run the announcements.

B.B.

Oh yeah, with your - KSSH - part time lover -KSSH -, Deathlaser!

MURDER MEOW

I'm sorry, who?

B.B.

You know! The guy who cheated on you with two other girls-

CAMERON

Yeah, actually, if you could put the word out for us, that'd be awesome! Thank you.

MURDER MEOW

Hey, anything for you Cammy Cat! Purraces, everyone!

She claps.

SCENE 5

Spotlight on MURDER MEOW!
 DEATHLASER, who dresses like the coolest
 guy to ever cool even though he is anything but,
 enters as the stage shifts to the afternoon
 announcements.

MURDER MEOW

D to the S to the C to the H!

DEATHLASER

We're Deathsurge County, in your face!

MURDER MEOW

Bringing the afternoon announcements straight to you!

DEATHLASER

Repping the Snakewolves all day, sssnAWOOOO!

MURDER MEOW

Good afternyoon, Deathsurge County High. I'm Murder Meow.

DEATHLASER

And I'm Deathla-

MURDER MEOW

And this afternoon we have some very special meowncements! Due to Dr. Gutwrench's absence, math club will now be meeting in the toxic waste dump beneath the gymnasium today. Mathletes, remember to bring both your calculators and your Geiger counters.

DEATHLASER

Also-

MURDER MEOW

Also! Footbrawl practice on Wednesday of next week will be cancelled. PSYCH! JUST KIDDING! Snakewolves never take a break! sssnAWOOOO. Signed, Coach Steelfist.

DEATHLASER

Finally-

MURDER MEOW

And finally, students of Deathsurge County High? Are you sick of constant booby traps? Tired of getting a limb chopped off on the daily? Just exhausted of the constant schoolwide battle royales? Well we're fighting to make a change! Join Cameron Greer for the human rights walk-out, tomorrow at noon! Be there and fight the purrower! Meow!

DEATHLASER

... Babe, look. I'm sorry.

MURDER MEOW

Are you really doing this right now?

DEATHLASER

It was just one kiss I swear.

MURDER MEOW

Okay, cut the mics.

DEATHLASER

I still love you.

MURDER MEOW

Cut the mics!

The afternoon announcements end, and word starts to spread. The following sequence is entirely silent, but feel free to have fun with the choreography.

One member of the STUDENT body tells another who tells another, and they tell their friends, and they tell theirs and so on and so on and so on.

Eventually, the entire school has heard about the walk out, and some of them have to admit- they are sick of constantly getting mauled.

SCENE 6

It's the day of the walk-out, and surprise, surprise! There's a pretty sizable crowd here! CAMERON and B.B. enter, protest gear in hand to find the crowd of supporters.

CAMERON

Oh my god. Broadcast! Look at this!

B.B.

It's beautiful.

MURDER MEOW enters, holding a megaphone.

CAMERON

Murder Meow! Hey! I really can't thank you enough. This is incredible.

MURDER MEOW

Hey, just doing what I can to help the claws!

B.B.

Sorry about all that stuff with Deathlaser, by the way.

MURDER MEOW

Aw, thanks! But hey, this isn't about lil' ol' meow or my douchey ex. This is about doing what's right. Cameron, the stage is purrs.

She hands CAMERON the mega-phone.
CAMERON stands center stage.

CAMERON

Students of Deathsurge County High! Ever since the war ended, we have been impaled, bludgeoned, beaten, and internally combusted by the very institution that is supposed to protect and educate us!

RANDOM STUDENT

One time I caught lymphoma!

CAMERON

One time that guy caught lymphoma! But no more. Today we take a stand. Today we fight the system. Today we say, “NO MORE SCRIMMAGES!”

The students begin chanting “NO MORE SCRIMMAGES” until-

COACH STEELFIST

No more WHAT?

Everything comes to a screeching halt as COACH STEELFIST enters, followed by SKULLBASHER and the rest of the Footbrawl team.

CAMERON

We said “No more scrimmages.”

COACH STEELFIST

Sorry, I didn’t hear y-

CAMERON

(firmer)

We said “No more scrimmages.” We’re tired of this administration failing us, so we’re taking matters into our own hands.

B.B.

Yeah, suck it!

CAMERON

Tell her, B.B.!

COACH STEELFIST

We’ll take it into your hands on your own time, sweetie! You’re interrupting class!

MR. SHARP, still trapped in the suit, enters.

MR. SHARP

You know, she’s got a point, Cameron. This is very disruptive and completely against our Code of Conduct.

CAMERON

Screw your code of conduct! These rules aren't helping anyone! Not me, not you, and not Skullbasher either!

COACH STEELFIST walks up.

COACH STEELFIST

What do you know about Skullbasher? Why I outta-

CAMERON

Get that fist out of my face!

CAMERON shoves COACH STEELFIST's steel fist to the side. A gasp goes over the crowd. COACH STEELFIST stares down CAMERON.

COACH STEELFIST

Fine then. You wanna play this game? You wanna make change? Then we'll make some change, the same way we've been doing it for years!

CAMERON

Wait, but-

COACH STEELFIST

No buts, soft worm! We're settling this in the way everything's supposed to be settled at Deathsurge County High! With! A! Scrimmage! SKULLBASHER-

SKULLBASHER

Huh?

COACH STEELFIST

C'mon, school board said I'm not allowed to fight kids anymore. Get out there and do it for me!

SKULLBASHER

But- but-

COACH STEELFIST grabs SKULLBASHER by his collar.

COACH STEELFIST

What did I tell you about being a soft worm?

SKULLBASHER nods, before getting up and entering the ring. COACH STEELFIST yells to the other students.

COACH STEELFIST

Y'all know what to do!

The students begin stomping in rhythm, something akin to "We Will, We Will Rock You." You know the beat. SKULLBASHER circles CAMERON.

CAMERON

Hey, hey, wait wait wait wait-

B.B.

Ladies, gentlemen, and those of us who are hot, we've got ourselves a - KSSH - BIG TIME - KSSH - scrimmage!

CAMERON

B.B.!

B.B.

Sorry. I thought people would think I'm cooler if I showed my face more often, so I volunteered as an announcer.

CAMERON

Understandable, but I still feel betrayed.

B.B.

And you're valid for that. In the left corner, weighing in at 573 pounds, he's the big snakewolf on campus and the reigning champion of Footbrawl, it's Skullbasher!

SKULLBASHER stands stoically.

B.B.

And in the right corner, weighing in at 102 pounds, they're the baddest (and only) human at Deathsurge County High, the all-star survivor with baby carrot arms! It's Cameron Greer! Alright, I want a clean match from both of you and- oh, wait.

I'm getting a signal from Coach Steelfist. Yep. Okay. She wants this match as dirty as possible, so forget that last part. GO!

CAMERON and SKULLBASHER engage in a truly epic combat, and by epic I mean CAMERON runs back and forth with wild abandon as SKULLBASHER chases them around the field. Everyone ad libs cheering for one side or the other. Eventually, CAMERON is cornered.

COACH STEELFIST

HA! Any last words, soft worm?

CAMERON

I... am not... a soft worm!

CAMERON jumps up, with a wild scream. With all their might, they pound their fist down onto SKULLBASHER's head. SKULLBASHER goes down. Everything stops. Silence.

DEATHLASER

Yo... they bashed his skull.

CAMERON has nothing to say to this. They run offstage.

SCENE 7

Somewhere outside the school. CAMERON enters and eventually runs out of breath, stopping. They collapse.

B.B. (O.S.)

Cameron? Cameron? - KSSH - Oh, what a mess! - KSSH -

MURDER MEOW (O.S.)

Hey! I think they're over there!

MURDER MEOW and B.B. enter. They run to Cameron's side.

B.B.

Cameron! Are you - KSSH - okay? - KSSH -

CAMERON

Yeah, yeah. I'm fine. Just, uh, slight panic attack. We're all good.

MURDER MEOW

Panic attack's aren't 'all good,' Cammy Cat.

CAMERON

Yeah, well, big shocker there. Sorry. I'm guessing the protest is over?

B.B.

Coach Steelfist forced everyone to leave, declared the match a draw, and... let's see... I'm listening in on the board of directors meeting now. Yep. Yep. Yeah. Virtually nothing is going to change.

CAMERON

Awesome. Love that. Look, we might have failed but... I seriously can't thank you guys enough. B.B., you've helped me this whole time, and look. I don't know if it means much, but even if you're not 'popular' or whatever, I like you a lot.

B.B.

If I wasn't emotionally stunted I would be crying real tears.

CAMERON

And Murder Meow, you've been incredible too. You know, it's weird, there was a time when I was kind of annoyed by you but at this point I think you're, like, genuinely one of the nicest people at this school.

MURDER MEOW

Aw, thanks Cam Cam! I know people think I'm a bit grating at first, but in the end they see that I'm a real cat-ch!

CAMERON

Okay, don't push it.

SKULLBASHER enters. MURDER MEOW and B.B. stand in the way of him and CAMERON.

SKULLBASHER

Hi. Can I talk to Cameron?

MURDER MEOW and B.B. look to CAMERON. CAMERON nods.

CAMERON

Yeah. Sorry guys. Can you give us some space?

They nod and exit. SKULLBASHER comes and stands next to CAMERON. There's a moment of silence.

SKULLBASHER

Nobody's bashed my skull before.

CAMERON

Yeah, well I've never bashed in someone's skull, so I guess there's a first time for everything. Did it hurt?

SKULLBASHER

No. It was surprising.

CAMERON

Well that's good.

Another pause.

CAMERON

Skullbasher, are you, like, happy?

SKULLBASHER

I'm sorry?

CAMERON

Doing you know, everything that you do. Do you like it?

SKULLBASHER

... Do you want to hear a cool fact?

CAMERON

I don't know if this is the best time-

SKULLBASHER

When they turned me into a mutant, they mixed my DNA with shark blood.

CAMERON

Okay, that is super cool, actually.

SKULLBASHER

So cool. But the thing is about sharks is that they don't stop swimming. Ever. It's constant motion, pushing back the waves, moving and moving and moving. And if you ever catch your breath, if you ever take a break, if you ever think about stopping, you die. That's how sharks live. That's how I live.

CAMERON

... Skullbasher, you know that's just a myth, right?

SKULLBASHER

What?

CAMERON

Yeah, who told you that?

SKULLBASHER

My dad screams it in my face, like, at least once a week.

CAMERON

Geez. Well, it's not true. Back in the early 1900s, this woman named Eugene Clark discovered that quite a few species of sharks pretty frequently stop to rest and recover.

SKULLBASHER

Why do you know so much about marine biology?

CAMERON

What, am I not allowed to have hobbies?

SKULLBASHER

Sorry. This is besides the point. Coach Steelfist, my team, Dad- everyone relies on me. I'm the captain of the footbrawl team. It's what I have to do.

CAMERON

Skullbasher, remind me again what the footbrawl team does.

SKULLBASHER

We wrestle a giant half-snake half-wolf hybrid deep beneath the Earth's crust-

CAMERON

Are you hearing how insane that sounds? Before the apocalypse most people would die if they did that! I can't imagine the amount of pressure you're under.

SKULLBASHER

Well, quite a lot of pressure. As I mentioned, we play deep below the Earth's crust-

CAMERON

Literally! It's not reasonable. Not for me, not for you, not for anybody. I get that everyone at this school is super strong, or super fast, or virtually indestructible, and hey, if they're lucky they might get something fun like cat ears.

MURDER MEOW ducks back in and does a lil'
"Meow!"

CAMERON

But I think even with all that, deep down we're all the same. Underneath all that shark DNA, you've still got a human heart.

SKULLBASHER pauses, taking this all in.

SKULLBASHER

Can I hug you?

CAMERON

Uh, sure-

Before they can fully respond SKULLBASHER
pulls them into a deep hug.

SKULLBASHER

I'm tired, Cameron.

CAMERON

We all are, buddy. We all are.

They break the hug.

SKULLBASHER

I am sorry about calling you a soft worm. It was very rude of me.

CAMERON

Eh, don't sweat it big guy. Honestly, I'm starting to think being a soft worm isn't the worst thing to be. Like yeah, I'm squishy. I die easily. I'm not the toughest. But hey, who is?

SKULLBASHER

Hmm. Well if you are a soft worm, and you bested me in combat, then I suppose that I am, right now at least, an even softer worm.

CAMERON

Hey, I guess we have that in common. Soft worm buddies?

SKULLBASHER

Soft worm buddies.

They fist bump. It's epic.

CAMERON

Welp, the walk out was a bust, so I guess I should go home and get ready for tomorrow's morning scrimmage.

SKULLBASHER

But you'll obviously be hurt.

CAMERON

Hey, don't worry. I'm used to it.

SKULLBASHER pauses.

SKULLBASHER

I see. I will see you tomorrow, Cameron. Goodbye.

He very quickly exits.

CAMERON

Hey, wait, where are you-

He's already gone. CAMERON smiles to
themselves, and shakes their head before exiting.

SCENE 8

We enter once again on a horrific day at Deathsurge County High. CAMERON enters, much like they did at the top of the show.

CAMERON

Well Greer, you did your best, but like many of history's greatest revolutionaries, you were taken down at your peak.

They spread their arms out, getting ready for their inevitable fate.

CAMERON

Let's just hope they don't kill me too bad.

A whistle blows, and once again the students rush in, ready for their morning scrimmage. CAMERON braces themselves for the pain when-

SKULLBASHER

STOP!

Everyone does. SKULLBASHER enters, and stands so everyone can see him.

SKULLBASHER

Deathsurge County High. Hello. My name is Skullbasher. I bash skulls. You all know me. Their name is Cameron.

He points to CAMERON.

SKULLBASHER

They are a human. You all know them. You also all know by now that Cameron is not a mutant. But while their body is very weak, their mind is strong and their heart is stronger. They are my friend. If you break them, I break you. Is that understood?

Everyone nods in agreement.

CAMERON

Skullbasher!

SKULLBASHER

You are my soft worm buddy. I don't abandon my soft worm buddy.

CAMERON

Oh, could you also extend that amnesty to my friend Broadcast Bandit? They're also very soft.

SKULLBASHER

Nobody hurt B.B. either!

B.B.

Yay! My arc is resolved!

COACH STEELFIST

Hey! What the in the waste dump is this?

COACH STEELFIST marches in.

COACH STEELFIST

I thought we wrapped this up yesterday at the human hippie walk! Nobody gets special treatment! Nobody!

MURDER MEOW

Oh, not this again!

SKULLBASHER

Don't worry. I'll handle this. Coach Steelfist, I respect you deeply as a mentor, so I will resolve this as civilly as possible.

He grabs her by the head. For the first time, we see fear in her eyes.

SKULLBASHER

What is my name?

COACH STEELFIST

Skullbasher?

SKULLBASHER

And what do I do?

COACH STEELFIST

B-bash skulls?

SKULLBASHER

Great. Now get to your office.

She's too stunned to move.

SKULLBASHER

NOW!

She runs. Everyone cheers.

SKULLBASHER

Alright everyone, you know what time it is. Let's scrimmage!

Everyone runs offstage, leaving CAMERON alone with a big ol' smile on their face. They pull out their phone.

CAMERON

October 26th, 2052

Dear Diary,

It's me again, Cameron. Your favorite little survivalist, though surviving has been a lot easier lately. Ever since Skullbasher gave me and B.B. "scrimmage immunity," the quality of life around here has been going way up! And guess what? It's not just us two.

B.B. and MURDER MEOW enter. B.B. holds a clipboard.

B.B.

Deathlaser got a knee injury Sunday while holding a boombox blasting "Can You Feel the Love Tonight" on Murder Meow's front lawn, so he's getting immunity for the rest of the week. That brings us to... forty mutants that are off-limits.

MURDER MEOW

Mmm, I guess he deserves a break too. Even though he's a lousy cheater. Three other girls! Three!

B.B.

Oh, tea?

CAMERON

We've extended the immunity grabs to whoever wants it! Turns out there's no rules in the scrimmage handbook that says everyone can't just ignore a few people, and let me tell you we are milking that loophole for everything it's worth. B.B. has been doing a great job so far keeping track of it all, and the students are loving them.

B.B.

(aside)

Note how they said everyone loves me. That's right. I'm the hottest radio-telepathic semi-narcissist to ever grace the toxic wasteland, and don't you forget it. Tigereye Bloodgun hasn't reached out yet, but she'll come around. They always come around.

They wink.

CAMERON

Now, I'll admit. It's not perfect. I mean, let's be honest, a system that runs entirely on peer pressure is always going to be a bit unstable. Luckily, someone I know is very good at peer pressure.

SKULLBASHER enters, slumping over.

CAMERON

Hey, Skullbasher. How's the scrimmage today?

SKULLBASHER

Bad. Headache. Bashed too many skulls with my skull.

CAMERON

Yeah, bud, that's gonna happen. You need to take a breather?

SKULLBASHER

Can I?

CAMERON

Absolutely.

SKULLBASHER takes a seat.

CAMERON

And you know, things aren't perfect here. There are still lava pits and locust swarms and toxic waste dumps, but hey, in the end, I've got these guys.

School sucks, the administration sucks, the apocalypse sucks, but when push comes to shove, I know there are people in my corner, and they know I'm in theirs. Gosh, what am I even trying to say here? Be good to each other. Be good to yourself. Don't assume cat girls are always annoying because some of them are really chill. Look man, it's early and I've got to get to math class so- until next time, this is soft worm, signing off.

CAMERON closes the journal.

END

Developmental Goals

Deathsurge County High was originally written as a ten-minute play for the Kennedy Center VSA Playwright Discovery Program, a competition that highlights the works of disabled writers. It was later expanded upon from 10 minutes to around 45 minutes, give or take a few, in my Playwriting I class at NYU. While on the surface it is a very silly play about mutants and monsters and trying to survive in a post-apocalyptic world all while not failing math class, it's also a very personal piece. As someone with autism who went through the many trials of American public school disability aid programs, I know what it's like to be Cameron; the kid who doesn't quite fit in, not because they don't want to but because it's quite literally not in their DNA.

For that reason, my goal for this piece to eventually be published and able to be licensed to high schools to be performed at school events and festivals (preferably for a cheap price because I know most high school theater budgets are lint and pennies). I was heavily involved in my high school's drama program, and doing so gave both helped me build my confidence and gave me a place to be seen as a young gay neurodivergent man. I want to give other teens like me- the misfits and the outcasts, the 'theatre kids' of the world- the chance to feel seen just like I did. Having the O'Neill Theatre Center help with workshopping this piece would be astronomically beneficial in getting it to the point where I would be ready to publish it. It would also be amazing to potentially get some insight on writing for high schoolers specifically, as well as insight on writing plays that don't quite fit within the rules of our reality (I saw that one of your script readers, Alex Olesky, was involved with Broke People Play Festival's production of *Pink Morph Suits*, which was a play I also loved).

Thank you so much for considering this piece, and I hope to hear from you soon!

Signed,
Roan Lucas