

030 YOUNG NICHOLAS
Stop! Please!

031 BOY 1
(mockingly)
Where's your man-god now?

MORE PUNCHES. NICHOLAS TRIES TO SHIELD HIMSELF.
ONE FINAL HARD PUNCH. NICHOLAS GRUNTS IN PAIN.

032 BOY 2
Come on, Titus, we're done here.

THE BOYS GRAB THE BALL AND LEAVE. YOUNG NICHOLAS
SLOWLY GETS UP, SNIFFLING. FADE OUT SCENE.

6 INT. NICHOLAS' HOME - EVENING

THE LOW CRACKLE OF A FIRE. EPIPHANIUS (30S) AND
JOHANNA (20S) SIT AT A WOODEN TABLE. THE GENTLE
CLINK OF CERAMIC DISHES AND CUPS AS THEY FINISH
THEIR EVENING MEAL.

033 EPIPHANIUS
The ships have returned with fine
goods from Alexandria. Spices,
grains, wool. God has blessed us
again this season. Let us share
with those in need, Johanna.

START >>>

034 JOHANNA
I was thinking of the widow Elara
and her children. I heard they're
having trouble finding work, even
within our own community.

035 EPIPHANIUS
Then we shall prepare a generous
portion of grain and some warm
clothing. We can send a cart with
it tomorrow and -

THE DOOR CREAKS OPEN. YOUNG NICHOLAS ENTERS.

036 YOUNG NICHOLAS
(sniffling)
Good evening Mama. Papa...

JOHANNA GASPS AND RUSHES TOWARDS HIM.

037 EPIPHANIUS
Nicholas! What happened to you?

038 JOHANNA

Come here, let me see. Sit down.

NICHOLAS SITS. WATER POURED INTO A BOWL, CLOTH
IS WRUNG OUT.

039 JOHANNA (CONT'D)

This may sting a little.

DAMP CLOTH DABBING, WALLA: NICHOLAS WINCES.

040 EPIPHANIUS

Nicholas, who did this to you?

041 YOUNG NICHOLAS

(voice cracking)

Some boys... They wouldn't let me
play with them.

042 EPIPHANIUS

And?

043 YOUNG NICHOLAS

(sniffling)

They said... they said Jesus isn't
God. They said that He's just a
man.

BRIEF PAUSE, CLOTH BEING DIPPED BACK IN WATER.

044 JOHANNA

He is both, Nicholas. Jesus is God,
and He is a Man.

045 YOUNG NICHOLAS

I know, but why? If He's powerful,
why become weak? Why become one of
us?

JOHANNA KISSES YOUNG NICHOLAS' FOREHEAD.

046 JOHANNA

Because the greatest power is love.

047 YOUNG NICHOLAS

Love?

048 EPIPHANIUS

Remember what the Apostle John
wrote: *"For God so loved the world
that He gave His only Son, so that
everyone who believes in him may
not perish but may have eternal
life."*

049 YOUNG NICHOLAS

I'm not sure I understand...

050 JOHANNA

The Son of God, in His boundless love for us, chose freely to take on a human body to be close to us. This is what true love looks like, Nicholas - giving everything, even oneself, for another.

051 YOUNG NICHOLAS

So... when they mocked Jesus, they were mocking love?

052 JOHANNA

Yes, but they don't know that.

053 YOUNG NICHOLAS

When they said those things about our Lord... I felt my blood boiling inside me, a fire in my fists. I wanted to hit them back, but they were bigger and they pushed me down... Is it okay to defend Jesus with my fists?

054 JOHANNA

Words should always be our first choice, Nicholas.

055 YOUNG NICHOLAS

But they weren't listening to my words.

056 JOHANNA

Remember how our Lord responded when he was beaten? Did he strike back?

057 YOUNG NICHOLAS

No, but he did overturn the tables in the Temple when people were disrespecting God's house.

058 EPIPHANIUS

(playfully)

He's got you there, Mama.

059 JOHANNA

I could use some help, Papa.

<<< END

EPIPHANIUS kneels in front of NICHOLAS, taking his hand.