

Scene One: MHU Campus - Day

1. CAMPUS NOISES: STUDENTS WALKING IN THE GRASS,
TALKING ABOUT CLASS, LAUGHING, ETC. _____

2. ORALENE SIMMONS: Dearest Mr. Anderson. My name is Oralene Graves Simmons and I am your great-great-granddaughter. Hello. I've been wanting to write you for a while now and today seemed like a good day to do it.

3. SOUND: TREES RUSTLING IN THE WIND

4. I'm sitting under a hickory tree and I can't help but wonder if you also sat down under this very tree. I wonder if you ate the hickory nut as food. Did you walk across the very path I did before I sat down today? What a thought, huh? There are so many trees here on campus: Oak, Pine, Tulip, Maples, Ash, and Hickory. My favorite is the Cherry Tree. Trees make me think of you. I like their strength. *(beat)* Did you hear those kids laughing a moment ago? Enjoying their day? Those are the white kids. Those are the kids who gather together to relax after class, to discuss the day's lectures, and laugh at something silly that they saw earlier. Those are the kids that tell me I don't belong here. It is 1961 and I am the first black woman to attend Mars Hill University. *(BEAT)* Sometimes I don't know if I can do it.

Sometimes I feel as thin as this paper I'm holding. But then I think of you and I am reminded that paper comes from trees.

Scene Two: Mars Hill - Day

1. SOUND: PATRIOTIC MUSIC & CELEBRATION; NON-SPECIFIC. SLOW BUILD & SLOW FADE DURING DIALOGUE.
2. WALTER N. JOHNSON These *Chautauquas* shall be a mingling of good men for a common good. It is my hope that men of all races enter the 1930s feeling free to share equal space in this world.
3. STUDENT #2 The 1930s? Who was this guy?
4. STUDENT #1 A baptist minister named Walter Johnson. He was also a teacher here, when it was called Mars Hill College.
5. Walter N. Johnson We plan to have at MHC another Interracial Retreat July 19 to 26. From Saturday until Friday we expect to have in attendance then a small group of people, Cherokees, Croatans, Negroes, Caucasians. They will all be voluntarily assembled in the equality of a Christian fellowship.
6. STUDENT #3 He held these gatherings he called Chautauquas regularly. He struggled with the teachings of Jesus Christ and the realities of Jim Crow. He wanted to unite men of all races and ethnicities. His focus was to sort of

"school" the white man on religious teachings and how they applied to racism.

7. WALTER N JOHNSON For 7 days, there will be no discrimination in race nor color nor class as to the roof under which we sleep nor as to the table at which we eat.
8. STUDENT #2 That's amazing. I can't believe that was going on 100 years ago.
9. STUDENT #1 Still didn't receive as much attention as the founder's day celebration and the recreation of the "Old Black Joe" story, though.

Scene Three: MHU Campus - Day

10. SOUND: "FOUNDERS DAY". MUSIC CELEBRATION AND "OLD BLACK JOE" DRAMA CLIP OR ANY VAUDEVILLE MINSTREL CLIP
11. STUDENT #1 In 1856 Mars Hill University, then French Broad Baptist Institute had a debt to pay to a local contracting company for their first school building. A slave owner, Jesse Anderson, decided to levy his slave Joe as payment for his portion of the debt.
12. STUDENT #2 Wait, what? Really?
13. STUDENT #1 And apparently the sheriff showed up with the contracting company and took Joe away in chains in front of his family.

14. STUDENT #2 Really? That happened here? What was their plan? How does that even work?
15. STUDENT #3 They were simply going to rip him away from his family and sell him to another slave owner
16. STUDENT #2 Wow. That's so messed up.
17. STUDENT #1 Happened all the time.
18. STUDENT #2 I can't even imagine.
19. STUDENT #3 But the founders were able to raise the money
20. STUDENT #2 So what happened to Joe?
21. STUDENT #1 He was able to get re-purchased and go back to his master and family.
22. STUDENT #2 That's unbelievable
23. STUDENT #1 What's unbelievable is that Joe was a brick maker by trade and built that very building.
24. STUDENT #2 Really? No way..
25. STUDENT #3 Later his remains were moved from an unmarked grave and he was named one of the founders, in a big ceremony. There's a monument to him on Joe Anderson Rd.
26. STUDENT #2 I've seen that road. Wow. Okay, so when did the ceremony happen? That's great.

27. STUDENT #3 In the 1920s. I'm sure the idea behind it came from a good place, but the reality is it only perpetuated the white community's Lost Cause agenda.
28. STUDENT #2 What's the Lost Cause?
29. SOUND PATRIOTIC UNDERSCORING
30. MARY JOHNSON AVERY Those great and noble freeman so loved and so trusted their slaves...later proven when the masters went forth to war, abolition of slavery being an issue, they left these same slaves to care for their wives and children, knowing they would protect them with their very lives
31. STUDENT #2 Wait. So, when the slave owners went to fight for their right-in quotes- to own slaves, their slaves stayed home and took care of the slave owner's family?
32. STUDENT #3 Yes
33. STUDENT #2 Oh, wow. So they celebrated slave ownership like slaves were just simply part of the family?
34. STUDENT #1 Yes. It helped perpetuate their idea that both sides were heroic in the civil war.
35. STUDENT #2 That explains the monuments. And man, do white people love their monuments.
36. STUDENT #3 The idea of The Lost Cause helped give the people of Mars Hill a way to pat themselves on the

back when it came to Joe Anderson, while still adhering to Jim Crow.

37. STUDENT #1 I mean, they referred to him as "Old Black Joe" like he was some minstrel character and not a man under 30. He became almost fictional in the magical way he was portrayed. By doing this they were able to remove the college's hand in this, because he was a hero. So this not only negated his story but the stories of so many others.

38. STUDENT #3 And even as times began to change, and even as the university became integrated, white students still performed his story in blackface.

39. STUDENT #2 Oh, wow. That is so messed up.

40. STUDENT #1 Friend, get this: his great-great granddaughter saw a performance of this when she was five years old.

41. SOUND: BACKGROUND NOISE FROM THIS SHOW IF AVAILABLE. IF NOT, ANY MINSTREL VAUDEVILLE ACT OF BLACKFACE

42. ORALENE SIMMONS Seeing him portrayed like that made me want to go to that college. I was very troubled he had built a school for white students to attend.

43. STUDENT #1 It's a good thing I wasn't there, cuz I woulda gotten on that stage.

44. STUDENT #3 Girl, who you tellin'?

45. STUDENT #2 ...so messed up
46. STUDENT #3 Even though by the 1980s, Joe Anderson was being played in school dramatizations by an African American, less than twenty years before, blackface was still on campus, from dramas to beauty pageants, complete with mammy-scarf and burnt cork.
47. STUDENT #1 That's why we got to be sensitive telling the story now.
48. STUDENT #3 And even the 1980s version had a Joe Anderson chained up with tin foil cuffs as if it was a light hearted event.
49. STUDENT #2 Wow. That's... I mean...why haven't I learned any of this? I mean, if it was so much a part of our history here?
50. STUDENT #3 You'd think we would learn this at FYS class right?
51. STUDENT #2 Right. I never learned it.
52. STUDENT #1 I only learned it by walking up Joe Anderson road and seeing the memorial.
53. STUDENT #2 Wow. But, why?
54. STUDENT #3 How do you feel now when racial issues are brought up?
55. STUDENT #2 Really uncomfortable

56. STUDENTS #3 Well, that's probably why.
57. STUDENT #1 The story stopped being told fairly recently. I think the university is still grappling with it. We realize now that we can't tell this story as a cute anecdote or pat ourselves on the back with it, but it makes people uncomfortable.
58. STUDENT #3 I think it makes white people uncomfortable. Like in class: Some classes are more diverse, but some of us end of being, like, one of the only people of color in class. So when we talk about race issues, it ends up being kind of brushed over, and I don't think everyone understands the challenges that goes with that for a black or brown person.
59. STUDENT #2 So it just stopped getting told? Just got swept under the rug? Because it makes white people uncomfortable?
60. STUDENT #1 I think it makes everyone uncomfortable.
61. STUDENT #3 But if, like, both students and professors were educated, not only on this issue, but how to have open dialogue about race, then maybe things'd be different. I mean, every one of us knows what's going on in

