

JACK'S BIG IDEA

Written by

Rachel Bartel & Jacob Katz

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TITLE: "THE MEETING - DAY 1"

INT. MEETING ROOM - EVENING

A large table sits in the middle of a room that's slightly too small for it. Around it, annoyed and passing the time, are JACK, ANASTASIA, and MELVIN (all late-teens/early 20's).

NORRIS, 40s, opens the door and walks into the room. His hair is everywhere, and he's dressed to the chess-club level of the nines. Suspenders underneath a tweed jacket, the works. Behind him is a timid looking freshman, LLOYD.

Anastasia doodles in her notebook, scooting ever-closer to Jack, while Melvin plays rock-paper-scissors with himself and somehow loses. Jack looks up at the door and grimaces.

NORRIS
(to Lloyd)
They're very friendly, I swear. You
should see them when--

He's interrupted by a gale force of person blowing through the door. It's MALLORY, mid-20's, and she is coming in with a *purpose*.

MALLORY
EVERYONE!

Norris backs out of the way.

MALLORY (CONT'D)
This is Lloyd. He heard about us
from his mom--

LLOYD
(nervously)
Our mom...

MALLORY
Lloyd heard about us from some
bitch named Sheila that doesn't
understand taking education at your
own pace, and would love a position
on the team!

NORRIS
Well... Apparently the campus
theater department is having a
conference at the end of the month
to raise--

Jack slaps Norris on the cheek.

JACK
Norris, can't you see!? This is the perfect opportunity to put on...

He jumps up on the table.

JACK (CONT'D)
My biggest idea ever! A musical!

NORRIS
But Jack, you can't, they--

MALLORY
There's no way you wrote a musical!
You spell like... uh....

She pauses, unable to think of a good, family-friendly joke.

MALLORY (CONT'D)
Someone that...can't spell.

She holds her hand up in the air.

MALLORY (CONT'D)
Lloyd, high five me or I'm not driving you home.

Lloyd begrudgingly slaps her a fresh one.

MALLORY (CONT'D)
A musical would be the perfect thing to finally earn my degree and get me out of here for real! And if we want the school to take us *seriously*, then we need someone who can actually write a story! You need help.

JACK
No way! I'm the most creative one here! Who else in here won their school's award for most creative student SIX years in a row?

MALLORY
You were homeschooled! Either write with somebody--

Anastasia swoons at the opportunity to work with Jack.

ANASTASIA
I'll do it!

MALLORY

Either write with *Girl* over there,
or the musical isn't happening.

Jack gives a defeated harumph and sits back down in his chair.

NORRIS

Mallory, you can't put on a
musical, the university--

MALLORY

I SAID FUCK OFF!

NORRIS

(chuckling)
Oh, you kids.

He smiles, shakes his head, and leaves the room. Melvin loses another game of rock-papes-scizz and raises his hand.

MELVIN

Hey guys...?

MALLORY

Assistant Director, I don't know.

MELVIN

Alright, cool... I don't really
know what that is, but I'm gonna be
the best at it! I'll do everything
I can to make this a success!

Jack cuts in.

JACK

If you dilly-dally-ers are done
dillying and/or dallying, I have
the world's BEST musical in mind!

MALLORY

For the last time, Jack, we are not
putting on a show called Anne
Frankenstein!

JACK

But it's her revenge saga!

MALLORY

No!

ANASTASIA

I'll make sure it's something we're
both proud of.

She winks at him and the two of them leave.

LLOYD

Well, what do you want me to do?

MALLORY

I don't know, what's something impossible to fuck up?

LLOYD

I thought mom's credit score, but you proved me wrong.

Mallory stares him down, the anger burning in her eyes like fire.

TITLE: "WRITING - DAY 3"

INT. LOUNGE - LATE AFTERNOON

The meeting room is filled with candy wrappers, chip bags, and soda cans. Jack, Norris, and Anastasia sit around the table.

Norris remains chipper as ever, Anastasia is typing excitedly on her laptop, and death is visible in Jack's eyes.

ANASTASIA

I think I got it!

JACK

What, herpes?

NORRIS

Jack!

ANASTASIA

A contemporary musical about an immigrant coming to the country and having to fight through all the barriers and injustices our legal system has put in place! What do you think?

NORRIS

It sounds amazing! What's the style?

JACK

The style is *bullshit* if you ask me! That's not art! This is!

He reaches into his backpack and takes out an encyclopedia-length script. He scoffs.

JACK (CONT'D)
Just the first draft for a little something I like to call 'West Side Swamp Monster,' a romance in five acts.

Anastasia begins to leaf through it. Her eyes light up.

ANASTASIA
Jack, this is *amazing*...

Norris begins to laugh but his smile fades away when he sees she's serious.

NORRIS
(sobering)
Oh god.

JACK
Swamp monsters are so overplayed though. I was thinking there needs to be some other kind of monster.

ANASTASIA
What about a mix of like Hamilton and vampires?

JACK
You're right! There's no greater monster than America's first Treasurer!

ANASTASIA
(blushing)
Thank you, Jack...

NORRIS
Wait...

JACK
Hamilton vs. Vampires! That's it!

NORRIS
Jack, no--

Jack excitedly runs out of the room.

TITLE: "CASTING - DAY 10"

INT. CLASSROOM - EVENING

Mallory and Melvin sit at a desk that is too small for either of them. Melvin has a frantic list of notes about the people showing up, while Mallory's notes are literally scribbles.

Lloyd sits in the back corner of the room, a hoodie pulled completely over his head, singing along softly to the music on his phone.

MALLORY

Goddamnit. There's like 20 people out there and none of them even come close to the, pale skin, hatred of sunlight, or lust for blood that we need in an Alexander Hamilton!

MELVIN

It's gonna be okay, I promise. I'm not going to rest until we find the absolute best Aaron Van Helsing in town. Who knows, maybe the next person to walk through the door will be--

Jack, dressed in a full Tinker Bell costume with a fake mustache on, slams open the door and struts in.

JACK

(in a fake German accent)
Hello, I am here to audition for the lead. My name is...

MELVIN

Jack, why are you here? You're supposed to be writing with Anastasia.

JACK

Wha...?

MALLORY

Get this shit over with, we have serious actors waiting outside.

Jack clears his throat then puts on the performance of the century. He sings, he dances, he notices Mallory and Melvin looking at him with disdain.

Jack throws a handful of pixie dust, aka Sizzle Stones, a non-copyright infringing candy that crackles when it hits one's tongue, at Mallory and Melvin.

Mallory looks ahead, stone-faced. Melvin licks a single Sizzle Stone off his finger. His eyes grow wide and he starts frantically clapping. Jack looks on at Melvin, a grin creeping across his face.

INT. LIBRARY - EVENING

Mallory and Melvin sit next to each other reviewing their notes. Melvin is eating Sizzle Stones one by one.

MALLORY

I don't know what to do! Everybody sucks! So fucking bad! Jack'll be the lead I *guess*, but how are we going to find people for the other parts?

Mallory starts hyperventilating and rummaging through her purse. She throws a dollar at Melvin.

MELVIN

Mal? You okay?

MALLORY

(crazed)

Take this dollar and go to the vending machine. Get me a bag of cheese puffs. Hurry.

Melvin rushes out of the room. Mallory exits the opposite way, panting.

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

Mallory gulps down water at the drinking fountain, but stops when she hears angelic singing coming from the nearby restrooms. She turns to look, the water hitting her in the ear. After listening for a beat, she rushes into the men's bathroom.

INT. MEN'S BATHROOM - SECONDS LATER

Mallory sneaks in before stopping outside the stall and listening, completely engrossed in the song. She sways to the beat, small tears in the corner of her eyes, before putting her ear to the stall.

Lloyd comes out of the stall and jumps, slamming into the door. Mallory grabs him by the shirt collar.

MALLORY
(surprised)
You!? You can sing!?

LLOYD
No... Why?

MALLORY
Because, Lloyd...

Her eyes sparkle in the worst way.

MALLORY (CONT'D)
(devilish)
You're my new lead.

Lloyd stares at her and gulps. He holds his hands up.

LLOYD
C-can I please wash my hands first?

TITLE: "REHEARSAL - DAY 15"

INT. STAGE - MIDDAY

Anastasia leads an unconfident cast through rehearsal. She claps along to the beat playing from an old radio nearby.

ANASTASIA
Alright, from the middle! A-14, 15,
16, 17!

Jack saunters in through the door. He looks up to see nobody paying attention to him. He jumps up on stage and pushes Anastasia with more force than necessary.

ANASTASIA (CONT'D)
What the hell, turd onion?

She takes a breath to compose herself.

ANASTASIA (CONT'D)
I mean... How's it going?

The actors on stage finish their third-assed version of Anastasia's already half-assed choreography and end on a pose pointing directly at Lloyd, who stands very nervously in the middle of the group.

JACK
What the fuck is going on?

ANASTASIA
(angrily)
Did you not hear? Mallory cast
Lloyd as the lead.

JACK
WHAT!? THAT'S MY ROLE?

MALLORY (O.S.)
LISTEN UP, FUCKERS!

Mallory comes out from backstage and hands Jack a tree costume with an odd, rather pronounced buttflap. Jack seethes with rage.

JACK
And what... the... *fuck*... is this?

MALLORY
Your costume, numb nuts. Put it on,
your solo song is coming up soon.

JACK
I'm sorry, solo SONG? Like, just
one!?

Mallory shushes him and heads backstage. Jack glares at Lloyd with a deep, white-hot hate. Lloyd looks down at his feet, sad and embarrassed.

Jack holds back angry tears, turns around, and goes. He shoves Anastasia to the ground with both hands as he passes.

JACK (CONT'D)
Shut the fuck up, Anastasia!

Anastasia watches him exit, heartbroken.

INT. JACK'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Jack's room is the type of place that hasn't seen a vacuum since it was built. Clothes are everywhere.

Jack paces around the room.

JACK
I earned that fucking role! He
didn't even audition!

He flops on his bed and starts to yell.

JACK (CONT'D)
I'm the lead. I AM!

ANIMATED JACK
I couldn't agree more.

Jack screams. In front of him sits an animated version of himself, talking in a (passable) British accent and wearing a colonial gothic vampire costume.

ANIMATED JACK (CONT'D)
You're really gonna let them step
all over you like that? Like uh...
uh....

A long pause ensues as he tries to think of an apt simile.

JACK
So... About me being the lead?

ANIMATED JACK
Yes! Don't you want your name in
lights? People cheering for you?
Someone's mom bringing you cold
dinner in the green room?

JACK
I mean, yeah... But can you make
that happen?

ANIMATED JACK
No, but you can.

Jack looks ahead as his animated self evilly chuckles.

TITLE: "MORE REHEARSALS - DAY 18"

INT. GREEN ROOM - NIGHT

The green room is littered with costumes, backpacks, and copied math homework. Norris climbs over everything and starts pouring a fresh cup of coffee. Jack, in his tree costume, springs up behind him. Animated Jack does a traditional evil hand rub as he watches the scene unfold.

JACK
NORRIS!

Norris jumps, but doesn't spill any of his coffee.

NORRIS
Ahh! Jack?

JACK
(shaking Norris with every
syllable)
NORRIS I HAVE AN IDEA!

Even though Jack shakes Norris, still no coffee is spilled.

NORRIS
That's great, but the script is
locked. We can't add anything more
without changing stuff.

ANIMATED JACK
Show him the light, Jack.

JACK
Just read this, you waste of
tuition payments. You'll see what
REAL genius looks like.

He YEETS some script pages at Norris, who scrambles to catch them but yet again spills none of his coffee. Jack laughs to himself and begins to walk away. Norris glances at the first page and yells after him.

NORRIS
You know we can't actually shoot
anyone out of a cannon, right?

JACK (O.S.)
Nyeah!

Jack throws his shoe from offscreen, which hits Norris's coffee cup and spills coffee everywhere.

INT. CATWALKS - LATER

Anastasia messes with lights up in the catwalks. It's dark. She's alone.

ANASTASIA
After all I've done for him, he
treats me like *that*!?

She continues muttering to herself while pacing around. A fraying light support cable catches her eyes.

ANASTASIA (CONT'D)
You know what, let him be the lead!
I'll give the audience a goddamn
show they'll never forget!

INT. NORRIS'S OFFICE - LATER

Mallory stands in Norris's office looking through documents. The door has obviously been kicked in, and she seems to be making a mess just for the hell of it.

MALLORY

MELVIN!

Melvin walks in. Mallory addresses him without looking.

MALLORY (CONT'D)

The GODDAMNED music department finally responded and said it would be "a poor use of their time and talent" to help us with the show!

MELVIN

So why are you in Norris's office?

Mallory slaps Melvin across the face.

MALLORY

(wildly)

I WAS SPEAKING!

(slightly calmer)

We need a new composer for the musical numbers.

Their eyes meet. Melvin's are scared, while Mallory's are alight.

MELVIN

Why me?

MALLORY

I saw you... Back in the fifth grade talent show. You were terrible, but you're all I have. And you said you would do *anything* for the show.

MELVIN

No... please... Why?

Mallory shoves a recorder and several bags of Sizzle Stones at him.

MALLORY

You must, Melvin... For the good of the show... I need... my degree...

Melvin takes the recorder, his hands shaking. Mallory leaves the room. Melvin breaks down and huddles in a corner.

He looks at the bags of Sizzle Stones. He knows what he must do.

MELVIN

For the good... of the show.

Melvin absolutely destroys the packaging on the poor candy packets. He scatters them around the room, swallowing them in one go, licking them off his hands, rubbing them in his hair, using them as deodorant.

For a grand finale, Melvin dumps a packet onto the floor, takes the recorder, and snorts the candy. He collapses on the floor in a drugged-out stupor.

INT. STAGE - SECONDS LATER

Mallory talks to actors offstage. She gives them directing notes, ignoring Jack, who is literally clinging to her, trying to get any form of attention.

JACK

COME ON, MALLORY!

Mallory walks up to Lloyd, who's biting his nails a few feet down the way. Jack wraps himself around her feet.

MALLORY

Okay, Lloyd. We're gonna practice your song now to see how it feels with all the lights going.

LLOYD

I don't know... I still don't think this is right for me. What if I choke?

Jack pops up.

JACK

Don't eat so much at once ha HA!

He raises his hand for a high five, but Mallory leaves him hanging. He screams and falls back down to the floor. Animated Jack is waiting there.

ANIMATED JACK

I thought it was funny.

MALLORY

Come on, Lloyd, you're gonna be fine! Let's go!

She pulls him and drags him onto the stage, then counts the beginning of the song. When it starts, Lloyd turns and runs off the stage.

MALLORY (CONT'D)
Motherfucker!

She goes to follow him, but Jack trips her. Melvin appears in the doorway, drawn by the noise. He shoves a packet of Sizzle Stones in his mouth and holds his mouth by Mallory's ear as she kicks Jack off of her feet. The white noise calms her.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - SECONDS LATER

Anastasia rummages around the dressing room before finding a cape and distinctive white mask. She tries them on, then admires herself in the mirror.

Lloyd runs into the dressing room and slams the door behind him. He slumps against it, slides to the floor, and puts his head in his hands.

Anastasia quickly switches gears and sits down next to Lloyd.

LLOYD
Hey, Anastasia. What are you doing in here?

ANASTASIA
(suddenly)
Nothing.
(changing the subject)
What's wrong?

LLOYD
I can't do this. I can't get in front of everyone and sing!

ANASTASIA
You can do it! Your singing is amazing! You sing better than a... uh...

Lloyd wipes his tears away as she struggles to think of a simile. She fails and moves on.

ANASTASIA (CONT'D)
And hey, champ...

She gives him a fatherly fake punch on the shoulder before leaning in close.

ANASTASIA (CONT'D)
(serious, sinister)
If you take this moment away from
me, I'll fucking kill you.

She awkwardly hugs Lloyd and gets up.

TITLE: "DRESS REHEARSALS - DAY 24"

INT. HALLWAY - EVENING

The cast gets into costume while Lloyd stands by, visibly nervous. Norris is in the background talking to two police officers.

NORRIS
I have no idea how the drugs got in
my office, I swear!

Lloyd sees Melvin, worse for the wear and drugged-out, hobbling by.

LLOYD
Melvin, wait!

Melvin grunts and keeps going. Lloyd, not being hunched over like a caveman, catches up easily. He turns Melvin around.

LLOYD (CONT'D)
Melvin, please! Hamilton is
supposed to be a sex symbol, a
hero, a real William Howard Taft! I
just... I don't think that's me.

Melvin grunts without emotion.

LLOYD (CONT'D)
Do you think you could talk to
Mallory for me? I think she'd kill
me if I quit. Please?

Melvin lifts a sleep-deprived and drug-induced eye.

MELVIN
You fuggin' talk to her! Isn't she
your... sister or somethin'?

TITLE: "OPENING NIGHT - DAY 30"

INT. JACK'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jack sits alone in his darkened room, hunched over a table. He has a crazed look in his eye. His animated self stands next to him with a nearly finished costume. It looks just like Lloyd's lead costume if it was made by a three year old out of fabric shreds and duct tape.

ANIMATED JACK

Yes, yes! It's nearly done.

Jack laughs and stands up from his chair.

JACK

Finally, my mom will regret
expelling me senior year!

INT. BACK STAGE - NIGHT

The cast sings the last note of the musical, holding their pose as Melvin struggles to get the last note out from his recorder. He strains for it, then passes out and falls backwards into the orchestra pit.

Mallory motions for the cast to gather around her. Jack waddles over in his tree costume, a large smile on his face.

ANIMATED JACK

You ready?

JACK

You fuckin' know it.

They join the circle while Mallory begins a condescending pep talk.

While Mallory talks, Anastasia goes over to Melvin with a roll of paper towels. She starts to clean up his drool, trying to touch his unconscious body as little as possible. Sizzle Stones dot the ground around him.

When she touches him, he grunts and a wet stain starts to grow on the front of his pants. As it spreads, the sound of the candy crackling gets louder and louder.

ANASTASIA

Alright. Fuck this.

She puts on her mask and walks away.

INT. STAGE - SECONDS LATER

Mallory hears Anastasia's laugh ring out.

MALLORY
What the hell was that?

LLOYD
The theater gods telling us this is
a bad idea.

MALLORY
Was I talking to you?

LLOYD
You were talking to all of us.

Mallory lifts up her fingers and hisses as if shushing a dog.

MALLORY
Look! We go out there in ONE HOUR,
and if we don't put on the
performance of our goddamn lives,
I'll never lose the other half of
my virginity!

LLOYD
What?

MALLORY
HUSH, WENCH!

She goes on. Lloyd, visibly sweating and shaking, goes to the green room to take a breather. Jack follows him.

INT. GREEN ROOM - SECONDS LATER

Lloyd pours himself a drink of water, trying to calm his nerves. Jack, still in his tree costume, rises up behind him.

JACK
Now it is your time to pay!

Lloyd turns around calmly.

LLOYD
Huh?

Jack snaps back to a normal human position.

JACK
(calmly, artificial)
Oh, nothin', bud!
(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Just wanted to make sure you were
okay! I got you this glass of
water!

He holds up a cup of water with several Sizzle Stones
floating inside. The liquid is a putrid bright green.

LLOYD

(trying not to be rude)

Oh... thanks, but I already have a--

Jack slaps the cup of water out of his hand.

JACK

Hm?

LLOYD

Oh... thanks.

Lloyd starts to drink the ogre juice. Jack twiddles his
thumbs. Animated Jack pops in to massage Jack's shoulders for
a job well done.

JACK

Yes... Drink the water. Drink it up
nice and slow.

Lloyd nervously finishes the water. His pupils start to bulge
as the drugs take effect.

LLOYD

Jack... what'd you do to me?

Jack slides his tree costume over Lloyd and puts a pointless
padlock on the back to 'ensure' it won't come off.

JACK

(maniacally)

You're gonna take a little bit of a
trip, just like Mallory and Melvin
did before they gave me the lead
role! The role that you stole from
me!

Jack forces a packet of Sizzle Stones down Lloyd's throat,
then dips into a dressing room to change into his costume.

INT. STAGE - LATER

A loud knock comes from the door.

MALLORY

Oh my GOD what could it be now?

She walks over to the door and angrily opens it. Norris is waiting there, a solemn look on his face.

NORRIS

Hey, Mallory, can I talk to you for a sec?

MALLORY

Anything you can say to me, you can say in front of my cast.

The cast all take a step away from her. Norris takes a deep breath.

NORRIS

You guys... can't put on the show tonight.

Mallory turns her head towards Norris agonizingly slowly.

MALLORY

What. WHY?

She starts to lunge at Norris in a murderous rage. Anastasia screams from the catwalks. A light falls ten feet away from Norris.

ANASTASIA (O.S.)

You can't take this away from me, you spineless little worm!

MALLORY

ANASTASIA QUIT INTERRUPTING ME I'M TRYING TO KILL NORRIS!

NORRIS

Well, you guys don't have the theater tonight. You never did. They're putting on some conference about--

Mallory slaps him in the face.

MALLORY

Now how am I gonna graduate?

NORRIS

Well... I looked at your records, and you actually graduated like... three years ago.

MALLORY

Yeah, but I lost my diploma!

NORRIS

Mallory, that's not how it works...
You still graduated.

Mallory stands up straight. Her hair is back to normal, her makeup is fixed, and the bags under her eyes are gone.

MALLORY

(calmly)
Oh shit, cool. I'm Audi, bitches.
Show's off.

She exits the theater. The cast and crew watch her go, not knowing what to do. Anastasia shows up next to them in her normal clothes.

ANASTASIA

Well, that sucks. You guys wanna go
get burgers?

Everyone shrugs and follows her out.

The lights go out, and Jack's voice rings, booming over the loudspeakers.

JACK

Now witness, ye of little faith,
the grand debut of your hero, your
Messiah, your leading man...

The lights come on. Jack is standing in the center of the stage, dressed in his homemade costume. The sewing is shoddy, his underwear is visible through the sides of the legs, and one arm is eleven inches longer than the other.

JACK (CONT'D)

Jack.

Jack performs the leading character's song. As he performs, his animated self comes out and joins in.

The two of them sing in disjointed harmonies. There's genuine joy in their eyes as they perform. Melvin's unconscious body is their only audience member.

The song comes to an end. Both Jacks take a bow.

JACK (CONT'D)

(out of breath)
So... what did you think?

ANIMATED JACK

I think this was a really shitty
idea.