

STAGE FRIGHT

Episode 1: "Pilot"

by

Nick Lundquist

1. EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - NIGHT

An empty street on a typical college campus, ominous streetlights illuminate the sidewalk. Aside from a few students going about their business, it's a quiet night. One lonesome figure begins walking towards the camera.

The figure is ZAC COOPER, early twenties, walking with headphones in his ears and his head hanging low. He's wearing black jeans and a "House Stark" shirt. His expression says he'd rather be home.

ZAC approaches a low-lit building. Outside, a large sign reads "Greece: The Musical. Coming Soon!". Based on the design, it's clearly a cheap ripoff of Grease set in ancient Greece.

ZAC smirks at it and enters the building.

2. INT. THEATER BUILDING HALLWAY - NIGHT

ZAC stops at the entrance to look at his phone. We see the Spotify playlist he's listening to titled "Sad Vibes 3". It consists mostly of Coldplay and Radiohead songs. He pauses it and takes out his headphones. He walks through the halls, running into RICHARD FLECK on his way.

RICHARD FLECK, mid-40's, is the stern night janitor for this college theatre. He is wearing dark blue coveralls, military boots and a black belt.

RICHARD dutifully sweeps the floor with a blank expression on his face as ZAC approaches. He looks at ZAC with unsurprised acknowledgment.

RICHARD
Late again, huh?

ZAC
(sarcastically)
I sure am, thanks for reminding
me.

RICHARD
Ya know, you remind me of someone
I knew back in basic. Total loser.
Know what happened to him? M.I.A.,
missed the last chopper outta
Saigon. That's what happens when
you're late, kid.

ZAC walks past RICHARD as he rants, but stops as his mind processes what he just heard. ZAC's confusion and curiosity get the better of him.

ZAC
(to himself)
Saigon?

He turns back towards RICHARD.

ZAC (CONT'D)
(to Richard)
Dude, how old are you?

RICHARD continues to work, responding without looking up from his broom.

RICHARD
Old enough to know a slacker when
I see one.

ZAC shakes his head and shrugs off the conversation. He continues at a brisk pace down the hall.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
They've been practicing for hours,
you better get in there.
(in a snarky tone)
Not like they need ya anyway.

ZAC ignores RICHARD's remark and heads toward the theater door.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
(yelling from behind)
Hey, keep an eye out for my mop
bucket, will ya? The damn thing
vanished.

ZAC approaches a large door with the sound of laughter behind it. He takes a deep sigh and enters.

3. INT. THEATER - NIGHT

A group of young actors stand on stage holding scripts. They're dressed casually, and seem to be having a good time. The cast is mostly female aside from a few out-of-place-looking dudes. Two actors stand out in center stage as the leads.

LAURA FROST, early twenties, is the beautiful lead actress practicing her lines with OWEN ALTMAN, 19, the handsome (and only) leading man.

LAURA
Oh, Dannicus.

OWEN
Oh, Sandromeda.

The two finish their current scene with a passionate kiss.

OWEN (CONT'D)
Aaaaaand scene! I nailed it today.

A stage light bursts angrily by itself beside them, interrupting their conversation. LAURA looks at it unsurprised, OWEN seems annoyed.

OWEN (CONT'D)
When will someone come fix the wiring in this dump?

LAURA
This "dump" is all we've got, so for now why don't you just focus on remembering your lines?

OWEN
Does Daniel Day Lewis 'remember all his lines'? Does Sean Penn? Does John Travolta?

LAURA
Um... yes?

ZAC enters from behind the cast. Nobody notices. He quickly slips past the commotion toward the backstage.

The stage manager, JANE ANDERSON, approaches.

ZAC
Jane, I'm sorry I'm late. I wasn't paying attention to the time.

JANE
(Interrupting)
We're really understaffed this year, Zac. You know that. Just be here when we need you, okay?

ZAC
Okay, sorry.

JANE
Yeah, you already said that. Since you were late again, you're on prop duty. Put all this junk back into storage, please.

ZAC
You got it.

JANE brushes past ZAC meets up with the cast on stage. ZAC approaches the curtain and looks at LAURA longingly.

JANE
(to cast onstage)
Great job, everyone. I think we've got something special here.

LAURA
Anyone want to grab some drinks downtown? Owen?

OWEN
I'm down.

LAURA
Cool, let me just grab my bag first. I'll be right back.

LAURA begins to walk toward backstage where ZAC is standing. ZAC jumps back from the curtain and starts fiddling with a nearby prop in an attempt to seem busy at work.

LAURA grabs her bag and turns to notice ZAC. She smiles.

LAURA (CONT'D)
(to ZAC)
Hey, you're new here right? Remind me of your name again.

ZAC anxiously looks up at LAURA, putting down the chair prop he was holding.

ZAC
Uh... I'm Zac Cooper. I'm one of the sound people. I mean, we're called "sound crew," not sound people. But for some reason I just said sound people.

LAURA looks uncomfortable.

LAURA
Sound people... right. Well, anyway, some of us are going out for a drink right now, do you want to tag along?

ZAC's eyes widen and his head tilts slightly down.

ZAC
Oh, I would. I'm of the legal age and everything, but I have to clean up the props tonight.

LAURA

Oh... okay. I'll leave you to it
then. Maybe next time?

ZAC

S-sure.

LAURA turns and exits and joins the rest of the cast as they leave the building. ZAC is now alone.

4. INT. BACKSTAGE PROP ROOM - LATER

The prop room is filled to the brim with junk from different stage productions. In the background are furniture, fake weapons and one out of place mop bucket.

ZAC is drags a desk into the room, tired and annoyed. Suddenly, he hears a disembodied whisper.

ZAC

Hello? Is someone here?

No response. ZAC goes back to his manual labor slightly confused.

A few moments pass before a prop on the shelf gets knocked to the ground. ZAC stares at it in disbelief.

ZAC (CONT'D)

What the hell...

Immediately the door slams shut behind him, before slowly reopening by itself. ZAC looks terrified.

ZAC (CONT'D)

(To himself)

Oh, absolutely not!

He attempts to run out of the room, but the janitors mop bucket rolls in front of him by itself. He trips into the empty hallway. The lights flicker wildly as he looks back into the prop room.

ZAC gets back up and darts out of the theater.

5. INT. THEATER BUILDING HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

RICHARD sits at the front desk watching a "Ghost Hunter" type show on his laptop instead of working. He hears someone running down the hall and quickly closes his computer.

ZAC runs into the room, out of breath. RICHARD looks at him with confusion.

RICHARD
What the hell has gotten into you?

ZAC takes a deep breath and calms himself.

ZAC
I... I uh... I found your bucket.

RICHARD
You had to run all the way back here to tell me that?

ZAC
Not exactly... this is going to sound strange but, um, do you know if this place is haunted?

RICHARD raises his eyebrows in excitement.

RICHARD
Haunted? You bet your ass it is. Why, what happened?

ZAC
I think a ghost took your bucket... Wow, that sounded much less stupid in my head.

RICHARD
I knew it! I knew that spirit has been touchin' my property. They warned us about this sort of thing back in seminary school, but I was never worried. Dick Fleck doesn't give up so easy.

RICHARD cautiously looks around, then leans in closer to ZAC.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
They say it's the ghost of some famous actor roamin' these halls... but if you ask me, and you should ask me, it's Lucifer himself at work here.

ZAC seems apprehensive at this idea, but shrugs it off.

ZAC
I'm sure the lord of darkness has better things to do than to mess with you.

ZAC tries to remain aloof, but can't help himself.

ZAC (CONT'D)
You said a famous actor? Who?

RICHARD
His name was Vance Martin. He was a big star back in the day. A real looker too, pearly blue eyes and strong jawline. We're talkin' a total stud...

RICHARD trails off a bit at the thought of VANCE's looks before he composes himself and continues.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
I think he was a student here too. got his start in this very building. It'd be the perfect breeding ground for paranormal activity. They gotta have attachments to their hauntin' grounds, ya see?

Both look at each other for a moment before ZAC breaks away.

ZAC
I... I gotta go. I'll see you later Mr. Dick, uh... Mr. Fleck

RICHARD
Yeah, whatever.
(To himself)
I still think it's a demon.

6. INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT

ZAC sits alone in his dorm room staring at the computer. He looks like he didn't sleep last night... he didn't.

On his computer screen we see twenty different tabs open, all involving ghosts. The current page he is on a Wikihow article entitled "How to See Ghosts".

His obnoxious roommate, JAY HOLLEN, enters. ZAC quickly minimizes the web-page. JAY is a bombastic frat boy with no sense of personal space.

JAY
(Laughing)
Bro, what were you looking at? Should I come back in a few minutes?

ZAC turns toward JAY, embarrassed.

ZAC
No, Jay, it's nothing like that.

JAY
Hey, no judgement! I've done my share of weird stuff in here. remember that one time you caught me...

ZAC
(Interrupting)
Stop! Don't remind me! I wasn't looking at that, I was looking at this.

ZAC pulls the webpage back up. JAY leans in to look. He laughs loudly.

JAY
Dude, this is even worse. You tryin' to be a Ghostbuster? This is hilarious.

JAY takes a Snapchat of ZAC's screen and puts it on his story with the caption "Who you gonna call?"

ZAC
I'm just doing some research, man. I saw some spooky stuff at the theater the other day... I think it's haunted.

JAY
I used to think my house was haunted as a kid, I heard weird noises coming from downstairs every night. Turns out it was just my brother up to no good...

CUT TO:

7. INT. JAY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

JAY sneaks down the stairs of his house. We hear noises in the background. He peers over the railing to see his brother aggressively playing "Dance Dance Revolution" late into the night. JAY stares in awe.

BACK TO:

6. INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT

We pick up right where we left off in the conversation.

JAY

He taught me everything I know...
you have any siblings?

ZAC

Nah, only child.

JAY

Oh, that explains a lot.

ZAC

What?

JAY's phone suddenly rings, interrupting the conversation. He answers it.

JAY

Hey boo, nah I'm not busy... Word,
I'll be there in 10.

(To ZAC)

I gotta go man, I'll probably be
back late tonight so keep the door
unlocked. Have fun with your
little ghost adventures.

JAY leaves. ZAC goes back to his computer and opens up YouTube. He plays a video titled "Vance Martin on Tonight Show, 1984."

ZAC skips to the halfway point when VANCE MARTIN is answering a question. Even in the old footage VANCE is handsome, charming, and quick.

8. INT. TONIGHT SHOW SET - NIGHT

VANCE

... I'm glad you asked, Johnny.
When I started out I was a total
nobody. I was working at my
college theater as one of those
sound people... or is it sound
crew? Anyway, within months I
impressed everyone with my ability
to cry on command in only 15.3
seconds, want to see?

VANCE turns to look at the camera and stares blankly for a few moments. He awkwardly struggles to make himself cry, it looks painful. Finally, one solitary tear rolls down his cheek. We hear an applause break from the crowd.

VANCE (CONT'D)

Thank you, thank you... It's a gift. But Johnny, the truth is those were the best years of my life in that theater. I miss it.

6. INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT

ZAC stops the video, closes his computer and goes to bed.

9. INT. BACKSTAGE PROP ROOM - NIGHT

Skip to a few days later, ZAC returns to the theater late at night. Nobody else is there. The theater is pitch black aside from one lonesome ghost light at center stage. He turns on his phone flashlight and navigates to the prop room.

In the prop room he empties some of the contents of his bag on a table: 3 celebrity prayer candles (one of which has VANCE's face on it), a Ouija board, a crucifix and a recorder. The results of his earlier research.

He sets up the candles in a triangle on the table, with the Ouija board in the center. He turns on the recorder and places it next to the board. The crucifix is clenched tightly in his left hand.

ZAC

(to the empty room)

Okay, if anyone is here... say something. Or you could move the piece on this Ouija board. Whatever you prefer.

Nothing happens.

ZAC (CONT'D)

Vance Martin, if your spirit lingers here then make yourself known. I know this theater meant something to you.

Still, nothing happens.

ZAC (CONT'D)

Satan, if it's you causing all this trouble then... I have no idea what I'm doing.

No response.

We skip to an hour later, the candles have gone out. ZAC is holding the VANCE candle in disappointment.

ZAC (CONT'D)
 (to himself)
 I am such an idiot, I can't
 believe I wasted 60 bucks on
 candles.

ZAC exits.

10. INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

ZAC walks into the bathroom with the same candle in hand. He sets it down on the sink and enters a stall in the background. The camera focuses on the candle for a few moments and suddenly it falls onto the floor by itself. We see ZAC lean backwards out of the stall looking toward the candle. He looks exasperated.

ZAC
 (To himself)
 You've gotta be kidding me...
 (To the noise)
 Hello? Is someone in here?

ZAC walks toward the candle and bends down to investigate. As he does, the toilet in the furthest stall flushes by itself. It startles ZAC.

ZAC cautiously approaches the last stall of the row, and gently pushes it open. Nothing is inside.

We see from inside the stall looking back at ZAC, he stands on the right side of the open door. He looks in confusion at the empty seat. Standing to his left is VANCE MARTIN.

ZAC slowly turns to look at VANCE, who is chewing gum casually.

VANCE
 What're we lookin' at?

ZAC screams.

HARD CUT TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE 1

STAGE FRIGHT

Episode 2: "World of this Out"

by

Meital Abraham, Kara Gordon & Peyton McElaney

1. INT. PROP ROOM - DAY

ZAC wakes up to VANCE blotting his face with a damp rag in homage to the scene from Back to the Future. He is in a different location than when he fainted.

ZAC

Mom, is that you? I had a horrible nightmare. I did a seance and summoned the ghost of Vance Martin. It was terrible.

VANCE

Well, you're safe and sound now, with the ghost of Vance Martin.

ZAC's eyes snap open and he sits up. He lets out a horrified scream. He grabs at the nearest prop, a fake leg, and wields it as a weapon against VANCE.

ZAC

Where am I?

VANCE breaks into laughter.

ZAC (CONT'D)

How did I get here?

CUT TO:

2. INT. BATHROOM - FLASHBACK

ZAC hits the ground.

VANCE

Fans. Always so excited.

VANCE sticks his ghostly fingers through ZAC's head and wiggles them around while making an exaggerated, silly ghost "oooooo" sound. He reaches toward ZAC's nose.

VANCE (CONT'D)

I've got your nose! No I don't.

VANCE takes a few mime punches at Zac and they all go through. He chuckles to himself.

VANCE (CONT'D)

Never gets old.

We hear footsteps approaching and see that OWEN is heading into the bathroom. VANCE startles and trips, falling into ZAC. VANCE disappears.

ZAC's body, now inhabited by VANCE, stands. POSSESSED ZAC is now chewing gum in VANCE's typical manner. Outside the bathroom, we see JANE pull OWEN aside just as he was about to enter the bathroom.

JANE

Owen! I have notes from
yesterday's run.

Back in the bathroom, POSSESSED ZAC is staring in awe at his new body.

POSSESSED ZAC

How the hell--Yes! I did it! Yes!

POSSESSED ZAC punches the air in victory and lets out a whoop, but in a comically haphazard way. OWEN strides into the bathroom singing scales in a show-off manner. POSSESSED ZAC stumbles backward into the stall just in time. OWEN stands in front of the mirror and begins slicking his hair back and shooting finger guns at his reflection.

OWEN

You are special. You are talented.
You are loved. You are a star.

In the stall, VANCE loses his grip on the possession and falls out of ZAC's now-unconscious body. They are standing uncomfortably close in the stall.

OWEN (CONT'D)

You are important. You are valid.
You are the best actor that ever
lived. You are a king. You--

OWEN's positive affirmations are interrupted by a moan from ZAC's unconscious body. OWEN freezes. He tiptoes toward the stall to investigate just as ZAC lets out another moan. OWEN sees only one pair of legs in the stall and shudders.

OWEN (CONT'D)

Do that in private, man!

OWEN returns to the mirror.

OWEN (CONT'D)

Focus.

OWEN begins rehearsing his monologue. His acting is decent enough, but over-the-top and hammy.

OWEN (CONT'D)

(in character as
Dannicus)

(MORE)

OWEN (CONT'D)
Sandromeda, my beloved goddess.
Can't you see I've changed, based
on the fact that I switched my
cool leather toga for this boring
nerd toga? That's how much I love
you. You are fairer than Aphrodite
herself. Please take me back.

OWEN drops the character, returning to himself.

OWEN (CONT'D)
And, scene.

A light flickers out.

VANCE
(under his breath)
Amateur.

Just then, ZAC, still unconscious, farts. OWEN, thoroughly
grossed out, flees the bathroom.

VANCE (CONT'D)
(mocking)
And, scene.

ZAC slumps over. VANCE sighs and tackles ZAC again. ZAC,
once again controlled by VANCE, stumbles out of the
bathroom and down the hall to the prop room. VANCE is
having trouble controlling him and he keeps bumping into
walls and knocking things over.

END FLASHBACK

CUT BACK TO:

3. INT. PROP ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

ZAC
So you mean you were like...
inside me?

VANCE speaks as he autographs the fake leg ZAC was
weilding.

VANCE
I haven't been inside anyone in
years.

ZAC
Ok, ok, so what do you want with
me?

VANCE

Well, let's start off with the fact that you summoned me, okay? But, now that we're here, I thought we could have a friendly conversation, ya know. Man to ghost. Ghost to man.

ZAC blinks back at him in horror. VANCE is oblivious.

VANCE (CONT'D)

Ya know, it's always an honor to meet a fan. I'd offer a picture, but no guarantees I'd show up in it.

VANCE laughs at his own bad joke. ZAC continues to stare at him in disbelief.

VANCE (CONT'D)

You get it? Cause I'm a-- Aw, c'mon.

ZAC is still zombie-like with shock.

VANCE (CONT'D)

Something wrong, kid? You--you do know who I am, no?

ZAC snaps back to reality.

ZAC

Yeah, I've seen your stuff on YouTube.

VANCE

You have what in your tubes?

ZAC rolls his eyes. He takes out his cell phone and pulls up a video called "VANCE MARTIN FAILS/CRINGE COMPILATION." VANCE is, at first, excited.

VANCE (CONT'D)

Look at that! Ha-ha! They put me on the pocket TV! I'm really something, aren't I.

MONTAGE:

4. INT. MOVIE SET - DAY

VANCE on the set of a campy 80s space opera wearing a metal space suit with giant shoulder pads. Terrible green screen effects behind him. A wind machine blows his hair.

VANCE
They tell me we can't be together
because you're from another
planet... But I think our love
is... out of this world.

VANCE goes for a dramatic hair flip, but overdoes it and
knocks down the green screen.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)
Cut!

A CREW MEMBER walks on with a slate that reads "Star
Fighter 2: A Good Day To Star Fight".

CREW MEMBER (O.S.)
Take 12. Action!

CUT TO:

VANCE
Our love is... sorry, what was the
line?

CUT TO:

The CREW MEMBER holds the slate in front of VANCE.

CREW MEMBER (O.S.)
Take 36!

CUT TO:

VANCE making eyes at the camera, fixes his hair, winks. The
wind machine turns on to high speed and VANCE is blown
backward.

VANCE
I'm fine. I'm cool.

CUT TO:

The CREW MEMBER holds the slate in front of VANCE.

CREW MEMBER (O.S.)
Take 78 and a half.

CUT TO:

VANCE
Out of this world. Out of this
world.

VANCE does vocal warm-ups a-la Sharpay in High School
musical. The CREW MEMBER raises the slate.

DIRECTOR (O.S.)
 (monotone and fed-up)
 Action.

VANCE
 Our love is... world of this out.

The funky meme remix of the bloopers begins. Slo-mo close-up of Vance saying "world of this out". The vocal warm-up clip plays over an EDM beat. The director saying "cut" is edited in on the beats. The physical comedy bits of the montage play in a loop as the bass drops. End with one last "I'm fine. I'm cool." from VANCE.

END MONTAGE.

5. INT. PROP ROOM - LATER

VANCE
 That's not fair! They cut out all of my best parts! What about my performance in the summer blockbuster, 15 Handles? Teen Beat called it... "Amusing".

ZAC
 I-I don't know, I didn't make the video.

VANCE
 Is this kind of stuff--is that what I'm remembered for?

ZAC
 No. No.

ZAC is obviously lying.

VANCE
 Your voice got higher. Oh, God, your voice got higher.

VANCE begins pacing the room, distraught.

VANCE (CONT'D)
 I'm a nobody.

ZAC
 No, don't say that. I'm sure you still have lots of fans.

VANCE
 I'm a nobody!

ZAC looks awkwardly at him and doesn't know what to say.

ZAC
 Look, I'm really sorry about the video, but I think it's time for me to go.

VANCE is suddenly optimistic.

VANCE
 Wait! You could help me! You could make a new video, put all my best bits in. Show everyone how good I really am.

ZAC
 Look, this has been... amusing, but I'm gonna be late for rehearsal.

Vance's interest is piqued at "rehearsal."

ZAC (CONT'D)
 Not like they need me anyway.

ZAC gets up to leave, but VANCE closes the door with his *ghastly powers*. ZAC jumps.

ZAC (CONT'D)
 Whoa, whoa!

VANCE
 Rehearsal... You act, kid?

ZAC opens the door and starts heading down the hall to rehearsal. VANCE chases him.

6. INT. THEATRE HALLS - DAY

ZAC
 No. No way. Never. I'm on crew.

VANCE
 Ah, an aspiring technician.

ZAC
 Nah. It's just a hobby.

VANCE
 Y'know, I got my start as a humble spotlight operator in this very theatre. Who knows, you might turn out like me!

ZAC

A ghost?

They make it to the back of the theatre. ZAC stops short. LAURA is up on stage, singing her big solo, "Hopelessly Devoted to Zeus". ZAC longingly looks on as she sings.

LAURA

It was a shocking surprise,
Felt like lightning in my eyes.
Might love him instead,
Hopelessly devoted to Zeus.
Hopelessly devoted to Zeus.

VANCE notices the way ZAC looks at her.

VANCE

Ah, I see. You're here to chase a girl.

ZAC

(snapping out of it)

N-no.

ZAC crosses to the light/sound booth and VANCE follows.

VANCE

She like you?

ZAC

She doesn't know I exist.

VANCE

Hang on, I'm getting an idea.
Whaddya say you let me take
another whirl in that ol' bod of
yours?

ZAC

No way. Nope. I'm not doing that Exorcist nonsense again.

VANCE

With my natural charm and talent,
we could weasel our way into this
show. You could get Leading Lady
over there to notice you, and I'd
remind everyone how great Vance
Martin is!

ZAC

Look. I'm sorry that you're bitter
about your past, or whatever, but
I don't want any part of this.

JANE (O.S.)
 Zac! We need more mic batteries
 ASAP.

ZAC shrugs and leaves the room, grabbing the spare
 batteries on the way out. VANCE stays behind.

VANCE
 (calling after him)
 Think about it!

7. INT. REHEARSAL - LATER THAT DAY

We see ZAC painting a set--a Greek temple-looking
 background that says "Mount Olympus High School." We hear
 LAURA and OWEN lead an ensemble rehearsing "Athens Lovin'".

ZAC looks up to the catwalk, and notices VANCE snooping
 around the lights, mischievously. He freezes. Up on stage,
 LAURA and OWEN sing the big finish of the song.

LAURA AND OWEN
 (singing)
 Athens dreams, we live in Greece,
 but... oh...
 Those Sparta Niiiiightsssssss!

JANE
 Alright everyone, take 5!

LAURA walks past ZAC. His eyes follow her, and we see him
 fumbling for something to say. VANCE notices the lovesick
 ZAC and settles in to watch this interaction from above.
 ZAC only finds the courage to speak once LAURA is out of
 the acceptable range for conversation.

ZAC
 H-hey, Laura!

LAURA looks around, unsure of who just called her name. ZAC
 gets nervous and ducks his head. LAURA realizes he was the
 one that spoke to her. She turns to him expectantly, still
 a long distance away.

ZAC (CONT'D)
 Uh. Just wanted to say great job!
 You--you really... uhh... you
 really remembered your lines out
 there.

LAURA
 Aw, thanks, Jack! Nice job with
 the sound, it was really... loud
 tonight.

ZAC looks up and sees VANCE fiddling with a big spotlight on the catwalk.

ZAC
Actually it's, uh, it's Zac.

ZAC sees VANCE wink at him as he continues fiddling with the light. ZAC looks down and sees that OWEN is standing directly underneath the light, rehearsing his big monologue from the bathroom earlier. ZAC's face is clear: he knows what VANCE is doing.

ZAC (CONT'D)
Actually, uhh, you can call me whatever you want. I--

LAURA
So, are you going to the cast party?

OWEN (O.S.)
And, scene!

ZAC
I'm--I'm sorry, I really have to go--

A huge BANG is heard in the background. ZAC, LAURA, and the rest of the cast and crew turn around and see that the light has fallen on OWEN's leg. OWEN begins to yell and scream in pain.

LAURA
Oh my god, what the--

LAURA, ZAC and the others run toward OWEN to help. ZAC is shocked and horrified. Once he is standing on stage, he makes angry eye contact with VANCE, who is smugly chewing his gum. VANCE raises an eyebrow at ZAC.

OWEN
I can perform in a cast! The show must go on!

LAURA
I'm calling an ambulance.

JANE
Owen, honey, you have way too many dance numbers. We're gonna need to bring in the understudy.

LAURA
Alec? He's been out with the swine flu for like 2 weeks...

JANE
(in the same tone that
one would say "Jesus
Christ")
William Shakespeare.
There goes our last male actor.

RANDOM THEATER KID
What are we going to do now?

LAURA turns and looks at ZAC, sizing him up. We see VANCE
up on the catwalk. One by one we see each cast members'
face turn around toward ZAC.

BLACKOUT.

END OF EPISODE 2

STAGE FRIGHT

Episode 3: "Possessed"

by

Audrey Shaw & Afrah Ahmed

1. INT. REHEARSAL - MOMENTS AFTER BLACKOUT

Everyone is staring at ZAC, anxious to see if he will take over as the leading man. He's terrified.

We see OWEN, one arm to the sky, being wheeled away on a stretcher in the background, but no one acknowledges it.

ZAC
I - I can't do it.

FLASHBACK TO:

2. INT. REHEARSAL HALL - TWO MONTHS EARLIER

ZAC is sitting in a waiting room with several other students waiting to audition for Greece: The Musical. He waits for his name to be called, visibly jittery.

JANE walks into the room with a clipboard in hand.

JANE
Zac Cooper.

ZAC stands up and awkwardly follows JANE.

He walks onto the stage and pauses for a moment, looking like he might faint at any given second. Three judges sit in front of him, and LAURA, OWEN, and RANDOM THEATRE KID sit in the back.

ZAC
(long beat)
... Thank you for your time.

He begins to "calmly" walk off, and then breaks into a run right before he passes the wing. We hear props falling and banging, indicating that he tripped.

The judges look at each other, raising their eyebrows. LAURA rolls her eyes as OWEN laughs. RTK blows a sick vape plume.

RANDOM THEATRE KID
I thought he was great.

FLASH FORWARD TO:

1. INT. REHEARSAL - PRESENT

Everyone is staring at ZAC, who still looks petrified. VANCE surveys the scene and decides he must take control of situation. He tackles ZAC.

ZAC falls comically to the ground and has a violent seizure. Everyone is frozen in place, staring at him with confusion and concern. ZAC hops back up chewing gum, just like VANCE.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
Never mind guys, I can do it!

Everyone eyes him suspiciously.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE) (CONT'D)
Newfound confidence...

He shoots a finger gun and starts to fall over on the RANDOM THEATRE KID, who pushes him back up. JANE sighs.

JANE
Fine, I guess. You have been at every rehearsal, so you know the lines?

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
Oh yeah, he knows - I mean I know them, for sure.

JANE
(unenthusiastically)
Alright, you're cast.
Congratulations.

JANE walks away. LAURA looks shocked and frustrated as she walks Up to ZAC. She thrusts a script into his hands.

LAURA
Get practicing...

She follows JANE out of the theatre. POSSESSED ZAC clutches the script to his chest.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
(quietly)
Yes, my stage vixen...

LAURA turns around.

LAURA
What?

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
Nothing.

3. INT. BACKSTAGE - MINUTES LATER

Everyone has left. POSSESSED ZAC walks behind the curtain, falls out of frame, and we hear a THUD as he hits the ground. We see VANCE stand up casually, adjusting his shirt.

ZAC, who is still laying on the ground, slowly sits up, looking wrecked. He makes a face and pulls out a wad of gum from his mouth.

ZAC
Ugh, is this yours?

VANCE
Oh, thanks, I was wondering where that went...

VANCE takes it and puts it back in his mouth. ZAC looks disgusted, and M A D.

ZAC
I specifically told you not to possess me! You - you - blatantly d-disrespected my wishes -

ZAC stumbles over his words.

VANCE
I'm a ghost, not a genie.

ZAC groans, very annoyed and visibly pissed.

ZAC
So - what, is that how it happens? You just tackle me?

VANCE
Hey hey hey, it's harder than it looks!

ZAC
(sarcastically)
They don't teach you that when you become a ghost?

VANCE
Nah, they just give you this manual, but, I'm not big on the whole "reading" thing.

He nonchalantly pulls out a manual the size of an encyclopedia with the title "HAUNTING FOR DUMMIES." ZAC slaps it out of his hand.

ZAC
Just - what possessed you to do
that!

VANCE
Hah, possessed.

VANCE points at ZAC, and ZAC points back, both laughing.
ZAC quickly remembers he's still mad, and snaps out of it.

ZAC
No! I'm mad! Answer the question!

VANCE
Look, I just took matters into my
own hands. I'm trying to help
here--

ZAC
HELP?!

He takes a breath and recomposes himself.

ZAC (CONT'D)
(calmer)
Vance, come 'ere.

ZAC waves VANCE towards him, till VANCE's face is next to
his.

ZAC (CONT'D)
I CAN'T ACT!!!

VANCE stumbles back, surprised.

VANCE
Jeez, what's your damage pal.
You're not gettin' my point. I'll
be acting for you. You've got
nothing to worry about!

ZAC
You can't even stand in my body
for five seconds without falling
over!

VANCE
Listen kid, all's we gotta do is
practice. You'd save the play,
they need you now. Plus, Laura...

VANCE gives him a suggestive look, prompting ZAC to roll
his eyes.

VANCE (CONT'D)
 You'd get to be in rehearsals with her, spend time with her... think about it.

ZAC
 I don't know, Vance...

VANCE
 Alright, full disclosure... I saw your audition.

ZAC groans and covers his face at the mention of it.

VANCE (CONT'D)
 I know you want to act! You just suck, really really bad. But! With my guidance, and a little practice, I would - you would - be incredible!

ZAC
 Wait... are you the reason I fell backstage?

VANCE
 Not important. Just, picture it...

VANCE puts his arm around ZAC.

VANCE (CONT'D)
 A standing ovation, the whole audience chanting your name - VANCE! Uh, I mean ZAC! ZAC! ZAC!

He looks at ZAC expectantly. ZAC contemplates all of this. He has a realization and looks at VANCE.

ZAC
 Wait... what's in it for you?

VANCE
 Come on, kid, I'm doing this all for you, out of the goodness of my heart.

ZAC
 You're dead. You don't have a heart.

VANCE
 Ooh, that's cold. Listen, I just want to help you...

(MORE)

VANCE (CONT'D)
 and in the process, if we can
 somehow, psh, I don't know,
 remind-everyone-of-the-sheer-unadu-
 lterated-talent-of-Vance-Martin,
 that would be totally radical.

ZAC
 Uh... yeah, I mean I guess we
 could...

VANCE pumps his fist.

VANCE
 Wicked! I knew you'd come around.

4. INT. PROP ROOM - LATER

VANCE and ZAC are standing across the room from each other,
 getting ready for another possession.

ZAC
 Is this gonna hurt as much as last
 time?

VANCE
 Not for me.

They run at each other and VANCE possesses ZAC's body,
 which hits the floor.

Outside, RICHARD is mopping nearby. He hears the thud of
 ZAC's body and stops what he is doing to look through a
 crack in the door. He sees ZAC lying on the floor, and
 after a moment POSSESSED ZAC shoots up, full of energy and
 vigor.

POSSESSED ZAC practices his lines, with a very suave,
 confident, not-at-all-ZAC demeanor. RICHARD looks
 perplexed. After a few moments, POSSESSED ZAC stops
 practicing.

He alternates between a ZAC-like demeanor and a more suave
 VANCE-like attitude.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
 Does your body always move so...
 awkwardly?

He starts to fall, but catches himself.

POSSESSED ZAC (ZAC)
 I had scoliosis as a kid! Don't
 make fun of me in my own body!

ZAC's phone rings - it's JAY. POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE) smirks and answers.

POSSESSED ZAC (ZAC) (CONT'D)
No, hang up!

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
Relax kid!
(into the phone)
Yellow?

JAY (O.S.)
Hey man, I just wanted to let you know that I ate all of your hot pockets, so I'm sorry about that, my b, but also... on your way home can you pick up more hot pockets? I like the pepperoni ones, like the ones you had that I ate.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
Eh, it's boring you take it.

POSSESSED ZAC switches the phone to his other ear.

POSSESSED ZAC (ZAC)
Jeez - uh... yeah, I guess I can. You know I really wish you'd ask before -

JAY (O.S.)
Goodnight my little beef empanada with a golden flaky crust, damn, love those jeans on you.

POSSESSED ZAC is confused. He looks down.

POSSESSED ZAC (ZAC)
I'm wearing khakis...

JAY (O.S.)
Oh... Zac... you still there? Remember those hot pockets.

JAY hangs up.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
He's great.

POSSESSED ZAC (ZAC)
A real treasure, yeah.

RICHARD, who is still watching, raises an eyebrow, before throwing the door open and striding in. POSSESSED ZAC is startled.

RICHARD
Well, well, well, what do we have
here? You fancy yourself an actor,
boy?

POSSESSED ZAC (ZAC)
Uh...

RICHARD
Think you're the next Michael J.
Fox or somethin'?

POSSESSED ZAC gets very angry at the mention of his name.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
He is HALF the man I EVER was - I
mean, am, I mean... I just didn't
love Family Ties.

RICHARD narrows his eyes at him.

RICHARD
I thought you were working crew,
what're ya doin' acting?

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
Oh, didn't you hear? I'm the new
lead.

RICHARD
What happened to the handsome
fellow, what's his name...

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
Don't worry about it. It's been
handled.

RICHARD
Hmm... alright, boy.

POSSESSED ZAC realizes RICHARD might be onto something.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
Uh, I've gotta motor.

He quickly grabs his open backpack off the floor.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE) (CONT'D)
Good luck with the, uh, mopping.

POSSESSED ZAC leaves the room, but doesn't notice that one
of his seance candles has fallen out of his bag.

RICHARD notices the candle but waits for ZAC to leave
before inspecting it. He bends over, eyeing it

suspiciously. He sneakily stuffs it in his jumpsuit, looking around to make sure no one has seen him.

5. INT. HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

POSSESSED ZAC hurriedly walks towards the theatre department's exit, shaken by RICHARD. As he reaches the doorway, VANCE is pulled out of ZAC's body back into the hall and ZAC falls forward out the door. ZAC looks up to see LAURA, standing over him.

ZAC quickly stands up, and whips around to look at VANCE, who taps the glass and shrugs to indicate that he is stuck in the theatre department.

LAURA

What are you looking at?

ZAC whips back around to face her.

ZAC

Oh, nothing, I thought I tripped on something.

LAURA

Yeah, air, it looked like.

ZAC laughs nervously.

ZAC

Oh, I'm just, uh, tired. I've been, uh, rehearsing for hours. You know, stayin' on that grind...

He looks down at his feet and visibly cringes at himself. VANCE bangs his head against the glass.

LAURA

Um, alright. Listen, I realize I might have been a little... curt... with you earlier, but I wanted to apologize.

She puts on what looks like a forced smile. Every word she says is veiled in a fake, pleasant demeanor. She is on the verge of coming unhinged.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I know you won't let us down. I mean, otherwise you'd just be ruining the hard work of the entire cast, crew, and theatre department as a whole.

The blood drains from ZAC's face.

LAURA
But, you're obviously not gonna
let that happen.

We see her smile at ZAC from VANCE's perspective, behind
the glass.

VANCE
Wow, dude's killin' it. Atta boy.

ZAC is petrified of this side of LAURA.

ZAC
N-no! No, uh, you can count on me,
definitely.

LAURA
Oh, good! That's what I wanted to
hear.

ZAC
Y-yeah, anything for you,
m'lady...

He nervously laughs, trying to avoid eye contact, as one
does after calling somebody "m'lady."

LAURA's fake smile gets more aggressively fake.

VANCE, still watching, and gives a fist pump, obviously
proud of ZAC.

LAURA
Right... well, I'll see you at
rehearsal.

ZAC
Yes! You will... because I will be
there... so you will see me...
because that... is how eyes work.

LAURA
Such a way with words.

She turns to walk away but stops, looking back at ZAC.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Oh, and... thank you for your
time.

ZAC goes pale, horrified. He puts his head in his hands,
deeply regretting everything. He turns around to see VANCE
mocking him, making out with the glass. ZAC rolls his eyes.

11.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE 3

STAGE FRIGHT

Episode 4: "The Unseen Armageddon"

by

Hannah Martin & Stephanie Cornwell

1. INT. THEATRE - DAY

A closeup on RICHARD's face. He is dimly lit and the rest of the room is dark.

RICHARD is in the middle of an impassioned speech a-la Dwight's acceptance speech from Season 2, Episode 17 of The Office.

RICHARD

... For too long the human race
has lain idle while a war for
eternity, for our very souls, has
been waged all around us. The
demon enters as an intruder, an
invader! They warp the minds of
those too weak to defend
themselves and lay siege upon
their spirits. It has been a
lifetime's struggle. A
never-ending fight. I say to you,
and you'll understand that it is a
privilege to fight! We are
warriors! We must never acquiesce
for it is together, TOGETHER, THAT
WE--

RICHARD looks out to where the audience sits in darkness.

As RICHARD reaches the climax/end of his speech, the lights flick on revealing his audience: one drunk guy who fell asleep during the AA meeting right before this, one goth kid just hanging out, and RANDOM THEATRE KID who is stuffing donuts into his face/bag in the background. The disembodied voice of JANE comes on over the God mic.

JANE (O.S.)

Alright Richard, time's up.

RICHARD

God?! Is that you?

JANE is sitting in the back of house and gives a frustrated sigh then walks down to speak to RICHARD who joins her off stage.

JANE

Come on, Richard. We've got
rehearsal's in here in ten
minutes.

RICHARD

It's not my fault. The AA meeting
held over by twenty minutes so I
was only just getting started.

JANE

Look, this isn't my ideal situation either, but before the university started renting out this building to weirdos like you for a little extra cash, this was a theatre. A holy ground, for the performing arts; so that comes first.

RICHARD'S interest is piqued at "holy ground."

RICHARD

Holy ground, huh?

JANE

No, not like that. Forget I said anything. Just clear out so we can start prepping for opening night.

RICHARD walks over to donut table where RTK is standing and starts to collect his things. RTK enthusiastically walks up to introduce himself.

RTK

(through a mouthful of donuts)

Ba;oifh irugg ofi as oghriug.

RICHARD turns to look at RTK.

RICHARD

What the hell did you just say, son?

RTK

I was just saying that your speech was fantastic. And I'm totally picking up what you're putting down. Casper, demons, Illuminati, I get it. I've seen some pretty weird stuff in this theatre myself.

RICHARD covers RTK's mouth.

RICHARD

Shh, kid. Not here. You never know who, or what, may be listening; ready to strike at any moment.

2. INT. PROP ROOM - DAY

VANCE is busy backstage trying on all the costumes he can. A short montage of him in various outfits walking up to a mirror and striking poses, playing with props. He's disappointed when he can't see his own reflection.

3. INT. THEATRE - MOMENTS LATER

RICHARD and RTK walk over to the exit. RICHARD wipes off some ancient runes he's written on the door and bends down to brush away a line of salt. He sticks his head out the door and looks left and right.

RICHARD
I've got somewhere safer we can
talk.

4. INT. OUTSIDE RICHARD'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

RICHARD and RTK walk in to Richard's office. At first glance it's an ordinary supply closet. Richard starts removing sheets an other coverings to reveal: a large cork board containing pictures of VANCE, spooky articles, a picture of Michael J. Fox, the words "Pepe Silvia?" scrawled across a piece of paper, etc. Boxes with labels such as ""not" demon stuff", "shirtless pictures of Mr. Clean", several large bags labeled "salt", a pile of candles, some red paint cans.

RTK walks over to admire the cork board. His jaw drops at the intensive research that Richard has done, and smoke starts to pour out of his mouth.

RICHARD
So what were you saying about
weird stuff in the theatre?

RTK
Well...

FLASHBACK:

5. INT. BACKSTAGE - FLASHBACK TO EP1

RTK is napping backstage. A loud noise wakes him up and he looks to see ZAC run out of prop room. ZAC trips over a mop bucket that mysteriously moves directly in front of his path. RTK rubs his eyes and falls back asleep.

CUT TO:

6. INT. STAGE CATWALK - FLASHBACK TO EP2

VANCE is fiddling with the lights, unscrewing things, etc. RTK is on opposite edge of catwalk without a shirt on, eating a slice of pizza and watching in bewilderment as random parts start dismantling on the lights.

RTK

What the--

Expletive interrupted by the light falling and crashing. He looks confused, but shrugs and keeps eating his pizza.

CUT TO:

7. INT. BACKSTAGE - FLASHBACK TO EP3

We see RTK once again unnecessarily lurking backstage, vaping and wearing a toga. He watches RICHARD watch VANCE and ZAC possess each other.

CUT TO:

8. INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

RICHARD

So what do you want from me?

RTK

Well, I figured I could help you. Nobody in that theater pays attention to me. I might as well be a ghost. And wouldn't you like the help of someone who can get around...

RTK does a weird wannabe-secret agent type move.

RTK (CONT'D)

(whispers)

-unseen?

RICHARD

Why'd ya whisper that? Wouldn't that imply unheard?

RTK

It's semantics.

RICHARD

Alright kid. I can appreciate your enthusiasm for justice. Come check this out.

RICHARD and RTK walk over to an old-timey television set RICHARD turns it on. He has a VHS tape of Vance news clips on repeat. He fast forwards past the "out of this world" scene from "Star Fighter 2: A Good Day to Star Fight," and then again to a talk show.

9. INT. T.V. STUDIO - DAY

A PBS/TCM style host presents a post-film biography.

HOST

That was Vance Martin in his final role as Sammy Starpower in the sequel Star Fighter 2: A Good Day To Star Fight. It was a box office flop released just days after its stars untimely death at the age of 26. Those close to Martin said it was comforting to know he never had to witness the critical backlash the movie endured. Star Fighter 2 was quickly overshadowed by the smash hit, "Back to the Future," which opened that same weekend.

10. INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

RTK is enthralled.

RTK

Damn. Sucks that he sucked.

He continues to stare in deep interest, then snaps right out of it and dives for the remote.

RTK (CONT'D)

You think the Jags are playing?

RICHARD slaps the remote out of his hand, sending it flying across the room.

RICHARD

Study up, boy. This is the demon that decides your fate.

He motions toward the screen just as VANCE's headshot with his birth and death years flashes on. RTK returns to his studious state.

11. INT. DORM ROOM - SHOW MORNING

JAY is on the phone and ZAC's alarm keeps going off, but he isn't moving. JAY chucks a pillow at ZAC, waking him up.

JAY
Bro, are you alive?

ZAC snaps awake.

ZAC
Huh, uh, yeah. Sorry.

He checks his phone.

ZAC (CONT'D)
Oh, crap! I'm running late.

JAY
(into the phone)
Hang on, babe.

JAY (CONT'D)
(to ZAC)
Are you alright man? They work you
guys to death over at that
theatre.

ZAC is quickly and awkwardly getting ready to rehearse with VANCE.

ZAC
What? Yeah, I'm peachy. Look, I
gotta go. Show opens today.

JAY
Okay, whatever you say dude.

ZAC starts to leave.

JAY (CONT'D)
I'll talk to you later, I love
you!

ZAC turns confused.

ZAC
I love you t--

He sees that JAY is once again on the phone.

ZAC (CONT'D)
Right. Nevermind. See ya.

ZAC runs out the door.

12. INT. RICHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

RICHARD and RTK stare at the television still playing clips of VANCE's work.

RTK

So why do you think this Vance
Martin guy is a demon?

RICHARD

He's an actor. It's a well known
fact that all actors sell their
souls to the devil for a chance at
the big time. Didn't your dad
teach you any of this?

RTK appears confused. He didn't realize demon protocol was standard father/son stuff.

RTK

Um, no... I can't say it ever came
up. My dad wasn't around much so
it was just me and my mom.

RICHARD

Oh. Well, better late than never.
What's your name by the way?

RTK

Ronald Thomas Kennedy.

RICHARD

Nice to meet ya, Ronald.

They shake hands.

RICHARD crosses his arms and stares into the television.
RTK looks at him and crosses his arms too, copying RICHARD.

13. INT. STAGE - DAY

We join a dress rehearsal already in progress. The stage is set in an Olympic games setting. ZAC is standing stage left in a comically short, athletic-style toga.

EXTRA

You should try something that
needs endurance. Something that
needs stamina. Like long-distance
running.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)

Anything that will help me woo my
sweet olive branch, Sandromeda.

ZAC, as Dannicus, braces up to run. He takes off running towards the hurdle just as LAURA, as Sandromeda, emerges stage left.

LAURA
Hi, Dannicus.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
Sandromeda.

Distracted by Sandromeda's beauty, Dannicus trips over his own feet and falls spectacularly.

LAURA
Are you alright?

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
I'm fine. I'm fine. What about you? Still dating that Troy-hard Paris?

LAURA
Well...

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
Is he taking to you to the Festival of Dionysus?

LAURA
Well, that depends.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
On what?

LAURA
On you.

Dannicus smirks and takes Sandromeda's arm as they exit the stage.

14. INT. BACKSTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

LAURA
Nice work, Zac. I've never known someone who could make tripping look so authentic, so effortless.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
It's all an act, of course. I'm very much in control of my body.

ZAC leans up against the curtain which doesn't provide substantial support, and he falls over. LAURA, amused but unimpressed, walks away.

15. INT. PROP ROOM - 1.5 HOURS BEFORE CURTAIN

ZAC and VANCE are relaxing after the dress rehearsal.

ZAC

So how does someone even end up as a ghost?

VANCE

You have to put in a request with upper management...

He gestures upwards towards Heaven.

VANCE (CONT'D)

... to get a permit.

ZAC

Really?

VANCE

Dude, I don't know.

ZAC

So how did you die exactly? It never said it in any of the articles I read about you.

VANCE

Oh, thank god. At least that part of my reputation remains.

ZAC

That bad?

VANCE

Well it wasn't great. After I filmed Star Fighter 2, I wanted to get back to my roots and try theatre again. It was opening night and right as I was delivering my final monologue, I started having a heart attack. The other actors thought I was just ad-libbing, and the audience started to applaud. It took several minutes before anyone realized what was actually happening, and then I woke up here.

ZAC

Wow.

VANCE

Yeah.

ZAC

It sounds like you gave a pretty killer performance.

VANCE

Sure, make fun of the deceased. Hilarious, dude.

ZAC

You really knocked 'em dead.

VANCE tackles ZAC, possessing him, and does that "why you hitting yourself" thing.

16. INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

We hear noises of ZAC/VANCE's fight in the background. RICHARD enters a door that says "DANGEROUS CHEMICALS. KEEP OUT." He grabs a mop and begins harmlessly mopping until we pan up to reveal that he's painted a pentagram on the floor.

17. INT. PROP ROOM - NIGHT

VANCE and ZAC are still wrestling, moments later VANCE exits ZAC.

ZAC

Alright come on, we're supposed to be brushing up. Curtain's in an hour and a half.

ZAC walks over and grabs a script.

VANCE

I actually think I've got it all down. Besides, I don't like to rehearse too much the day of a performance, makes it less authentic.

ZAC

I just still feel kind of shaky on some of the lines.

VANCE

It's fine dude, you're not the one who's actually saying them.

ZAC

I know, but... what if something happens and you're not around.

VANCE

Relax, I'm a ghost. It's not like I've got anything better to do to.

ZAC

But what about after this play? If you're gone and I go back to being... myself... won't it look weird that suddenly I can't get through a single line of dialogue?

VANCE

I don't know, maybe. But that wasn't the deal.

ZAC

I kind of thought we were past deals. I thought you genuinely wanted to help me.

VANCE

I do, but this is supposed to be my moment and... I've seen you act. There's only so much we can fix in a week.

ZAC

So I'm just a vessel for you? You don't give a damn about me as long as you get to perform again.

VANCE

Come on. I just wanted to give this theatre a decent performance. It's been a long time since it's seen one of those.

ZAC

A decent performance? Yeah, okay...

ZAC begins mocking VANCE'S YouTube compilation.

ZAC (CONT'D)

"Our love is... world of this out."

VANCE aggressively tackles ZAC while he's mocking him and possesses him once again. ZAC flops to the floor and rolls around as if he's wrestling someone.

LAURA walks in.

LAURA
Um, whatcha doin' there, bud?

ZAC, tired and panting struggles to pull himself up from the floor.

POSSESSED ZAC (ZAC)
Just some um, warmup exorcisms, I mean sizes, exercises.

LAURA
By rolling around on the floor?

POSSESSED ZAC (ZAC)
Yup. Looks like it.

LAURA
Well, when you're done... stretching? We need you in makeup. And look, I should've said it earlier, but I think you've made a lot of unexpected progress this week and I'm kind of proud of you. If you don't blow it, of course.

ZAC noticeably changes and VANCE takes over.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE)
Me? Blow it?

VANCE blows a huge bubble and lets it pop obnoxiously.

POSSESSED ZAC (VANCE) (CONT'D)
Not a chance, sweetheart.

LAURA
Alright. Cool it, James Dean.

LAURA leaves, slamming the door in ZAC's face.

VANCE and ZAC separate.

ZAC
What the hell was that all about?

VANCE
Oh, I'm sorry. Was my performance not good enough for you?

ZAC

You're pathetic, you know that?
The only thing people even
remember you for is your terrible
acting. You probably wouldn't even
be haunting this place if you
weren't so hung up on your
supposed glory days.

VANCE pauses in disbelief. This is ZAC at his most hostile.
Even ZAC is shocked. He pulls back and looks away. VANCE
shakes his head.

VANCE

You know what? You're right. You
don't need me. The show is yours.

VANCE starts walking away, pauses and looks back in ZAC's
direction.

VANCE (CONT'D)

Break a leg.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE 4

STAGE FRIGHT

Episode 5: "Lucifer is Risen!"

by

Emily Sparks, Danny Salazar & Afrah Ahmed

1. INT. STAGE - NIGHT

VANCE has just abandoned ZAC, who is left to act on his own. ZAC and LAURA are on stage waiting for the curtain to open. ZAC is visibly nervous. LAURA is poised and ready. She looks over at ZAC.

LAURA

If you haven't spat out your gum,
better swallow it now.

Instead of responding, ZAC breathes heavily. He is jittery and spaced out. LAURA finally glances over at him and notices something is off. She is about to say something to ZAC when the curtain begins to open.

LAURA turns on her Sandromeda persona. She looks lovingly at ZAC, who blinks as he is blinded by the stage lights.

CUT TO:

2. INT. STAGE - MONTAGE OF ZAC SCREWING UP ACT I

-1: Parody of opening scene of Grease.

ZAC and LAURA (as Dannicus and Sandromeda) are holding each other. LAURA looks passionately at ZAC, who is staring out into space, sweating bullets.

LAURA

I'm going back to Athens. I won't
see you again.

ZAC doesn't deliver his line. LAURA continues acting anyway.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I've just had the best summer here
in Mykonos, and now I have to
leave!

ZAC is unresponsive. LAURA starts getting desperate but tries to keep it under control.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Dannicus, is this the end?

After a beat, ZAC realizes he has a line to deliver.

ZAC

Of not course. Beginning this is
the only of.

CUT TO:

-2: Parody of "Greased Lightning"

We see ZAC (as Dannicus) and his posse, who are women dressed up as men, on stage. Instead of cars, there are cheap-looking, cardboard-cutout chariots. Everyone is wearing togas but with greased 50s-style hair.

ZAC sings nervously. Chorus chimes in when necessary.

ZAC/CHORUS
 You know he ain't chatty
 He's a real angry daddy
 Zeus Lightnin'!
 Oh, Zeus Lightning!

Disgruntled stagehands start throwing cardboard lightning bolts on stage. All the actors run off stage in character, except for ZAC, who is paralyzed in place.

CUT TO:

-3: Parody of drive-in movie scene.

ZAC and LAURA sit together behind a cardboard cutout of a chariot, watching a Greek play. ZAC forgets that he is supposed to "grope" LAURA (a-la the movie, we're not being pervy). LAURA impatiently grabs ZAC's hand and places it on her shoulder. After a beat, she screams.

ZAC is startled.

LAURA
 Dannicus, get off me!

ZAC
 Oh, um, sorry...

LAURA
 You think I'm going to stay here
 in this sin chariot?

LAURA storms away from the chariot. As she walks away, the cardboard chariot falls over, revealing the two sad, foldable chairs that LAURA and ZAC had been sitting on.

ZAC remains seated, dazed. The curtains begin drawing to a close. ZAC stands up and runs away, not bothering to wait until the curtains have fully drawn. We see him about to trip as the curtains close.

END MONTAGE.

3. INT. PROP ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

VANCE leans against a wall, bored and bitter, and uses his *ghastly powers* to flick the lights on and off. We hear a loud THUD as ZAC trips off-screen. VANCE stops what he is doing and reacts to the THUD.

VANCE
Wasn't me this time.

4. INT. BACKSTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

ZAC picks himself up off the floor. He looks around and sees that there's nobody around.

Suddenly, a hand covers ZAC's mouth with a rag. ZAC tries to fight it but quickly passes out. We see RICHARD is the perpetrator, and RANDOM THEATRE KID watches in awe off to the side.

RICHARD
(to RTK)
Don't just stand there gawkin',
kid. Help me carry the vessel!

RANDOM THEATRE KID grabs the bucket, still wet with some red paint, and puts it over ZAC's head (like the bag kidnappers use to cover their victims' heads with). RICHARD gives him a quizzical look.

RANDOM THEATER KID
Just in case he wakes up.

RANDOM THEATRE KID helps RICHARD carry ZAC away, leaving a small trail of red paint behind them.

5. INT. PROP ROOM - LATER

VANCE is still in the prop room, flicking the lights on and off. LAURA storms into the room.

LAURA
Zac, where in the Liza Minnelli
are you?!

VANCE is intrigued and turns to watch LAURA. LAURA shouts, hoping that ZAC is listening.

LAURA (CONT'D)
Zac! ZAC! We go on in ten, with or
without you. You better shape up.

LAURA storms away.

VANCE

Hah! You better shape up.

VANCE starts humming the tune of the song. After a few moments, he stops humming and follows LAURA out the door.

6. INT. BACKSTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

VANCE searches around for any clues as to ZAC's whereabouts. He gets more and more desperate as he searches.

Eventually, VANCE steps on a drop of red paint and stops in his tracks. He looks down to see the trail of red paint, and he starts to follow it.

7. INT. BACKSTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

LAURA is storming around, frantically looking for ZAC. She sees JANE and runs over to her.

LAURA

Jane, did you see Zac?

JANE

Yeah, he's never been quite that bad. It was almost like he was a different person up there --

LAURA

No, I mean have you seen him since Act I? I can't find him anywhere.

JANE

Crap. That boy has it coming. Round up people to look for him.

LAURA runs off to find ZAC once again.

8. INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

ZAC is tied up in a chair with the bucket still over his head. He is in the center of the pentagram that RICHARD had painted. RICHARD is circling the pentagram while chanting in Latin.

RICHARD

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet,
consectetur adipiscing elit...

In the pentagram are lit candles, including the one RICHARD stole from ZAC in Episode 3. We see smoke swirling around

the room. Suddenly, RICHARD stops chanting and turns towards RANDOM THEATRE KID.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
What's the next line?

Cut to RTK, vaping in the corner, revealing him to be the source of the smoke. He pulls out a WikiHow printout titled "How to Perform an Exorcism."

Before RANDOM THEATRE KID can respond, we hear ZAC stir. RICHARD and RTK turn to look at ZAC.

RICHARD (CONT'D)
Lucifer is risen!

RANDOM THEATRE KID
Pretty sure his name's Jack.

ZAC
What's going on? Where am I?

RICHARD dramatically takes the bucket off of ZAC's head. RICHARD stares maniacally at ZAC, who looks back and forth at RICHARD and RTK.

ZAC (CONT'D)
What the...?

RANDOM THEATRE KID
Yo, Jack! What's up, man?

RICHARD
(to RANDOM THEATRE KID)
Jack's not in there anymore.
That's all demon inside him.

RANDOM THEATRE KID
Ahh. I get it, I had a tapeworm once.

RICHARD rolls his eyes and starts explaining his master plan to ZAC.

RICHARD
You thought you could fool me,
demon, but I always knew there was
something evil in that scrawny,
puny body of yours.

ZAC
(offended)
Rude.

RICHARD
Tonight, I will finally banish you
from this dimension.

ZAC
And crazy.

RICHARD
You have tormented this theatre
for years, but ol' Dick Fleck will
bring an end to your reign of
terror.

RICHARD keeps talking nonsense. ZAC looks pleadingly at
RANDOM THEATER KID. RICHARD is so engrossed in his speech
he doesn't notice.

ZAC
(whispering)
Hey! RTK! Come here a sec.

RANDOM THEATRE KID walks over.

ZAC (CONT'D)
I know a guy who can get you a
discount on that vape juice. If
you untie me, I could give you his
number.

RANDOM THEATRE KID widens his eyes.

RICHARD sprays ZAC in the face with a Windex bottle that
RICHARD has taken the label off of and replaced with a
piece of tape that reads, "Holy Water."

RICHARD
Silence!
(to RTK)
Don't let it tempt you, child!
(back to ZAC)
As I was saying-

RICHARD starts talking more nonsense. RTK gets distracted,
playing with one of RICHARD's trinkets.

VANCE enters the room. He surveys the situation, and then
he looks at ZAC.

VANCE
What do we have here? Virgin
sacrifice?

ZAC
Exorcism, actually.

VANCE
Well, I was half right.

RICHARD
The demon speaks! Quickly, Ronald,
let's begin the expulsion!
(Beat)
What's the Walkie-How say to do
next?

RTK leafs through the WikiHow article.

RANDOM THEATRE KID
Uh... I think I lost the next
page.

RICHARD
You what?

RICHARD and RTK begin arguing (or more like RICHARD yells
at RTK, who gives the occasional shrug or puff of smoke).
VANCE approaches ZAC.

ZAC
(defensively)
So did you just come here to make
fun of me?

VANCE
Hey, watch the tone. I have a
plan. Let's put those acting chops
to use, leading man.

We cut back to RICHARD and RTK as they finish their
argument.

RICHARD
(to RTK)
You wouldn't have survived a day
in the trenches.

RANDOM THEATRE KID
Oohhh. I probably left the page at
the printer.

RICHARD
So what are you waiting for? Go
get it!

RANDOM THEATRE KID
Aight.

RTK leaves. Suddenly, we hear a gurgling yell.

RICHARD whips his head back towards ZAC, who is contorting his body and rolling his eyes back in an attempt to appear possessed. RICHARD sprays ZAC with more holy water, but it has no effect.

VANCE uses his *ghastly powers* to make the lights flicker on and off. RICHARD looks around, confused. The bucket flies towards RICHARD and just barely misses him. RICHARD recoils.

RICHARD

Holy-

A shelf falls behind RICHARD.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

You cannot get rid of me, demon!
I'm Richard Fleck, sanitation
specialist, and it is my duty to
cleanse this world from beasts
like you!

More objects begin flying around the room and crashing against the floor. RICHARD yelps as he dodges the objects. He is spooked.

We see VANCE leaning against a wall, waving his finger around to move the objects, as if he is conducting an orchestra.

Meanwhile, ZAC's noises are becoming louder and his movements increasingly violent.

9. INT. PRINTER ROOM - MEANWHILE

RTK is standing by an outdated printer, waiting as the last few pages of the WikiHow document print painfully slowly.

10. INT. BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

RICHARD

Stay back! The power of Christ
compels you!

The lights go out. The candles are blown out, and the room is pitch black. We hear a THUD as RICHARD trips and falls to the floor.

Suddenly, the lights come back on. ZAC is standing over RICHARD. ZAC has red paint smeared on his face for extra demon-y effect. He looks terrifying.

RICHARD screams. He struggles to his feet and scrambles out of the room. As he reaches the door, he turns around to deliver his final words.

RICHARD (CONT'D)

You may have won for now,
antichrist, but you won't be
getting this Dick today!

The door slams behind him. VANCE and ZAC look at each other with relief and excitement. They go in for the high five, but their hands pass through. A few more attempts before they finally give up. There's an uncomfortable pause between them.

VANCE

Uh... about what I said earlier...

ZAC

Honestly, don't worry about it. If anything, I should be the one apologizing.

VANCE

True, you were a tool, but I feel like I ruined any chance you had with Laura.

ZAC

You know what? I don't really think I had a chance to begin with. I don't know if you've noticed, but there's this insane height difference between us. That's why we're always sitting in our scenes together. Hypothetically, if we ever got married, she'd probably have to bring a step stool to the wedding and the whole thing would just be awkward.

VANCE

How much have you thought about this?

ZAC

Too much.

They both share a laugh.

VANCE

So we're cool?

ZAC
We're cool.

11. INT. STAGE - MEANWHILE

LAURA is standing in one of the side wings, anxiously watching an all-female cast perform "Olympic School Dropout." JANE marches up to her.

JANE
No sign of Zac. And he better keep hiding 'cause he does not want to deal with me right now.

LAURA
Could Owen take his place? I mean, he can't dance but maybe he can, like, sway on his crutches or something?

LAURA and JANE turn to look at OWEN, who is sitting out of earshot, gluing a lightning bolt to his cast.

LAURA and JANE give each other a worried look.

12. INT. BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

ZAC
So... you ready to hop back in this bod?

VANCE
You really need to learn to think before you speak.

ZAC
Come on, you know what I mean. We gotta finish the play, let's go.

ZAC opens his arms, preparing for VANCE to possess him.

VANCE
Actually, no. You should do this on your own.

ZAC
Huh? But I suck.

VANCE
Maybe in Act I you did, but that exorcism performance was pretty bitchin', y'know?

(MORE)

VANCE (CONT'D)
There's somethin' there. You can
handle college theater.

ZAC relaxes his arms, flattered.

ZAC
You really think so?

VANCE
I've seen a lot of actors come
through this theater. I know so.

VANCE looks down at the ghost watch on his wrist.

VANCE (CONT'D)
Enough of this. You better hustle.

ZAC
How am I gonna get there in time?

VANCE
Teleportation.

ZAC
(impressed)
You can do that?

VANCE
No. Run!

ZAC's face falls and he sprints out of the room.

VANCE begins to leisurely follow suit. Suddenly, a
spotlight shines down on him from an unknown source. He
looks around, confused, and realizes the light is shining
directly on him.

Still confused, he looks out across the hallway and sees
ZAC turn to give him a thumbs up as he's running back to
the stage.

He stares, then a peace comes over him. He smiles
bittersweetly, and nods.

VANCE (CONT'D)
Ah. I get it. Kill it out there,
kid. I'll be watching.

VANCE heads towards the exit.

VANCE (CONT'D)
Can't believe my last hurrah was
almost Greece: The Musical.

VANCE audibly shudders.

After VANCE leaves the room, RTK comes back to the destroyed basement, holding the pages he just printed out. He scans the room for a moment, shrugs, hits the Juul, and walks out.

13. INT. STAGE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

ZAC runs up to backstage, out of breath, some red paint still smeared on his forehead. JANE looks up from her clipboard, pissed. OWEN's smile falls flat as he sees ZAC.

ZAC

Jane! I'm so sorry, I can explain,
but you probably won't believe--

JANE

(Interrupting)

Honestly, I don't care. Just get
out there.

ZAC gives her a determined nod and rushes onto the stage. OWEN looks betrayed and miserable.

14. INT. STAGE - END OF PERFORMANCE

ZAC and LAURA are center stage, holding hands and gazing at each other lovingly as they stand behind their cardboard-cutout chariot, complete with detachable wings. OWEN stands behind them, on crutches, as Zeus. He is wearing a white toga, a plastic crown, a white beard, and holds a cardboard lightning bolt in his hand. A few extras are also sprinkled across the stage.

We hear a lackluster applause, and we pan over a small audience of 10 to 20 people. JAY stands up and and claps enthusiastically.

JAY

Woo! That's my scrump nugget!

ZAC looks confused, but flattered.

Suddenly, ZAC hears loud WHISTLING coming from the back of the theater. VANCE is standing there, cheering wildly for ZAC. ZAC is flustered for a moment but laughs. As the faint applause grows ever fainter, VANCE gradually stops his cheering and gains a more serious expression.

VANCE

That's your spotlight now, bud.
Enjoy it.

ZAC and VANCE share a look. VANCE puts on a pair of Ray Bans, gives ZAC a bow, and walks into the light that is spilling out from the back of the theatre. ZAC watches VANCE fade away.

15. INT. BACKSTAGE - LATER

ZAC is talking with a group of other actors. We see JAY walking towards the group, beaming and holding a bouquet of flowers.

JAY
You were AMAZING!

ZAC is, again, confused but flattered.

ZAC
Thanks, I, uh... can't believe you came! I don't even remember telling you about this...

JAY walks right past ZAC, who has been obscuring LAURA from our view. They give each other a loving embrace.

ZAC surveys the situation.

ZAC (CONT'D)
(to himself)
That... actually explains a lot.
Good for them.

JANE approaches ZAC, making her rounds after the performance.

JANE
(to ZAC)
You're coming to the cast party, right?

ZAC
You want me at the cast party?
After all that?

JANE
Yeah, well, you may have been disastrous in Act I, but you managed to pull it together for the second act. Kind of. It was marginally better. I guess what I'm trying to say is, don't expect more than a supporting role next time.

ZAC

Uh... thanks. And yeah, I'll be at the cast party, there's just something I gotta take care of first.

JANE has already begun walking away before ZAC has finished his sentence.

ZAC (CONT'D)

See ya.

As JANE leaves, ZAC walks up to the other actors, who are getting ready to leave.

ZAC (CONT'D)

Hey guys? Does anyone know how to put in a complaint about a janitor?

16. INT. THEATRE - LATER

The theatre is completely empty. ZAC sits in an empty seat facing the stage, illuminated only by the ghost light and his laptop screen. We see him report the cringe compilation video he had shown VANCE earlier before uploading his own compilation entitled, "Best of Vance Martin" with the description, "Our love was... out of this world."

ZAC closes his laptop and walks out of the theatre. Right as he leaves, the ghost light flickers out.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW