

MYTHIC QUEST

Spec Episode

"Down with the Ship"

Written by

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Based on the show MYTHIC QUEST

INT. GRIMPOP - NIGHT

DANA sits at her desk, absorbed in something on her computer.  
IAN appears.

IAN  
Hey, thanks for waiting. I just  
really needed to--

Dana SCRAMBLES to hide her screen. Nothing to see here.

DANA  
I wasn't- I'm-

IAN  
What are you doing?

DANA  
Nothing.

IAN  
Were you watching porn at work?

DANA  
No.

IAN  
'Cause I'm not against watching  
porn at work. It can really reset  
your creative systems. Actually-  
don't tell me if you were, though,  
because I think that would be  
inappropriate. Maybe. We don't have  
HR. But, off the record, it's okay  
if you were.

DANA  
I wasn't watching porn.

IAN  
Right. Good job. Our non-existent  
HR would appreciate that stance.

DANA  
No, really. I was...reading  
fanfiction.

IAN  
Fanfiction? Like those horny made-  
up stories fourteen-year-olds  
write? Sounds more like something  
your girlfriend would do. No  
offense.

DANA

None taken.

IAN

Or Poppy.

DANA

Okay, now offense taken. Besides, it's more than that. There are some really talented writers and a huge community of fans for pretty much anything. Even MQ.

IAN

Someone wrote something for MQ?

Dana turns her screen toward him.

DANA

More like a hundred thousand someones.

IAN

Oh my god.

(then)

Oh my god. These fuckers really are horny. What is a lemon?

DANA

Here, you can filter that stuff out using tags if you want. Just...

IAN

Wait.

DANA

I am not reading MQ erotica with you.

IAN

Why is my name a tag?

DANA

Where? I don't see it.

IAN

It just popped up when you were typing.

DANA

I don't think--

IAN  
 Dana, I had my face painted on the door of my office. Do you really think I wouldn't be able to spot my name with predator-level precision? Search it.  
 (points at the screen)  
 There.

DANA  
 Huh.

IAN  
 Well? Click through.

She does, and the screen populates with not one, but dozens of fics involving Ian.

DANA  
 Oh no.

IAN  
 This is...

IAN (CONT'D) DANA  
 Amazing. Disturbing.

**MAIN TITLES: MYTHIC QUEST**

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

JO talks on the phone as she rides up.

JO  
 (militant)  
 Yes, sir. Of course, sir, I appreciate you checking in.

Beat.

JO (CONT'D)  
 No, it's okay, you can tell Mom I'll call her later. I'm about to step into the office, and I've told you what a tight ship it is, so-- oh?

INT. MQ BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Jo steps off the elevator as she speaks.

JO

You're coming by for a surprise visit? Because you want to see what my life is like? That's...

She looks around the office. RACHEL is wearing an ANTI GUN T-SHIRT. DAVID is reading a book titled LIVING FULLY WITH SOCIAL ANXIETY. One of the new testers is adding OAT MILK to his coffee.

JO (CONT'D)

Today's really not a good day, sir. Things are so busy- my boss, he's a real hardass. A dictator, even, and I don't think he would- no, trust me, you don't want to meet him, so- Dad? Hello? Hello??

Ian barges in, trailed by an irate POPPY and an over-it Dana.

IAN

David. Where's David? David!

DAVID

No, I told you, you can't come up here anymore! I'm not letting you pay me off again.

JO

Again?

POPPY

For the record, I don't want to be up here. This is Dana's fault.

DANA

Excuse you?

IAN

I'm the main character, David! I have proof.  
(reading off his phone)  
Ian removes his shirt. His rippling muscles shine like the Blade of Light itself. He grips the shaft of his--

POPPY

Ew! You said you weren't going to read a dirty one!

IAN

--sword. I was gonna say sword,  
Pop. Can I just have this moment?  
Please?

DAVID

What is this? What are you talking  
about?

IAN

Our fans have spoken, David.  
Creative Director or not, I'm the  
main character of Mythic Quest. So  
I should get a real say in the  
movie. For the sake of the fans.

DAVID

(to Poppy)

Do you know what he means?

POPPY

Dana showed Ian Mythic Quest porn  
and now Ian thinks he's a literal  
king.

JO

There should not be porn in this  
office. I'm calling the police.

IAN

It's erotica--

DANA

Fanfiction.

IAN

It's fanfiction, not porn. And  
second of all, I am a literal king  
in this one.

JO

I'm still calling the police.

DAVID

Okay, no you're not, Jo. Who is  
writing fanfiction about Ian?

DANA

Not just Ian. Most of the MQ staff.

Everyone in the bullpen begins searching for the page.

DAVID

How is there even enough awareness of our office for people to do that?

DANA

I think it's your fault. That Christmas livestream popped off pretty hard. Everyone was in it. It's created some weird secondary MQ fandom.

BRAD pipes up.

BRAD

So it's brand-related? That makes it monetizeable.  
(catching himself)  
Is what Rachel should say.

RACHEL

(scrolling)  
You want to monetize a three-thousand-word smut-fic about you and David?

DAVID

A what now?

Rachel hands David her phone for him to see. He spits coffee all over the screen.

BRAD

What's wrong, David? Am I too much man for you?

Jo blanches. These are the two men she works for? Her dad can't see any of this when he visits.

JO

Stop saying smut in the workplace! This is supposed to be a corporation, not a free love commune!

DAVID

You're right. Kind of. Ian, I'm very happy that you're getting the attention you crave, but fan-created work really has no bearing on what we do in-office. Besides, I already told you that I'd let you consult.

IAN

Yea, you said that, but it doesn't feel like you're really doing it? Feels like you kinda just said it.

POPPY

Ian, we don't work here anymore. There's enough to do at GrimPop without whinging about a movie that nobody wants you for.

IAN

Whinging?

POPPY

Whinging. You know, whinging.

IAN

Never mind. I just think that as MQ's fan-favorite employee, I have a responsibility to--

DANA

You're not. Not if you're measuring by fic popularity, anyway. Searching by the number of views, there's one that outranks all the others by far, and you're not even in it.

IAN

That's impossible. Who's it about then?

Dana sighs.

DANA

I didn't want to say anything, because you're already being intolerable, but...

IAN

Dana, who?

DANA

It's about Poppy.

PAN to Poppy, her expression unreadable.

POPPY

Me?



INT. MQ STUDIOS - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Rachel hands Brad her coffee covered phone.

RACHEL  
Can you fix this for me, please?

BRAD  
Sure thing, boss.

David follows Brad down the hall.

DAVID  
Brad. Brad, can I talk to you for a minute?

BRAD  
Talk fast, big boy. I've got places to go, phones to clean.

DAVID  
Big- no, see, that's the thing. You can't talk to me like that. Or like you did earlier.

BRAD  
Why not?

Brad keeps walking. Enters a supply closet to get disinfecting wipes. David follows him in.

DAVID  
I think it's obvious.

BRAD  
I'm a humble assistant, David. I'm gonna need you to spell it out for me.

DAVID  
You're undermining me in front of my team.

BRAD  
I would argue you undermine yourself in front of your team by following a low-level employee around like a puppy dog.

DAVID  
I- stop twisting everything around like that!

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

Listen, I am the boss, and we are going to settle that right here, right now. No matter how long it takes.

Suddenly, the closet door SLAMS shut.

BRAD

I didn't do that.

David tries to open it, but it's STUCK. From the outside, we see that Jo has BLOCKED THE DOOR. David starts banging fruitlessly.

DAVID

Hello? Hello??

BRAD

Looks like you'll have all the time you need.

INT. DAVID'S OFFICE - LATER

Ian sits at David's desk. Dana and Rachel enter.

RACHEL

Uh, I got a meeting request from David?

IAN

Yea. I borrowed his computer. And his office.

DANA

You have your own office.

IAN

Technically, this is also my office...

RACHEL

What do you mean, technically? You don't work here.

IAN

...And the office you're referring to has Poppy, who is probably waiting to rub her victory in my face as we speak.

(MORE)

IAN (CONT'D)

I bet she's got some, like, weird Australian saying she's dying to pull out about kangaroos eating shrimp, or something. She can't know about this.

DANA

Oh, this is about the fanfiction thing. I'm gonna go, then.

IAN

No! I need you. Both of you.

RACHEL

For what?

IAN

(to Rachel)

You're a writer. I think you mentioned that once.

RACHEL

I've mentioned it multiple times for the better part of a year. You'd know that if you listened when I talk.

IAN

Yea, shh. I need you to write a fic. About me. One that will blow Poppy's out of the water.

DANA

And why am I here for that?

IAN

I don't like her, but you do, so you're gonna act as a buffer.

DANA

Absolutely not.

RACHEL

Oh my god.

Dana goes to leave.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

Please stay? For my sake?

DANA

Fine.

IAN

Great. So I'm thinking something where I'm an epic hero slaying monsters that only I can.

(MORE)

IAN (CONT'D)

Real action-packed stuff. Like The Odyssey but with me. And I'm shirtless.

RACHEL

That's not how this works.

IAN

What do you mean? That's amazing. I'm giving you gold.

RACHEL

Fanfiction isn't really about someone going on random adventures. It's usually more... emotional wish fulfillment for the readers. They want to see someone unpack their trauma. Or fall in love.

IAN

Pass on that first one.

DANA

Shocker.

IAN

You're here to be a buffer. That is not buffering.

(to Rachel)

Okay, so have me fall in love with someone hot. Gisele Bündchen.

DANA

Of course your type is Gisele Bündchen.

IAN

Buffer!

DANA

Can I go do my job?

IAN

No.

No!

RACHEL

RACHEL (CONT'D)

If you want this to do well, it has to be another character within the fandom. So, in this case, someone from MQ.

IAN

No. God, no. Can I just say, you suck at this. C.W. would've already nailed it by now.

RACHEL

You asked for my help! I don't even work for you!

IAN

You're attending a meeting I scheduled in my office.

RACHEL

David's office.

DANA

It sounds like you really just miss MQ, Ian. It's okay to admit that.

IAN

What? That's crazy. GrimPop is the future, everyone knows that. But that doesn't mean I can't protect my legacy from going up in flames.

INT. MQ BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Jo surveys her surroundings.

JO

This place needs to go up in flames.

She grabs a TRASH BAG and starts throwing out anything that doesn't fit her carefully cultivated image. She snatches a FUNKO POP off of a coworker's desk.

JO (CONT'D)

What are you, twelve?

In the trash it goes. Another COWORKER sips from a BOTTLE. Jo takes it.

JO (CONT'D)

This is...?

COWORKER

Kombucha?

Into the trash.

COWORKER (CONT'D)

Hey!

JO

You drink Diet Coke now, like a  
real American.

A final COWORKER has an INHALER on their desk. Jo trashes it.

COWORKER 2

I need that!

JO

You'll get healthcare when you earn  
it!

She is tearing a COEXIST MAGNET off of the fridge when CAROL  
approaches.

CAROL

What are you doing?

JO

Bringing order to chaos.

CAROL

By stealing your coworker's  
belongings?

Jo turns on the bullpen workers.

JO

Which one of you snitched?

The FUNKO POP COWORKER looks guilty.

JO (CONT'D)

So you're a child and a narc. You  
know, in the wild, a man like you  
wouldn't be allowed to reproduce.

CAROL

Woah, you cannot say that.

JO

I'm just telling the truth: this  
office is full of infantilized  
neoliberal weaklings who should be  
culled so that the true alphas can  
thrive.

CAROL

You also cannot say that!

JO  
I don't think you're understanding  
me. I didn't mean for that to be  
offensive.

CAROL  
Oh?

JO  
No!

CAROL  
So what non-offensive thing are you  
trying to say?

JO  
That we should gather anyone who  
thinks or acts a certain way and  
forcibly remove them from the  
company.

CAROL  
Alright.

Carol grabs Jo's arm and starts dragging her away.

JO  
Wait, no!

CAROL  
It's time-out time.

JO  
But--

CAROL  
Carol does not want to hear it.  
This shit is way, way below my pay  
grade now.

JO  
(to her coworkers)  
Avenge me!

The coworkers look on, apathetic. One fishes their kombucha  
out of the trash.

INT. SUPPLY CLOSET - A LITTLE LATER

David BANGS on the door as Brad watches.

DAVID  
Hello? Hello??

He gives up.

BRAD

You know what's crazy is that this is an exact trope in fanfiction.

DAVID

How would you know?

Beat.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Do you... read fanfiction?

BRAD

Of course I do. Out of professional interest. It's the one corner of fandom that hasn't been completely torn apart by capitalism.

(dreamily)

It's my life goal to change that someday.

(then)

Anyway, this? This is straight out of an enemies-to-lovers romance, my friend.

DAVID

That's ridiculous.

BRAD

Is it? Two men, one incredibly insecure, the other miles out of his league, locked in a small space and forced to confront their mutual disdain for one another?

He steps closer.

BRAD (CONT'D)

Lobbed insults turn into an honest dialogue that eventually leads to a deeper emotional intimacy, and each of them is made to wonder if what they've been missing in life has been right in front of them all along?

A charged beat.



BRAD (CONT'D)

Nah, I'm just fucking with you. I don't respect you enough to hate you or love you. You're just a cog in my machine.

DAVID

I knew that.

BRAD

So you were saying? About being the boss?

DAVID

Right. I really think that if--

BRAD

Oh. You have a cobweb in your hair.

DAVID

I'm not falling for that.

BRAD

Fine, if you won't get it, I will.

He grabs the cobweb and shows it to David, messing up David's hair in the process.

BRAD (CONT'D)

See?

DAVID

Oh. Thank you. Now can I--

He bumps the shelf behind him, tipping over a bottle of cleaning solution. It gets all over his shirt.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Shoot.

INT. GRIMPOP - DAY

Poppy types away at her computer. Ian enters with Rachel and Dana.

IAN

Pop. Pop, are you busy?

POPPY

I mean, I'm not here to fuck spiders.

IAN

Fuck-- that's an Australian thing,  
isn't it.

(to Rachel and Dana)

See? Told you.

(then)

Pop, I did it!

POPPY

Nothing you've done today could be  
something I even remotely care  
about. But you're gonna--

IAN

I'm gonna tell you anyway.

POPPY (CONT'D)

--tell me anyway.

IAN (CONT'D)

Look.

He shows her his phone.

POPPY

(reading aloud)

Sir Ian and the Shaft of Power.

IAN

Yea, this time 'shaft' does mean  
what you're thinking.

Poppy groans.

IAN (CONT'D)

See? It's the top viewed fic now.

RACHEL

Could not tell you how.

DANA

For real - it's pure trash. And not  
even in a good way.

IAN

How I did it is by knowing our  
fans, and them knowing me. As the  
main character. Because that's who  
I am.

POPPY

Ian, I really don't have time for  
this.

DANA

Neither do I. Can we go now?

IAN

Oh. I didn't realize you guys were still here. Yea, you can leave. It's not like you did any of the work anyway.

RACHEL

You--

DANA

Not worth it, babe. Not worth it.

They leave. Poppy keeps working as though Ian isn't present.

IAN

Wait, Pop, are you...are you actually mad about this?

POPPY

No. I don't care.

IAN

But you do a little, though.

POPPY

No.

IAN

There's a vein popping out right there that would--

POPPY

I don't care, Ian! Can I please just do my work?

IAN

Look, if it makes you feel better, I didn't really get that many hits. I bought a bunch of bots to visit the page. It turns out it's really hard to write like a horny teenager.

(Beat)

Did you hear me? You win.

POPPY

I'm not trying to win. You're the only one trying to win this made up competition between you and yourself.

IAN

I would argue that all competitions are made up.

(MORE)

IAN (CONT'D)

Except for the one between your face and that vein... it's definitely real and the vein is winning.

POPPY

I don't have a vein. You have a vein.

IAN

I have intentional veins that I have cultivated to project the perfect amount of masculinity. You have a vein from... I don't know, a head injury, maybe? Because that would explain a lot. More likely extreme neglect, though.

POPPY

I am going to give you a head injury if you don't let me work on this pitch.

IAN

I- wait, pitch? What pitch?

POPPY

I'm pitching Playpen to investors next week.

IAN

Why wouldn't you tell me?

POPPY

When would I have told you? When you were spending all day in your old office or when you were making me hear about your shaft?

IAN

I didn't make you hear about my shaft. I wrote about it. Well, technically, I ended up using an AI to write it. But whether or not you choose to take an interest is entirely up to you.

(Beat)

I just wish you told me. I'm like a pitch god. I mean, do you know how many pitches I've done?

POPPY

Enough to know that I don't want your Ian-ness all over this one.

Ouch.

IAN  
Oh. Uh, yea. Okay. Okay.

POPPY  
Thank you.

IAN  
Sure. But I'm still the main character, right?

POPPY  
Again, I don't care.

IAN  
Great. Okay. Well, I'll let you get back to...having sex with spiders.

POPPY  
It's an idiom, and that's not how it works.

IAN  
Got it. I'm gonna use it though, now, even though it's weird. Good luck.

POPPY  
Thank you.

Ian exits.

POPPY (CONT'D)  
(whisper)  
Like hell you're the main character.

She pulls up the fic about her on her screen.

POPPY (V.O.)  
(reading)  
Queen Poppy's subjects knelt before her. They knew she was the only one with both the power and the wisdom to overcome the threat to their realm...

INT. SUPPLY CLOSET - LATER

David is now SHIRTLESS with TOUSLED HAIR, trying desperately to cling to any scrap of dignity.

DAVID

(to the closet)

Anything else you'd like to do to throw off my groove? No?

BRAD

Seems like even the glass cleaner doesn't know you're the boss. You should tell it. You know, get a practice round in before you tell me.

DAVID

You know what, Brad? I'm tired of letting you demean me. I'm tired of waiting to get the respect I've earned. This time around, I'm going to take it. I'm going to make you feel exactly how you've made me feel. That's right--

The door opens.

DAVID (CONT'D)

After years of letting you ride my ass, I'm riding yours twice as hard!

BRAD

Hi, Carol.

Carol stares in the doorway.

CAROL

Mm mm. No. I didn't not see this coming, but no.

DAVID

Carol.  
(he assesses his appearance)  
It's not- I- The cleaning-

CAROL

Carol was just trying to find where your insane assistant hid her gluten-free cookies. They are not here, though, and to me? Neither are you. I did not see this. Delete.

DAVID

But I-

CAROL

Delete!

She walks off.

BRAD

You know what, David? Watching you embarrass yourself like that was all I needed. Feels just like old times. I will gladly defer to you and your needs for the foreseeable future. Call it a fair trade.

DAVID

You're saying I earned your respect?

BRAD

I would not say that, no. But you can always pretend.

INT. MQ BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Jo walks into the bullpen just in time to run into a disheveled David and a smug Brad.

JO

What are you two doing here? I made sure to get rid of you for this.

DAVID

Get rid of us for what?

The elevator DINGS.

JO

It's too late. He's here.

DAVID

Who's here?

JO

(to Brad)  
Quick, lecture me about corporate values.

BRAD

Actually, I'm doing what David says now.

JO

He... cucked you?? God this is worse than I thought.

The elevator doors open and in walks JO'S DAD. He's the opposite of what was expected in every way: a gentle, teddy-bear of a man with a hokey MIDWESTERN ACCENT.

JO'S DAD

Oh, wow, Jojo, this is so impressive!

BRAD

Jojo?

JO

You can't call me that in a corporate setting, it's unprofessional.

JO'S DAD

Sorry, sugar-pop. I'm just so proud of you. Who are these fine gentlemen?

JO

No one. They're vagrants. I was actually just about to kick them out. SECURITY!

DAVID

I'm David Brittlesbee, executive producer.

BRAD

Brad Bakshi. And you are?

JO'S DAD

Well, I'm Jojo's old man. She probably didn't tell you I was coming. Doesn't think I'd fit in with your... what'd she call it... "ultra-militant corporate culture," but you two seem like mighty fine fellas. It must be nice to be able to have your husband at work with you.

DAVID

Oh, we're not married. We're not together.

JO'S DAD

My apologies for assuming. You two have a certain *je nais se quois*. Not that I'd have a problem with it, of course. I support all kinds.



JO

Dad! You're embarrassing me!

JO'S DAD

Ope, my bad. I'm just excited to see my girl following her dreams!

DAVID

It's nice to meet you. Can I offer you a coffee?

JO'S DAD

That'd be swell. Do you have any oat milk? I've got a tender tummy.

DAVID

Let's see what we've got.

They head to the kitchen together.

JO'S DAD

(hushed)

We come from a pretty small town. I don't think Jojo's ever quite forgiven me for being softer than her friends' parents.

Jo watches them go, aghast.

BRAD

That man is your genetic predecessor? I don't believe it.

JO

Neither do I. I've tried to prove my birth certificate was faked. He never believes me.

BRAD

Sheep never do. You lie to him and tell him this place was your ideal conservative power fantasy?

JO

Yep.

BRAD

And now that he's seen David in a cardigan he's gonna think you're going soft like him?

JO

Yep.

BRAD  
My condolences.

David and Jo's Dad chuckle dorkily about something. Brad and Jo cringe.

BRAD (CONT'D)  
You wanna help me cut off power to  
the fridge so everyone's kombucha  
spoils?

JO  
You always know what to say.

They head off to do just that, walking past the other two men to take the elevator. As the doors close on them, we CUT TO BLACK. At which point, Jo has one final thought.

JO (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Hey, did you fuck David?

END OF EPISODE.