

MYTHIC QUEST

S03 E01 Spec Script

"Juno"

EXT. PRISON - DAY

BRAD struts out of the prison gates. Drops his shades to see...

JO waiting by the car, mochaccino in hand. Smiling. Eager.

BRAD
I'm off the sauce.

Jo hurls the coffee away.

JO
It's good to have you back. Are you hungry? I --

BRAD
Business first, Jo.

She opens the passenger door for him, realizes her error, closes it. Opens the rear door. Brad gets in.

BRAD (CONT'D)
Tell me everything.

INT. JUNO STUDIOS - DAY

IAN and POPPY address a group of EMPLOYEES in a shabby office. Flaking paint, bad lighting, the whole nine. Behind them, an easel shrouded with a white sheet.

IAN
You're thinking: "Six months since Ian and Poppy left Mythic Quest to start their own shop. Where's the ping pong table? Where are the snacks?"

POPPY
"Is there health insurance?"

IAN
"Is there..."
(realizing)
Pop, can you...?

POPPY
Sorry.

IAN
Look. You want snacks?

POPPY
Mythic Quest has got 'em.

IAN
You want ping pong?

POPPY
(points to self)
MQ reigning champ.

IAN
You want state-of-the-art
equipment? Paid vacation? Work-life
balance? Fat salaries?

POPPY
Ian.

IAN
The point is: If that's what's
important to you, there's the door.
But if you want to build something
new...

POPPY
Something the gaming world's never
seen...

IAN
Something unbecomingly beholden to the whims
of those helicopter moms in
Montreal!

POPPY
Well, that's what we're doing here.

A DEV nods knowingly, totally drinking the Kool-Aid.

DEV 1
Hera.

IAN
Um, well --

POPPY
Well, no --

IAN (CONT'D)
No, not Hera. Our lawyer made very
clear that what we're working on
here is...not Hera.

As one, the EMPLOYEES turn to a guy in the corner. REVEAL the
lawyer, DARNO (50) a badly dressed, skittish little fella.

DARNO

That's right. Um. Hi, everyone.
Darno Flamm, esquire. That's a
fancy way of saying lawyer. But
don't think of me as a lawyer.
Think of me as, like --

POPPY

No. Definitely think of him as a
lawyer. One hundred percent.

IAN

Absolutely. He is a lawyer.

POPPY

Our lawyer.

IAN

For better or worse.

DEV 2

You told us in the interview that
we'd be working on Hera.

IAN

And in a way, you are.

POPPY

No, they're not.

IAN

Well...

POPPY

No, they are not, Ian.

IAN

Not officially.

DARNO

Hera's owned by Mythic Quest.

POPPY

So we've conceptualized an entirely
new thing!

Ian rips the sheet off the easel. On the whiteboard, a single
word: **JUNO**.

IAN

Juno: a globally synced MMORPG experience in which players can modify the in-game world in real time, synchronized across all servers with permanent, lasting, universal repercussions.

DEV 1

That sounds exactly like Hera.

DEV 2

"Permanent" and "lasting" mean the same thing.

DEV 3

Hold on. Juno, like, the Roman goddess version of the Greek goddess Hera?

POPPY

(comprehension dawning)
Oh, my God, Ian!

SMASH TO:

MAIN TITLES: MYTHIC QUEST: JUNO

INT. MQ STUDIOS - DAY

Brad and Jo survey the place. It's descended into eerie normalcy: workers work calmly, diligently...even happily? CAROL walks by smiling.

CAROL

(to EMPLOYEE)
Here you go, Connor. Thanks for filling that out.

CONNOR

Sure thing, Carol. Thank you!

CAROL

Of course, honey. Don't you go working too hard now, OK?

CONNOR

Wouldn't dream of it.

Laughter.

BRAD
You weren't kidding.

JO
It's creepy, right?

BRAD
Very weird.

INT. IAN & POPPY'S OLD OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Brad lets himself into Ian's old office -- DAVID'S new digs.

DAVID
My, my. Is it that time already?

Something different about David. Must be self-confidence.

BRAD
Six to eight months.

DAVID
Brad. Great to see you, man. How are you?

As he suffers an embrace, Brad looks at Jo: who's this guy and what did he do with David?

DAVID (CONT'D)
Here, have a seat. You want something? I can send one of the interns for a mochaccino.

JO
He's on the wagon.

BRAD
Mochaccino would be great, David. Thank you.

DAVID
(on intercom)
Hey Trav, bud. Come in here for a second?

TRAVIS appears.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Travis, this is my old colleague Brad. Would you mind popping next door and getting us a couple mochaccinos?

TRAVIS
Sure thing, David.

DAVID

Thank you so much. Oh! And you, Jo?

JO

I'm OK.

DAVID

She'll have a small hot. Two cream,
two sugar.

(to Jo)

If you don't drink it, no sweat.
But just in case. Thanks, Trav. Put
it on the card.

TRAVIS

You got it, boss.

DAVID

Anywho. What brings you back to
Mythic Quest, Brad? Business?
Pleasure?

JO

He doesn't need a job, if that's
what you're implying.

DAVID

No, I'm sure. Six months in the pen
makes you the prettiest girl at the
dance in your twisted circles,
doesn't it, Braddy-boy?

BRAD

A little insider trading never hurt
anybody.

DAVID

(to Jo)

Shows them he doesn't fuck around.

JO

I know that, David.

DAVID

Speaking of F-ing around, you hear
about Ian?

BRAD

He and Poppy left for greener
pastures, I'm told.

DAVID

What a disaster. Between trying to wiggle out of their non-competes and realizing Hera belongs to MQ, they're about ten miles up shit creek with a biodegradable fork for a paddle.

BRAD

What do you mean, Hera belongs to MQ?

DAVID

Intellectual property clause, bro. Hera is ours. Not that we can do much with it, given the mess of foundation code MQ is built on. But still, as long as Ian doesn't have it.

BRAD

A win's a win.

DAVID

My guy on the inside says Tweedledumb-n-Dumber are still trying to crack the thing under some pseudonym, but it'll never come to market. And if it does, I'll just sue the fuck out of them and use the money to buy a jet or a trampoline or something.

BRAD

Your guy on the inside?

DAVID

At Juno.

JO

Juno, as in the Roman version of --

BRAD

Got it. Yeah.

Brad stands to pace.

DAVID

You alright, Brad?

BRAD

I'm impressed, David.

DAVID
 (faltering)
 You...you are?

BRAD
 Oh, very. "Guy on the inside"? "Sue
 the fuck out of them"? It's like a
 Nazi doctor injected you with
 Backbone Serum.

JO
 Glued balls to your fleshy cleft.

DAVID
 Well, thank you, guys.

BRAD
 It makes sense, I suppose. Once
 free of Ian's shadow, there's
 enough sunlight for any flower.

JO
 But something doesn't add up.

BRAD
 Something's rotten in Denmark.

JO
 What kind of flower attacks the
 tree that just quit the company?

BRAD
 That's right, David. What kind of
 flower attacks the tree that just
 quit the company? Why are you
 spying on Ian? If he's as up the
 creek as you claim, where's the
 advantage?

David attempts a smile but achieves a grimace.

DAVID
 Competitive edge?

INT. KARAOKE BAR - STAGE - DAY

C.W. and RACHEL are onstage, belting out the Spice Girls' "If
 You Wanna Be My Lover."

INT. KARAOKE BAR - BAR - MOMENTS LATER

C.W. retrieves another round from the bar.

BARTENDER

You and your son crushed it up there.

C.W.

Thank you.

INT. KARAOKE BAR - LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Rachel accepts the beer from C.W.

RACHEL

Thanks, man.

C.W.

My pleasure, dear girl.

RACHEL

So...? What do you think so far?

C.W.

Of college?

(off her nod)

It is a foul, pestilent miasma of carnal lawlessness and intellectual braggadocio. I love it.

RACHEL

Thank God. After I convinced you to apply, I was so worried you'd hate it.

C.W.

Convinced me? Bah! A man cannot be convinced of any enterprise against which his heart truly rebels, Rachel. I wanted this as much as you.

As he starts to wax poetic, Rachel perks up at something -- or SOMEONE -- she's spotted across the room.

C.W. (CONT'D)

(background noise)

You know, for decades I scorned formal education, believing wordcraft an unteachable thing. It was, I thought, a matter of innate skill.

(MORE)

C.W. (CONT'D)

I hoped my own small talent, fed a steady diet of classic literature and disciplined practice, might blossom into something transcendent -- or at least worthwhile. But then, it turns out --

RACHEL

Holy shit, dude. Look.

C.W.

What is it?

RACHEL

See that guy over there? That's M. Night Shyamalan.

C.W.

Who?

RACHEL

C'mon. We gotta say hello.

INT. JUNO STUDIOS - POPPY AND IAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Ian hangs by his feet from an inverter machine. Poppy paces the room.

IAN

I honestly don't see what the big deal is, Pop.

POPPY

We have to have plausible deniability!

IAN

It's entirely plausible that I don't know shit about Roman mythology and I'm naming our innovative, groundbreaking game after the innovative, groundbreaking Diablo Cody film.

POPPY

What?

IAN

Juno, Poppy. Juno? With Ellen Page?

POPPY

Elliot Page.

IAN

No, this was pre-transition. It's about a teenager who gets preg --

POPPY

I know what the movie is about. His name is Elliot.

IAN

Well, no, because at the time --

POPPY

I'm not arguing this with you, Ian. You told me you had "Oriental" for dinner the other night.

IAN

So it's okay for rugs but not for cuisine?

DARNO enters.

DARNO

My two favorite mischief-makers. So, here's the scoop. I talked to the troops and cleared everything up. Juno's not Hera and Hera is not Juno.

IAN

But they are.

DARNO

No.

IAN

I mean, it's the same thing.

DARNO

Much different.

IAN

It's a globally synced MMORPG experience in which players can modify the in-game --

POPPY

Jesus Christ, Ian! We know it's the same thing. But we can't say that out loud.

IAN
 (confused)
 I'm not...afraid of David. Are you
 afraid of David?

POPPY
 Oh, my God.

DARNO
 It's not who is
 (at Poppy)
 and who isn't
 (at Ian)
 afraid of David. It's nuanced. It's
 about optics. Mythic Quest can't
 claim an idea as their exclusive
 intellectual property. But given
 the amount of code that was written
 and the number of meetings taken
 trying to execute Hera while you
 two were co-creative directors at
 MQ...It'll be hard to convince a
 judge you didn't just make off with
 MQ's golden goose in flagrant
 violation of your contracts.

IAN
 Fuck the contracts, Darno. I'm so
 tired of hearing about the
 contracts. That was Hera. This is
 Juno.

DARNO
 Right. But we need to get our
 stories straight.

POPPY
 (mostly to herself)
 We're going to look back on this
 one day...

IAN
 I'm thinking we just totally deny
 the Roman mythology angle.

POPPY
 ...from a jail cell...

DARNO
 "Ian Grimm has no working knowledge
 of Roman mythology --"

POPPY
 And it'll all seem so preventable.

IAN

It's the lesser of the two mythologies, anyway. *The Aeneid*? Come on.

DARNO

"He named his current project *Juno* after the 2007 Ellen Page vehicle of the same name-- "

IAN

Elliot Page.

DARNO

This was pre-transition, though. Late aughts.

IAN

It's Elliot Page, Darno. Come on, man, your privilege is showing.

POPPY

(disbelief)

Holy shit.

(then, shifting gears)

Wait. Why not just change the name? Change it from Juno to, like, literally anything else?

A long beat while Darno and Ian consider this.

IAN

Naaaah, I kinda like how Juno sounds.

INT. KARAOKE BAR - DAY

C.W. looks on skeptically as Rachel hounds M. NIGHT SHYAMALAN.

RACHEL

I remember seeing *Signs* in theaters. Oh, my God. It was amazing. "Swing away, Merrill, swing away!"

M. NIGHT

Thank you.

RACHEL

What was it like working with Mel Gibson?

C.W.

Apart from his naked anti-Semitism,
she means.

M. NIGHT

Mel's actually done real work to
make amends since the incident
you're --

C.W.

Oh, has he? What did he do, move to
Argentina?

M. NIGHT

I'm sorry, you are?

RACHEL

CW, cut it out. I'm so sorry, Mr.
Shyamalan.

M. NIGHT

Wait, hold on.
(recognition)
Not CW Longbottom.

C.W.

At your service. And you are?

M. NIGHT

Such an enormous fan. *Tears of the
Anaren...* God, what a revelation.
Though personally I thought the
second book was a grittier, realer
experience. I know, I know --
critics claim *Tears* is the best,
but what can I say? I'm a sucker
for a sequel.

C.W.

Your friend has impeccable taste,
Rachel.

M. NIGHT

Any movement on the third
installment?

RACHEL

Actually, CW is --

C.W.

Closing in on a final draft. I can
send you an advance copy when it's
finished, if you like.

M. NIGHT

I'd be honored, Mr. Longbottom. Any hints about how it all ends?

C.W.

Any...predictions?

M. Night leans in and whispers a prediction in C.W.'s ear -- whose eyes GO WIDE at what he's hearing.

M. NIGHT

So? Am I close?

C.W.

You must...wait and see, dear boy. Wait and see. Rachel, why don't you exchange contact information with Mr. Night, and uh...

He wanders away, clearly rattled. At the same time, an INCOMING CALL on Rachel's phone. It's DANA. Rachel hesitates, hits ignore, turns back to M. Night.

RACHEL

Are you on Instagram?

INT. SUE'S OFFICE - DAY

David stands in the doorway, backed by Brad and Jo. All three frown at something O.S.

REVEAL SUE as never before: bags under eyes, hair askew, clothes wrinkled and stained. She appears not to notice the visitors.

SUE

(muttering)

There is nothing that keeps wicked men at any one moment out of Hell but the mere pleasure of God. His sovereign pleasure, his arbitrary will

(climbing, trembling)

restrained by no obligation, hindered by no manner of difficulty

--

DAVID

Sue.

SUE

Oh, hello there!

DAVID
You alright?

SUE
Oh, sure. Just dealing with a few
disgruntled players! You know how
the community can be.
(with venom)
Wretched little creatures.

Brad and Jo back out of the room.

SUE (CONT'D)
Is that Brad Bakshi? Hi, Brad!

INT. MQ STUDIOS - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Brad strides toward the elevator with Jo in tow. David catches up as the doors slide open.

BRAD
David, what the fuck was that?

INT. MQ STUDIOS - ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

The three ride up.

DAVID
It's funny -- the whole company
improved when Ian left. That's how
it seemed, at least. People are
happier. They work harder, they
smile more.

BRAD
But the player base?

DAVID
Well, that's the strange thing. I
don't get it. Montreal says our
numbers are solid. We released
Zeus, and --

BRAD
You what?

DAVID
We released Zeus.

JO
You what?

DAVID
We...released Zeus?

BRAD
Zeus, the expansion Ian told you to trash?

DAVID
It was solid content. The devs said it was ready to launch, so I thought...

BRAD
David, do you know who you are? You're the moron who looks at a brownie recipe and says "Tablespoon of vegetable oil? Oh, shucks, I don't have vegetable oil. I guess I'll use motor oil instead, and I'll eyeball it rather than measuring, and then I'll launch the expansion that Ian specifically told me not to launch." That's you.

JO
Baking is about precision, David.

BRAD
You know why I'm so good at my job? I don't let things like employee morale or my colleagues' approval cloud my decision making.

They get off the elevator.

INT. MQ STUDIOS - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Walk and talk.

BRAD
You, on the other hand, crave the approval of both your betters and your lessers. So when your betters jumped ship, you were little more than an unmoored rowboat, drifting around trying desperately to make people like you by restocking the vending machines and playing ping pong.

JO
I am so aroused.

BRAD

Which is why you're now saddled with about a hundred happy employees and twelve million pissed off gamers who don't like having half-baked shit shoveled down their throats.

DAVID

But Montreal...the numbers are solid, they said.

BRAD

The numbers are "solid" right now because you've got a natural influx of casuals who show up any time a fancy expansion is announced in *Game Informer*. At the same time, you've got an invisible mass exodus of die-hards who feel betrayed by the big letdown that is Zeus. Once the casuals get tired and fuck off, you're going to notice a big dip in playership. I have to imagine in-game purchases have dropped already?

DAVID

Well, yes. Plummeted, really. But that's --

BRAD

That's because casuals don't make in-game purchases, David. The pockets that matter are the pockets we've been picking since the beginning.

(gestures to MQ offices)

This? This is just a pretty corpse that hasn't started to stink yet.

DAVID

(childlike)

What do I do?

BRAD

What do you do? I don't know, why don't you run along and ask your mother? Seriously David, this is pathetic, even for you. I don't work here.

DAVID

I'll bring you back. I'll double your salary.

BRAD

I can make five times my salary in the private sector now that I've been to jail.

DAVID

This is the private sector.

BRAD

Oh, honey. You think this is the private sector?

JO

There are sectors you know nothing about.

BRAD

Tell you what. I will help you, David. I can't save Mythic Quest. No, it's too late for that. Ian's seat was still warm when you slaughtered his firstborn. But I can save you, David. Do you want that?

JO

Do you?

DAVID

Yes. Please.

BRAD

Good. But I'll need something in return.

DAVID

Anything.

INT. JUNO STUDIOS - NIGHT

Close of business. Ian and Poppy sip whiskey from paper cups.

IAN

This isn't how I imagined it.

POPPY

Me either.

Brad enters, regarding the office with a skeptical eye.

BRAD

Jesus.

POPPY

Holy shit. Hi, Brad.

BRAD

This place is a shithole.

IAN

From the little acorn grows a
mighty oak.

BRAD

You're well, I hope?

IAN

When did you get out?

BRAD

Earlier. Saw David today.

POPPY

Aw, David. How's he doing?

BRAD

I thought bad...
(eyeballs the space)
but comparatively?

IAN

Can we help you?

BRAD

No. But I can help you. I have
David convinced Mythic Quest is
dead.

POPPY

You what?

BRAD

I know. Stroke of genius, really.
Morale is up at the office and I
spun it like he's screwed the
pooch. Got him to do some really
humiliating shit in exchange for a
seat at the shiny new table.
(eyeballs the space again)
Not as shiny as I imagined, though.

IAN

How'd you do that?

BRAD

Oh, Sue's a little stressed out and in-game purchases are down. Told him it was his fault.

(snorts)

Happens every time a new expansion launches. People are so smitten with the new content they don't need to buy anything for a few months. The ship will right itself. MQ will be fine. David's shitting his pants, though.

IAN

So he went ahead with Zeus? That rat bastard.

POPPY

He launched Zeus three months ago, Ian.

IAN

I don't really do news.

BRAD

Jo's keeping an eye on him downstairs. Should I have them come up so we can discuss the terms of our employment?

POPPY

David's here?

IAN

"Our" employment?

BRAD

This is the shiny new table, friends. I promised him a seat.

IAN

Brad, why the fuck would we want David of all people slinking around? Come to think of it, why would we want you?

BRAD

Because you need a producer and you need a moneyman. Outside producers aren't gonna bend to your will so easy, and other moneymen? Well, I'm the best there is.

POPPY

Why do you want to be here? You don't even like us.

BRAD

True. But I have fourteen point two million in personal investment capital and for that I will take a 33% stake of the company.

IAN

Fourteen...

BRAD

That's right. Look, I don't give a shit about the two of you. But you're creative geniuses, and if you can pull off Juno, it's gonna be the biggest thing there is. So? Me and David. We're a package. Like in gym class.

Off Ian and Poppy, considering...

INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT

C.W. BURSTS IN, abuzz with energy. He shrugs off his jacket, sits at the desk, loads his typewriter, goes to pour himself a drink...

A moment of hesitation. The alcoholic's struggle. He stoppers the bottle and stows it in a drawer. Starts to type.

CLACK CLACK CLACK CLACK CLACK...

INSERT: *THE ANAREN UNTITLED / Book Three / by C.W. Longbottom*

INT. CAR - NIGHT

David's hair is shaved on top to resemble male pattern baldness -- not dissimilar to CW's dome.

Jo does her best to look anywhere else. A knock on the window.

BRAD

(through the glass)
Thumbs up, buddy. Come on in.

CUT TO:

EXT. JUNO STUDIOS - THROUGH THE WINDOW - MOMENTS LATER

David enters, then Brad and Jo. Ian greets David, Poppy waves hello. The old gang back together again.

Poppy rubs David's freshly shorn head and he nods, gesturing to Brad: *he made me do it.*

Ian passes more whiskey around. PULL BACK to leave the team alone, let 'em enjoy their reunion...

BLACK.

TAG

INT. LIBRARY - LATE NIGHT

Almost nobody left at this hour. Couple die-hards snoozing on tables. PAN across until we find...

DANA, wide awake, working intently.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Dana, right?

Dana doesn't hear. Too focused.

WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Dana?

DANA

Huh? Oh, sorry.

WOMAN

Hey.

This is HAILEY, 30.

DANA

Hi...?

HAILEY

I sit behind you in Danella's class. Loved your presentation. The goat thing, it's awesome.

DANA

Grumpy Goat, yeah. Hi. Thank you.

HAILEY

(laughs)

You don't recognize me at all, do you?

DANA

Sorry, just...

HAILEY

Hey, look, it's almost last call at Punter's. I'm gonna go get a margarita. You wanna come?

Dana looks at her phone. No return call from Rachel...

DANA

Know what? Yeah, sure. Give me a second to pack up.

HAILEY

I'm gonna go get my car anyway. Meet me out front. It's a Subaru hatchback.

Dana blinks.

HAILEY (CONT'D)

I'm kidding. But imagine? See you in a minute.

She leaves. Dana watches her go, takes in the sway of her hips...BUZZ BUZZ.

INSERT - TEXT MESSAGE FROM RACHEL: *Crazy night. Met M. Night Shyamalan. CW so weird. Can I call u back tomorrw? A little drunk.*

Rachel puts her phone away and packs up.

END OF SHOW