

She Jumps Right Off the Page

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Character descriptions:

Allison 1: 13-19 year old girl. Allison 1 is stubborn but curious, and begins the play extremely stressed about her assignment for school.

Allison 2: Visually similar to Allison 1. First a silent character representing Allison 1's vision for her play and then an element of Allison 1's world, Allison 2 is a meta character who both lends Allison 1 some advice while being a hypothetical character in her play. She is confident and happy, an "ideal" version of Allison 1. and should ideally look the same age (and be wearing the same clothing) as Allison 1 as she is playing the autobiographical character in Allison 1's play.

Lights up. A girl in a pink shirt and black pants (ALLISON 1) walks on stage begrudgingly. She slumps down on an actor's block and sighs. She pulls out a phone. She sets it down and opens a book. She pulls her phone back out while still looking at

the book. She looks at the phone and then the book and the phone. She groans and then puts both down firmly. Her posture sags and she puts her head in her hands. She pulls out her phone again. She dials the number of her best friend Molly.

Allison 1: Hi yes Molly? Hi. I'm having trouble. The English assignment? Write a whole play-....I don't know how you do it. Oh my God please. Anything to help, I'll do anything....Get up? Okay. I'm up *(she says while still sitting)*....ugh you know me too well *(she actually stands up)*....okay. I'm actually up now....walk around. Okay. I'm walking around....*(she starts pacing)*....no! I actually am this time Molly, I swear! Hmmmmmm five things?...*(she looks around her "room")*.....um? A pillow, a book, a shoe, a lamp and a pencil....that's good...okay good. I did something right at least....okay line them up? okay....*(she lines them up in no specific order)*...now create a story??? About a lamp?? What am I supposed-.....okay ... I'll try....hmmm...there's a lamp, okay, her sole mission in life is to....set on fire *(a sad attempt at jazz hands)*!! Okay no. Molly. This isn't working. What am I even saying?? How am I supposed to have a lamp talk in the first place? Aren't I supposed to write words, like dialog and stuff??....stage directions? What on earth are stage directions??... ohhh okay....still! Stage directions about a lamp?...okay Molly that is weird....okay....I'm hanging up now Molly you're being weird....lamps can't talk Molly lamps can't talk....I'm pressing the button....bye.

Allison 1 sits back down on the block and sighs. She gets back up again and looks at her line of items.

Allison 1: *(in frustration)* Dude! Molly wants help with chem, I give it. Molly wants help with geometry, I give it. Molly wants someone to help with flashcards, here I am!! But when I literally have one single tiny question about an English assignment all the "help" I get is a play about lamps? Talking lamps? *(she slumps again rolling her eyes at the thought of a talking lamps)*

Allison 1 remembers something and runs to her backpack. She pulls out a sheet of paper. She reads out loud.

Allison 1 (*reading from the paper*) This assignment entails writing and designing your own play. The subject of your play could be anything from a girl to a lamp. (*not reading anymore*) A lamp. Seriously?? (*continues reading*) Write what you know, don't try to be someone else. (*finishes reading*) Great. Just great. How can I write what I know if I don't know anything! (*groans, then sarcastically*) Maybe I'll just write about not knowing...

Allison 1 sits down again and sighs. She reads through the page again silently. She puts everything in the room back to where it was at the beginning of the show.

Suddenly she has an idea. Allison 1 takes out a notebook and a pencil from her backpack and starts to write a draft of a play. She reads what she is writing (in bold) out loud.

Allison 1: **Lights up.** (*Allison 1 looks up from her paper. stops writing, and says the next line not 100% mean-spirited but more playfully angry*) See Molly! I can do your fancy stage directions without your help! (*she turns back to her notebook, excited*) **Our main character** - (*sits up again, speaking to herself*) I'll think of her name later - **Our main character steps on stage. She is disappointed.**

Another girl (Allison 2), a representation of the girl Allison 1 is writing about in her play, steps on stage. She is illuminated by a sharp spotlight. As Allison 1 is writing about herself, Allison 2 reenacts Allison 1's entrance at the beginning of the play. She is disappointed.

Allison 1: (*still writing in her notebook and reading her writing out loud*) **She slumps down and pulls out her phone.**

Allison 2 slumps and takes out a phone.

Allison 1: *(trying to remember exactly the way that it happened to her)* Or was it my book first?

Allison 2 puts down the phone, and takes out the book.

Allison 1: *(giving up making it completely accurate to her experience)* Oh whatever, creative license - **she takes out her phone first.** Yes. Phone first.

Allison 2 stops. Looks at Allison 1 and rolls her eyes. She knows that Allison 1 is dictating her every move as the playwright. She puts the book away and once again picks up the phone. Frustrated, she stares at it.

Allison 1: **She puts her phone down and takes her book out.**

Allison 2, unable to speak unless Allison 1 writes dialog for her in the play, jerks her head toward Allison 1 and groans.

Allison 1: Sorry! This is how it actually happened!

Allison 2 puts her phone away and pulls out the book.

Allison 1: *(saying to the girl)* Okay don't hate me. **She takes out the phone and looks between the phone and the book over and over.**

Allison 2 obliges, looking between the phone and the book over and over.

Allison 1: **She sighs and puts everything down.**

Allison 2 puts everything down. Satisfied. Like she thinks she's done.

Allison 1: She picks up her phone again.

Allison 2 stands up indignantly and stomps staring at Allison 1.

Allison 1: She dials her best friend Molly's number.

Allison 2 dials the number.

Allison 1: She has an *incredibly* lengthy conversation (*playing into the comedy of directly mirroring what Allison 1 did in the first half of the play, this conversation can go on for up to a full minute*) with Molly about whether lamps have the capacity to possess life and hangs up the phone.

Allison 2 pretends to be talking on a phone and then hangs up the way that Allison did when she hung up her call with Molly.

Allison 1: She sits back down on the block. She sighs. She rolls her eyes at the thought of a talking lamp.

Allison 2 sits back down. She sighs. She rolls her eyes at the thought of a talking lamp.

Allison 1: She picks up the sheet of paper from her backpack. And reads through it. Suddenly she has an idea.

Allison 2 takes the sheet from her backpack and reads. She raises her finger, getting an idea.

Allison 1: She takes a notebook and pencil from her bag and starts to write.

Allison 2 opens the notebook and begins to write.

Allison 1: Ughhh now what do I write??

Allison 2 starts mouthing words and then realizes she can actually talk. Deliberately forming words with her mouth, she starts making noise.

Allison 2: Oh my god you are indecisive! The phone the book the phone the book the phone!

Allison 1: *(defensive)* I'm sorry! I didn't know what to write!

Allison 2: Clearly! You literally wrote a scene about yourself not knowing how to write a scene!

Allison 1: Wait so you are me? Well, the me that I just wrote about in my play?

Allison 2: Yeah, you started a play and I appeared to help you picture your vision. So technically if the character you wrote about is truly written about yourself...I am you. Nice to meet you Allison, my name is Allison.

Allison 1: Hi?

Allison 2: So? What are you going to write now? I'm still your character! *(twirls, carefree)*

Allison 1: But that's the problem! I started writing this play in the first place because I don't *know* what to write about!

Allison 2: Well *I* have some ideas...

Allison 1: How do *you* have ideas? You're me and I don't have any!

Allison 2: Wrong. I'm not you, I'm your *character*. Your play about yourself doesn't always have to be exactly true. Especially if your character has ideas and you don't. Let me lead! Your play doesn't have to go exactly how *your* life is going. Otherwise Romeo and Juliet would literally be about an old man in his attic writing with ink and a quill.

Allison 1: (*purposely confusing, Allison 1 is very lost*) Wait, so you're saying I, the playwright, should listen to you, a character version of me that I wrote, for ideas about my play that I'm writing about me? You? I'm lost.

Allison 2: Just listen to your characters, whether they are based on you or not...what do *they* want?

Allison 1: But my character *is* me! You are me! I'm writing about myself!

Allison 2: I'm my own character, even if I am based on you.

Allison 1: You're starting to sound like my English teacher.

Allison 2: Well maybe your English teacher is right! Just write about what your *character* wants.

Allison 1: Fine. What do you want Allison?

Allison 2: I've been waiting for you to ask me that! (*charming grin*) Let me help you!

Allison 1 (*challenging*): Okay. Help me then. What do you - and therefore I, I guess - want? I don't know what to write and you want to help me? Help me then.

Allison 2 (*silly all-knowing*): I think you know more than you think!

Allison 1: I'm listening...

Allison 2: Write about...(*thinking*)...your friend Molly!

Allison 1 rolls her eyes.

Allison 2: Perfect!

Allison 1: What?

Allison 2: That eye roll! That was perfect. *That* is something I know you care about! Write!

Allison 1: What *about* Molly though? I thought you were going to *help* me! What do I write about?

Allison 2: I thought you'd never ask.

Blackout.