

The Sundogs

By
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CHARACTERS

Jay Cohen - 17, president of the AV Club and host its podcast AV Gravy. She's a social butterfly, getting along with most everyone but not developing particularly deep relationships with any one person.

Jackie Randle - 18, classmate of Jay's. Jackie is known by everyone, and no one knows a thing about her. It's seldom you'll see her interacting with a fellow student. The thing is, it's been this way for so long that no one is sure whether or not it is by choice.

PJ Crumb - 16, editor of the yearbook. PJ stopped visibly giving a shit what you thought about him years ago. His interests are narrow and mostly involve visual art and table top role playing games. He's got friends, but not the kind of people you'd hang out with. Good. More Arizona Iced Tea for him.

Sam Lerner - 17, captain of the varsity tennis team. Sam is a golden god, and boy does she know it. Star athlete, gifted student, and good looking to boot. If she comes off as arrogant, it's because her confidence has never been checked before. She thinks she's the Queen of West Summit High and has yet to see any evidence to the contrary.

SETTING

The Publications Office at West Summit High School. Ostensibly, this room is meant to be used by members of the three student publication clubs: the newspaper, the yearbook, and the AV Club. Thing is, the students in those clubs also happen to be friends with one another, and since working on these publications takes a lot of time, the place is essentially a private clubhouse. It's messy, there's all kinds of nerdism on the walls, and there are back issues of the newspaper and yearbook in stacks everywhere. There are two computer stations at either side of the room and in the center is a circular table along with two microphones and an audio interface.

TIME

The last month of school.

THE SUNDOGS

SCENE ONE

JAY and SAM sitting across from one another, both on mic, both wearing headphones. They are recording a podcast. They are laughing.

SAM

You're not listening to me!

JAY

I am hearing you *loud and clear*.

SAM

I didn't say *I* planned something, I said something was *planned*.

JAY

Ah, the passive voice, the go-to grammatical choice of People With Zero Accountability everywhere. How would you even know something *was planned* if you didn't plan it?

SAM

Maybe I could give you a name or two.

JAY

Oh, my God, *could* you?

SAM

No, no, no, no.

JAY

I'll edit this part out.

SAM

You can do that?

JAY

Sure, I always cut out fluff.

SAM

I keep on thinking this is live.

JAY

Not a fan of podcasts?

SAM

Don't know, never heard one.

JAY

Alrighty, uhhh whatwerewetalkingabout YES. Okay. You *know* something is planned but you had no part in it?

SAM

Look, there has been a senior prank at every high school every single year since forever ago. It's only reasonable to think that there will be one at West Summit this year.

JAY

Fair enough. Alrighty, we've got to wrap things up here in just a second, but I want to say before we do, congratulations on Amherst.

SAM

Thank you.

JAY

Sports scholarship, right?

SAM

Tennis, yeah. I'm a lucky, lucky lady.

JAY

David Foster Wallace played on that team.

SAM

Oh. Didn't know that.

JAY

(Playful, prodding)

Do you know who David Foster Wallace is, Sam?

SAM

Writer or something. Jason Segel, right?

JAY

I'll give you some recommendations.

SAM

Oh. Sure.

JAY

Know what you're going to study?

SAM

Economics, I think. Make myself useful.

JAY

You know, we'll be neighbors.

SAM

You're going to Amherst?

JAY

Emerson. For comedy.

SAM

You mean, like, as a joke?

JAY

No, for comedy. To study comedy. Make myself useful.

SAM

Well we'll have to meet up while we're up there.

JAY

Alrighty, that just about wraps up this week's installment of AV Gravy, my guest has been Sam Lerner, tennis player extraordinaire, Fearless Leader of the Student Body Government of West Summit High...

SAM

And would-be Prom Queen if West Summit had prom queens.

JAY

Madame Modesty himself, Sam Lerner. I'm giving you the last word, Sam, what's it going to be?

SAM

Astronaut.

JAY

Zing. Good one.

SAM

I guess I just want to thank everyone at West Summit for being awesome, shout out to the varsity tennis, going to state next week, and uhhh, thank you, Jay. I regret these past twelve years of our lives not every really having a conversation.

JAY

Isn't that so weird? We were practically in diapers together and only now do we get a chance to talk. That's why I like doing these things.

SAM

It was a pleasure. We should do it again some time.

JAY

Alrightyyyyy, that was Sam, this is Jay, and this has been AV Gravyyyyyyyyyyy.

JAY pushes more buttons, and the recording session is over.

JAY (cont'd)

And that's it!

SAM
That's it?

JAY
That's it.

SAM
Weird. Okay.

JAY
Did you have a good time?

SAM
Yeah, it was fine.

JAY
Fine? Just fine? Jeez, Sam, you beg me for a year and a half to get on the show and it's just *fine*?

SAM
It was a lot of fun. Highlight of my week. Better?

JAY
A little.

SAM
You're going to edit out all of that stuff about the prank and everything, right?

JAY
Absolutely. Dude, the things I hear in here, if I were to publish all of them I wouldn't have a show anymore.

SAM
I don't even know what a podcast is, but I enjoyed doing this one.

JAY
Internet Radio. That's all it is. It's a radio show you can listen to at your convenience.

SAM
When will this one be broadcast?

JAY
There's no broadcasting. You can download it and listen to it this Friday. AV Gravy always goes out on Friday. People listen to it while they get ready to go out on Friday night.

SAM
Get all the hot gossip from the week at West Summit?

JAY

It's not a gossip show. It's a human interest show. It's an interview show.

SAM

Of course.

JAY

Gossip happens. Everyone talks about everyone when no one's around. If that's what the people want... guess who I've got coming in in ten minutes?

SAM

Tell me.

JAY

Jackie.

SAM

Wacky Jacky?

JAY

I know, right?

SAM

How did you get her on? Did you promise her like severed bat heads or vodka or something?

JAY

Nope. Just invited her on.

SAM

Ask her about her tattoo. I heard she has one of a severed bat head or something.

JAY

Sounds like a rumor.

SAM

What a freak.

JAY

I think she's cool.

SAM

Really?

Knock, knock, knock.

JAY

Speak of the Devil. *Come on in, Jackie!*

JACKIE enters. She is wearing sunglasses with large plastic stars adorning the frames, a fluffy white scarf, a red poncho, and leggings.

JAY (cont'd)
Jackie! How are you doing?

JACKIE
Fine.

JAY
Good, good.

Awkward silence.

JACKIE
Am I interrupting?

JAY
No, no, not at all. Just finished up an episode with Sam here.

SAM
I'm on my way out.

JACKIE
Good.

SAM
I like your... uh... I like your things.

SAM gestures to her glasses

JACKIE
You want them? Have them.

JACKIE takes her glasses off and holds them out for SAM.

SAM
No, thanks, I'm all set.

JACKIE
But you like these things, Sam. Have these things!

SAM
Alrighty, I'm out of here. This sucks now.

JAY
Sure, well, like I said the episode will be up...

SAM

Up on Friday, yup. Sounds great. Jackie, enjoy getting interviewed. Jay...

SAM attempts to exit the room, but JACKIE is standing in the door, making no attempt to move. SAM awkwardly makes her away around JACKIE to exit.

JAY

(Staling)

You're here a bit early! Thanks for coming in. Just give me one second here, let me save this GarageBand file... aaaaand let me export it just in caaaase.....

JACKIE

I think that's the first time Sam Lerner has spoken to me since the fourth grade when she put her Double Bubble in my hair.

JAY

She did that?

JACKIE

Yup. The most popular kid in school touched my hair. And now she said she liked my *things*. I think I'm in love. What did y'all talk about?

JAY

You'll have to listen to the episode to find out.

JACKIE gives her a look, "Are you fucking kidding me right now, Jay?"

JAY (cont'd)

Lots of things. Tennis. Being an editor at the paper.

JACKIE

Scintillating.

JAY

It was, actually, at times. She's... she's something, that Sam.

JACKIE

Jackie.

JACKIE holds her hand out.

JAY

I'm... I know.

JACKIE

We've never formally met, so.

JAY

I know your name though.

JACKIE

Doesn't mean you've *met* me.

JAY

Fair enough. Jay.

JACKIE

I know.

JAY

Ah.

JACKIE

Well, we've met. Do have a conversation with a microphone now, is that the idea?

JAY

(Unsure how serious JACKIE is
being.)

We... we have a conversation with each other. On mic.

JACKIE

You want to have a chit-chat, you could sit with me at lunch or invite me somewhere, you know. Easier.

JAY

I did invite you somewhere, I invited you here.

JACKIE

Why?

JAY

These Senior Spotlight segments? I'm trying to cultivate a full picture of our class. A perfect cross-section, you know? Like Sam, you know, I don't think a portrait of West Summit is complete without her, for better or for worse.

JACKIE

Same goes for me?

JAY

I think so, yeah.

JACKIE

Does that make me the other side of the cross-section?

JAY

("Of course the opposite
side.")

Well...

JACKIE

Okay, bye. I'm not doing this.

JAY

Wait, what?

JACKIE

Yeah, no. This whole... the mics, the sound levels, the world wide web, no. I'm getting this weird Alex Jones vibe.

JAY

Was it something I said?

JACKIE

It's like, what am I, a character or something? A cartoon in your portrait of the school?

JAY

I didn't say that, Jackie.

JACKIE

You know no one even listens to this podcast, right? No one reads the school paper, no one looks at the yearbook unless they're looking for themselves, no one even cares.

JAY

Then there's no problem, right?

JACKIE

This was a bad idea. I'm just gonna, yeah, I'm gonna leave now. Okay? Thanks for the invite.

JAY

Jackie, please. I really, really wanted to interview you. I wouldn't have asked you here if I didn't. I mean, that's the stupidest way to bully someone I've ever heard of. "You know what would really embarrass that Jackie girl? If I stayed after school for two hours and then recorded an interview with her, spent two more hours editing it, and then released it to the school to show everyone what a freak she is." Come on, I'm not that dedicated.

Silence.

JACKIE

You just called me a freak.

JAY

I *don't* think you're a freak. Quite the opposite. I think you're cool. I am not Alex Jones. I am Jay, and I want to get to know you.

JACKIE

I'm not cool. You are mistaken.

JAY

That raincoat? Those boots? Is it true you have a tattoo? I heard you have a tattoo.

JACKIE

Is this the interview?

JAY

You seem like an interesting person. I like talking to interesting people.

JACKIE

When you first asked me to do this I thought it was a joke. I still think it might be.

JAY

Well, I am going to Emerson. So.

JACKIE

I didn't expect this. You're not supposed to be nice.

JAY

Sorry about that.

JACKIE

Just makes it harder, that's all. Throws my plan all off. And it was a very, very good plan Jay.

JAY

Plan?

JACKIE

Cool gear.

JACKIE goes over to the table and looks at the microphones and interface. JAY is completely thrown off guard, which is exactly JACKIE's intent.

JAY

Thank you.

JACKIE

Did the AV Club splurge on this interface?

JAY

That's actually my own. On loan.

JACKIE

Didn't think so. Built-in pre-amp, two flex pic ups... you're a guitar player, aren't you?

JAY

Bass. You play?