

DESERT BLUFFS

Episode 5: Motel of Memories

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INT. DESERT BLUFFS REST STOP - EVENING

JACK is sitting all alone at the help desk counter, looking exhausted from a long and boring day. Apart from him there is no one else in the building, with only the buzz of fluorescent lights and quiet pop music filling the air.

Just as Jack is about to pass out at the counter, WENDY bursts out of a door from the back room going over a clipboard. The sudden appearance is enough to scare Jack off his chair and onto the floor.

WENDY

Ok I'm all finished checking stock,  
I'm going to get out of here -

Wendy looks up from her clipboard and notices no one is at the counter. She peers over and sees Jack's exhausted body laying limp on the ground.

WENDY (CONT'D)

Hey you still got two hours lazy  
bones. You can sleep later.

Jack buries his face in his hands and lets out a loud groan.

JACK

(Tired)

Uhhhg, nut I have to be here for  
opening in the morning too. How am  
I supposed to get my full 12 hours  
of sleep in conditions like this!

WENDY

Hey you said you would take the  
shift from Pepper, you did this to  
yourself really.

Jack groans louder.

WENDY (CONT'D)

You know... Sometimes I take naps  
in the store room when I have to do  
these shifts.

Jack picks himself up, and with bags under his eyes he starts moving erratically in his tired and delusional state.

JACK

I don't want to sleep on paper  
towels and expired chips! I need a  
nice soft bed with pillows and 2  
inch thick blankets to curl up in!

He then slumps himself back onto the store counter after his burst of energy. Wendy turns and makes her way to the door.

WENDY

Whelp, then in that case don't fall asleep on the drive home.

She looks back at the counter to see Jack face down asleep. Arizona peels his face away from the surface and wakes him up.

WENDY (CONT'D)

Hey! Two hours! Drink a fizz wizz to wake yourself up ok?

JACK

(Half asleep)

Uh, uh-huh.

Wendy lets go of him and leaves the rest stop.

WENDY

See you in the morning Jack.

EXIT WENDY

Jack lets out a loud groan and plops his head back on the desk.

The windows the front doors start to glisten as Wendy drives away. The monster Wendy saw in the window last episode starts to take form in the windows reflection. It stares at Jack with hungry eyes.

It growls and fades away, revealing the silhouette an ominous roadside Inn across the street. A loud roaring can be heard as the inns neon sign flickers to life.

EXT. DESERT BLUFFS FRONT - MORNING

WENDY pulls up to the stop and exits her car. She lets out a yawn, walks up to the store, and sees PEPPER sitting out front on the ground.

WENDY

(Confused)

Uh, what are you doing outside?

PEPPER

The doors are locked.

WENDY

(Concerned)

What?!

Wendy walks up to the doors and gives it a couple tugs, it doesn't budge. She then grabs her keys and opens the door herself.

INT. STORE - MORNING

Wendy and Pepper walk into the dark store and turn on the lights.

WENDY  
(Yelling into store)  
Jack!!!

PEPPER  
I don't think he's here.

Wendy rolls her eyes and walks to the counter. A sticky note from Jack is placed on the surface that Wendy picks up and reads.

WENDY  
(Reading to Pepper)  
"Didn't want to go home to went to  
the new place across the street. If  
I'm late then either I slept  
through an alarm or got kidnapped"  
signed Jack

The two simultaneously look outside and see the in, now fully visible in the day light. Styled as an old road side motel from the 70's, the walls are dilapidated and trash litters the small parking lot in front.

EXT. MOTEL EXTERIOR - MOMENTS LATER

ARIZONA is seen in the parking lot of the motel already surveying the scene. Pepper and Wendy get to the scene without Arizona noticing.

PEPPER  
Hi Arizona!

ARIZONA  
(Startled)  
Gah!

She takes a beat as she turns around and sees Pepper next to her and Wendy standing sheepishly further away.

WENDY  
(Awkwardly)  
H-Hey... Arizona...

Arizona doesn't make eye contact and turns away sheepishly.

ARIZONA

Hi.

There is a beat of silence as Pepper looks at the two confused, before breaking the silence.

PEPPER

Hey Arizona have you seen Jack? He said he went over here last night.

ARIZONA

(More composed)

Oh, Jack? No I just got here.

WENDY

He probably checked one of the rooms.

Everyone walks over to one of the doors, and Wendy begins banging on it.

WENDY (CONT'D)

Jack! Jack are you in there!

After another knock the door two units down swings open revealing a dark and vast forest inside. It's almost like a portal to another realm.

I/E. DREAM FORREST - NIGHT

The group walk in and gawk at their surroundings.

WENDY

Where are we?

ARIZONA

Look over there!

Arizona points at Jack running off into a bush.

WENDY

Jack wait!

The group end up getting lost within the dense foliage and bushes. This leads to Pepper getting seperated from the other two, and Wendy and Arizona run out of some bushes, crash into one another, and both are knocked over.

WENDY (CONT'D)

(Dazed)

Oh man... Ah, I'm sorry! I didn't mean-

ARIZONA  
(Slightly frustrated)  
Uhg, it's- fine.

Wendy looks down in shame and embarrassment. She looks up as Arizona is still rubbing her head and sees Jack in the distance being dragged into a cave by hooded figures.

WENDY  
(Yelling)  
Jack!

Wendy gets up and runs after Jack.

ARIZONA  
(Still worked up)  
Wha- Gah Wendy!

The two run into the cave.

I/E. DREAM FORREST - NIGHT

Pepper emerges from the bushes into an open clearing. She looks around and then sees a bright red light off in the distance in front of her.

She ventures further and further into the dark toward the light until she is surrounded by nothing but a black void. She walks closer and closer to the red light, the source of which are a circle of torches, with a bed in its center.

As she gets closer she sees Jack laying in the bed. Just as she is about to run up to him, her arm is grabbed by one of the cloaked figures. Pepper lets out a scream and tries to free herself.

CLOAKED FIGURE  
Well well, hello Pepper...

Pepper looks at the figure, and as she looks into its face her face goes pale from fear.

INT. DREAM CAVE

Arizona runs down a cavern hall and stops at a corner. Wendy follows but tried to run straight around the corner. Before she can Arizona grabs her arm and yanks her back to the corner.

WENDY  
Hey! What's your deal!

ARIZONA  
 (Angry Whispering)  
 You need to slow down or your gonna  
 get yourself killed!

WENDY  
 Jack is in danger! I don't need you  
 holding me back!

ARIZONA  
 I'm trying to protect you!

Wendy quietly stares deep into Arizona's eyes with a furious stare before breaking away from her grasp and running deeper into the cave. Arizona wipes her eyes and runs after.

After a while the two find a large room where they see an alter in front of a large glass tube, holding a wispy creature inside.

On the table is Jack, with another cloaked figure standing over him.

WENDY  
 (Whispering)  
 What are they doing?

The cloaked figure then takes off their cloak, revealing itself to be a dream version of Pepper. The twos expressions drop as they watch Pepper take out a knife and raise it above her head.

I/E. DREAM FORREST - NIGHT

Cutting back to the real Pepper, she is frozen with fear as she faces her captor.

CLOAKED FIGURE  
 It's nice to see you have come to  
 your senses and returned to us.

PEPPER  
 (Fearful)  
 No, no no no. This is fake! this  
 can't be real!

CLOAKED FIGURE  
 Oh Pepper, you can't ever run from  
 this. You can never run from us.  
 From You.

Pepper then freaks out and rips herself away from the figure. She makes a break for the bed and shakes the unconscious Jack with tears in her eyes.

PEPPER  
(Panic)  
Jack! Jack wake up! Please wake up!  
Jack!

INT. DREAM CAVE

With Pepper holding the knife above her head, the misty chamber behind her starts to roar and move violently with the mirror monster seen within. The dream world starts to shake and cracks begin to form along the floors and walls.

WENDY  
Jack No!

Wendy jumps up but Arizona grabs her and makes a run for the exit.

WENDY (CONT'D)  
(Yelling and flailing)  
What are you doing! Stop!

INTERCUT WITH: PEPPER IN FOREST

Pepper is crying while shaking the sleeping Jack on the bed. The world is also starting to break apart here.

PEPPER  
Jack! Wake up!

INTERCUT WITH: WENDY IN CAVE

Wendy is terrified while reaching out with tears in her eyes.

WENDY  
Pepper! Arizona! Stop!

Arizona keeps running further into the cave until the world becomes a dark void. Tears well up in her eyes and she gets Wendy out of whatever ritual that was.

Before they know it Arizona and Wendy find their way to Pepper on the bed.

ARIZONA  
(Furious Yelling)  
Pepper! Get away from him!

Pepper looks up with her tears illuminated by the red fire.

The world around them begins to break apart and everyone falls between the cracks and into the bottomless void below.



Everyone yells as they fall before a large white flash brings them back to reality.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - AFTERNOON

The whole group wakes up in the motel room in a panic. Pepper wakes up with Jack beside her, while Arizona and Wendy are on the floor. Jack then wakes up with a loud yawn looking well rested.

JACK  
(Sleepy)  
Oh, good morning everyone!

Before anyone can respond the building begins to shake as the Inn also starts to break appart.

ARIZONA  
Run!

The gang frantically run outside and down to the parking lot as the whole building crumbles around them. Everyone looks back with tired and shocked expressions from what they saw.

Jack, who actually looks well rested lets out a loud yawn and looks at his watch.

JACK  
Whelp! Looks like it's 5:00. I'm  
going to go clock out and go home.

Jack walks off camera, leaving the rest stunned and speechless.

END.