

## JASPER IN DEADLAND SHOW SYNOPSIS \*SPOILERS\*

### WHY A SHOW SYNOPSIS?

Jasper in Deadland is a fairly experimental show that combines and alters the mythos of a myriad of ancient cultures, as well as many highly topical modern themes and situations. While fascinating, this kind of multifaceted adaptation can be very difficult to follow on a first viewing. This write-up's purpose is to help you, the audience, follow the action should you get a little lost in the tessellated world of deadland.

### ACT ONE

The first act of the play begins with our hero, Jasper, falling into deadland from a cliff overlooking a lake in his hometown. He jumped in order to save his best friend, and recent romantic partner Agnes who left him a troubling voicemail after they shared "one perfect night" together after a long friendship. This new dimension of intimacy added to their friendship was too much for Agnes to deal with given the dark secrets that she has been keeping from Jasper for their entire friendship. As Jasper traverses the first circle of Deadland he learns that Agnes likely killed herself by jumping into the lake and drowning.

Meanwhile an ambitious river spirit by the name of Madame Lethe begins to panic as she learns that Jasper's living body in deadland is beginning to restore the memories of the citizens whose minds her magical bottled water has been erasing for centuries. Her panic quickly turns to glee as she realizes that Jasper could possibly be the key to her plans to distribute her mind altering water to the living world and increase her power to the point that she could defeat the gods and take control of the entire world. Lethe sends her henchman, the Norse gods Hel and Loki, to capture Jasper for her plan.

Back in the City Circle Jasper meets a precocious tour guide named Gretchen who takes him on a whirlwind tour of the city's hottest spots in search of Agnes. They don't find her and at the end of their night out Jasper runs into Virgil, the lawyer of the underworld, who tells him that Agnes' spirit has been called to move on to Elysium for eternity and he should give up on his search to find her. Jasper doesn't listen and he and Gretchen outsmart Ammut, the guardian of the gate out of the City Circle when Gretchen gives Jasper her heart after he fails Ammut's test.

They move through the gate and end up at a great gulf that bridges the gap from the city to Elysium. Jasper and Gretchen begin to cross an invisible bridge just as the last of Jasper's memories fade away. Without his determination to reach Agnes across the gulf the bridge shatters just as Gretchen's memories return thanks to her prolonged contact with Jasper. She discovers that she has been Agnes all along, and the death manifest that Virgil showed them in the city must have been a fake. Jasper is now the one with no memories, and Agnes remembers everything about their past. They plummet to the wasteland far below as the act comes to a close.

## ACT TWO

The second act opens with a memory. Jasper and Agnes sit on a couch together watching Star-Trek. It becomes clear that this is the night before Agnes jumped from the cliff and Jasper followed her into Deadland. They share a vulnerable moment before the memory ends and Jasper and Gretchen, now Agnes, awake in the barren wastelands between the circles of Deadland.

As they gather themselves it becomes clear that Jasper does not remember who he is whatsoever, and takes on the name of Daryl, Agnes' ex-boyfriend from the living world. As they start to try to figure a way out of the wasteland Beatrix Portinari, Dante Alighieri's muse from the famous epic poem Dante's *Inferno*, crash lands her flying car Pergatorio nearby. She explains to them that their journey will only end in tears given her experience with Dante and his quest through the circles of hell. She and Dante re-enact their story in the style of an Italian Soap Opera.

Through this retelling, it is revealed that since Agnes gave Jasper her heart when they tricked Ammut, he is now a half-life and is granted two wishes while in the underworld. Unfortunately, in his dazed state, Jasper uses one of his wishes to summon Hel and Loki who immediately capture Jasper and Agnes and take them to Lethe' factory.

Once there, Agnes is put to work on the factory floor while Lethe tries to manipulate Jasper into working for her. Agnes starts a riot and rescues Jasper just as he is about to sign a deal with Lethe, and Jasper uses his last wish to transport himself and Agnes to Elysium.

There, he meets Eurydice who helps him come to terms with his trauma and move on with his life. Pluto and Persephone, the rulers of the underworld enter, and Jasper offers to sacrifice himself to let Agnes live. Persephone is touched and she agrees to let them both return to the living world. Agnes and Jasper make their way back up the river to the lake where they originally fell into Deadland, and Persephone sends a gentle snowfall to the world above as Jasper and Agnes begin their second shot at life together.