

The Bucket List: The Abridged Script

By

Jim Greer

EXT. MOUNT EVEREST, NEPAL

A MOUNTAIN CLIMBER goes up the MOUNTAIN as we hear the SWEET SOUND of MORGAN FREEMAN, giving POIGNANCY to YET ANOTHER WHITE DUDE'S MID-LIFE CRISIS.

MORGAN FREEMAN

(Narration)

Jack Nicholson died in May. He wasn't a good man and he didn't do any good deeds, but he became a little less of an asshole before he died, thanks to a wise black mechanic.

FADE TO...

INT. AUTO SHOP

MORGAN FREEMAN is a WISE BLACK MECHANIC. He's reciting TRIVIA to show he's SMART, because KNOWING HOW TO REPAIR CARS is for CHUMPS.

MORGAN FREEMAN

Then there's the Hazel Nut, the Cashew, the Macadamia Nut, the Pistachio, and last but not least, the Pine Nut.

FRENCH MECHANIC

That's it, my friend! You named every type of nut!

He closes THE BIG BOOK OF LISTS.

YOUNG MECHANIC

Gee, Mr Freeman. For a black mechanic you sure are smart. Any chance your vast knowledge of trivia might pay off some day before you die?

MORGAN FREEMAN

Not in the least. I probably have some amazing story that really should end with me fulfilling my dreams after a lifetime of hard work. But instead I'll likely spend my final days helping some spoiled jackass learn how to enjoy himself...yet again.

(pause)

(CONTINUED)

MORGAN FREEMAN
Honestly. Is it too much to ask for
ol' Morgan Freeman to get a little
putang for all his trouble just
once? Damn.

He takes a PUFF from a DEADLY CIGARETTE. His PHONE rings.

MORGAN FREEMAN
(Exhaling Death Fumes)
Uh huh?

DR ROB MORROW
(On phone)
Mr Freeman, our tests show you have
terminal lung cancer and you're
going to die. But before you kick
the bucket I'd like for you to
bring that beautiful voice of yours
to the hospital to help give
meaning to someone else's life.

MORGAN FREEMAN
Yep. Sounds about right.

He walks off so he can narrate mentally.

MORGAN FREEMAN
(Narration)
And that's when I knew it was time
for me to get started on my bucket
list and find some rich white man
whose life I would change forever.

FADE TO...

INT. HOSPITAL BOARD MEETING

JACK NICHOLSON'S BLOATED CORPSE does a passable impression
of JACK NICHOLSON as played by a RICH POMPOUS ASSHOLE who
ALWAYS GETS WHAT HE WANTS and NEVER REALLY LEARNS ANYTHING
because he's JACK FUCKING NICHOLSON.

JACK is telling his assistant SEAN HAYES and DR ROB MORROW
why he should be the VILLAIN of this MOVIE.

JACK NICHOLSON
I got into the hospital business to
make HUGE PROFITS. If that means
putting five people in every room,
SO BE IT!

(CONTINUED)

SEAN HAYES

But sir, as we've explained before,
we can make even BIGGER PROFITS by
giving PRIVATE ROOMS to RICH
PEOPLE.

DR ROB MORROW

And for gods sake, we need to start
serving the patients real food
instead of making them eat out of
vending machines. We can't keep
bribing the health inspector
forever.

JACK NICHOLSON

Hogwash! This is a HOSPITAL, not a
HEALTH SPA! If people want to get
HEALTHY, they should do it on their
OWN TIME!

JACK LAUGHS like an ASTHMATIC DONKEY.

DR ROB MORROW

But sir, what if it was YOU who was
sick?

JACK NICHOLSON

Me? Sick?! I've never been sick a
day in my life!

JACK LAUGHS until BOTH HIS LUNGS SHAKE LOOSE and his BOWELS
EMPTY, ending in a BRUTAL COUGHING FIT. He stares at a
HANDKERCHIEF DRIPPING WITH HIS OWN LUNG BLOOD.

DR ROB MORROW

Ha. Looks cancerous. Guess you'll
have to stay in your own crappy
hospital for some reason. We'll
just say it's due to bad publicity
and not bad writing.

They all SMIRK as JACK is faced with the TERRIBLE IRONY that
he'll receive PROPER MEDICAL CARE in HIS OWN HOSPITAL. WOMP
WOMP!

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

MORGAN FREEMAN is on a BUNKBED memorizing THE BIG BOOK OF
LISTS.

SEAN HAYES leads JACK NICHOLSON in, who acts like he's never
seen one of his hospital rooms before and is OUTRAGED that
they don't have PRIVATE ROOMS for RICH PEOPLE.

(CONTINUED)

JACK NICHOLSON

I should get my own room. This is my hospital!

SEAN HAYES

Sorry, sir. I think this is supposed to serve as some sort of ironic learning experience, but it's really just the set-up for your Meet-Cute with Morgan Freeman. Only a sociopath would see lung cancer as comeuppance...or as an excuse for a road movie. Seriously.

JACK NICHOLSON

You expect me to share a room with these zombies? And what the hell's HE supposed to be?

Pointing at MORGAN FREEMAN like he's never seen AN OLD BLACK PERSON before.

SEAN HAYES

He's the wise black mechanic who will teach you the meaning of life.

MORGAN FREEMAN

That's right, ya mean old bastard.

JACK NICHOLSON

Great. All I need now is an inciting incident and we can start having some fun around here.

DR ROB MORROW

Mr Nicholson, I have good news and bad news for you. The good news is that the patient on the bottom bunk died of consumption last night so you won't have to sleep on the floor.

JACK NICHOLSON

That's terrible. What's the bad news?

DR ROB MORROW

The bad news, Mr Nicholson, is that you have ONE YEAR TO LIVE before you...KICK THE BUCKET.

JACK STARES in DISBELIEF and CONTEMPLATES his own MORTALITY.

(CONTINUED)

MORGAN FREEMAN

As my old black grandmother used to say, suck it up, buttercup. You're seventy damn years old and look like you might have died a decade ago and forgot to tell anyone. Plus, you own a hospital and must see people dying every day. How is death some big surprise for you?

JACK LAUGHS like a BUSTED ACCORDIAN.

JACK NICHOLSON

Mister, I like your style. I'm going to be nice to you and you alone, which will make up for what a complete douche I've been my entire life and will continue to be until the day I die.

MORGAN FREEMAN

Sounds like it's time for you to get started on your BUCKET LIST, so you can pretend a few meaningless life events with a stranger will somehow make up for a lifetime of crapping on everyone who ever cared about you.

JACK NICHOLSON

Works for me. Where'd you hear about this Bucket List?

MORGAN FREEMAN

The Bucket List was something I learned about my freshman year at Harvard, before poverty forced me to give up my dreams and become a poor black mechanic.

He thinks BITTERLY about BACKSTORY that's MORE INTERESTING than THIS MOVIE.

MORGAN FREEMAN

We had to make a list of ALL the things we DREAMED of doing with our lives, before we...

JACK AND MORGAN

KICK THE BUCKET.

They stare at the camera.

(CONTINUED)

JACK NICHOLSON

You know what? I happen to have my own bucket list right here.

He pulls JACK'S BUCKET LIST out of his ROBE.

JACK NICHOLSON

Hey I've got a great idea! How'd you like to help a rich old bastard learn to enjoy life a little more than he was already?

MORGAN FREEMAN

Well, I've got a loving wife at home along with kids and grandkids who would probably like to be with me during my final days on earth, while you're a selfish prick whose only redeeming traits are your old films and faded charisma. By all rights, this SHOULD be MY story.

(pause)

But what the hell. I can't take a dump without some white asshole making it all about themselves. I'm in.

CANCER PATIENT

Can I come? I've got a year to live too and a sadder backstory than both of you.

CANCER KID

Or me. I've got the saddest story of all. Cough...cough.

CANCER PATIENT

And hey. You're rich as hell and can afford to bring the whole cancer ward on your little adventure, if you wanted to atone for your greedy ways before you...kick the bucket.

JACK NICHOLSON

Screw you. Named actors only. I need a sidekick, not redemption.

DR ROB MORROW

May I remind you that you both still have cancer and will be dead soon. I mean, seriously. When did radiation start giving old people super powers?

(CONTINUED)

JACK NICHOLSON

We've got a few things to do before
that happens and you're not going
to believe what's next!

JACK LAUGHS like he swallowed GENERAL GRIEVOUS whole.

MUSIC MONTAGE!

Various skits of JACK using his VAST WEALTH to fulfill the
DREAMS of OLD CRUSTY WHITE DUDES EVERYWHERE, which counts as
CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT because MORGAN FREEMAN was there.

JACK AND MORGAN'S STUNT DOUBLES jump from PLANES, drive RACE
CARS, and have other ZANY ADVENTURES rarely attempted by
TERMINALLY ILL CANCER PATIENTS in their 70's. This is LIFE
AFFIRMING and not RIDICULOUS.

JACK and MORGAN fly to CGI EGYPT and OTHER EXOTIC CGI
LOCALES in JACK'S PRIVATE JET, which TOTALLY HAS ENOUGH ROOM
FOR MORGAN FREEMAN'S WIFE; but SCREW THAT because this
CANCER ROAD TRIP is DUDES ONLY.

MORGAN FREEMAN'S WIFE

Hey, don't worry about me. My
husband got Jack to leave me a
small fortune in this version, so I
can visit the REAL pyramids some
day and not that green screen
bullshit.

HAYDEN CHRISTENSEN

Tell me about it. They didn't even
bring a surfboard. Lame!

HAYDEN JUMPS into A MORE RIDICULOUS FILM and is NEVER SEEN
AGAIN.

EXT. JACK'S PRIVATE AIRPORT

JACK and MORGAN exit JACK'S PRIVATE JET so MORGAN can
FINALLY get back to his WIFE and FAMILY.

MORGAN FREEMAN

Hey, Jack. Now that you've finished
dragging my cancer-ridden ass all
around the world, how about you do
ONE unselfish thing in your life by
contacting your estranged daughter
before you die?

(CONTINUED)

JACK NICHOLSON

Never! My daughter's nothing but a cheap plot device masquerading as backstory because filmmakers think comedies need dramatic third acts for some reason. I'm so outraged that you'd even ATTEMPT to arc me that our friendship is officially over until it's not!

MORGAN FREEMAN

Come on, Jack. You won't even need to say anything. I'll just read a few Hallmark cards in voiceover while the two of you stare at each other. There won't be a dry eye in the house.

JACK NICHOLSON

Not a chance, Freeman. Audiences WANT me to be a bastard and I already heard your opening narration so I know I'll be getting a great send off no matter what I do...in May.

JACK gets back on the PLANE.

JACK NICHOLSON

And hey, make sure to say some bullshit about how great I was for being a rich selfish bastard who made everyone else miserable for his own amusement. In return I'll give an amazing eulogy at your funeral that's all about me and how your death gave meaning to my life.

MORGAN FREEMAN

I didn't expect anything less.

JACK NICHOLSON

Now I'm off to Vegas for hookers and blow. You can narrate your ass back home. Our geriatric road trip is over, sidekick.

JACK SMIRKS, then closes the DOOR to HIS PRIVATE JET that he can afford because HE MAKES HUGE PROFITS running HOSPITALS HE WOULDN'T WANT TO STAY IN.

(CONTINUED)

MORGAN FREEMAN
Man, I'd like to narrate him a new
asshole.

EXT. MOUNT EVEREST, NEPAL

We're back at the beginning with the MOUNTAIN CLIMBER going
up the MOUNTAIN as MORGAN FREEMAN narrates, because ART.

MORGAN FREEMAN
(Narration)
At this point, I COULD tell you
that both Jack and I eventually
died of cancer as the obvious
conclusion to a story that only
seems poignant due to the deep
melodious tone of my voice.
(pause)
And I COULD tell you this is Sean
Hayes climbing up the mountain to
illegally bury Jack Nicholson's
ashes because he was a selfish
prick who learned nothing to the
end.
(pause)
But let me tell you what REALLY
happened.

THE MOUNTAIN CLIMBER reaches the SUMMIT and removes his SKI
MASK to reveal that it's MORGAN FREEMAN; still alive and
totally NOT doing narration from beyond the grave, because
BLACK CHARACTERS DESERVE HAPPY ENDINGS TOO.

JACK NICHOLSON comes up behind him, looking like THE SAME
SMUG ASSHOLE he was at the beginning of the film; but
HAPPIER because HE GOT EVERYTHING HE WANTED and ONLY LEARNED
TO BE NICE TO SIDEKICKS and NOTHING ELSE.

JACK lights a LARGE JOINT and takes a HUGE HIT.

MORGAN takes out JACK'S BUCKET LIST and scratches off "SMOKE
DOOBIE IN UNLIKELY PLACE." There's ONE TASK left on the
list: "HELP BLACK MAN FULFILL LIFELONG DREAM."

JACK NICHOLSON
Ah, it's good to be alive!

MORGAN FREEMAN
Enjoy it while it lasts, Jack.

JACK passes the JOINT to MORGAN.

(CONTINUED)

JACK NICHOLSON

You know, Morgan. In the three days we've known each other, you've never told me what's on YOUR bucket list.

MORGAN FREEMAN

Actually, there's only ONE THING that's EVER been on MY bucket list, Jack.

JACK NICHOLSON

What's that, friend?

MORGAN FREEMAN

Well Jack, my whole life, I always wanted to...kill me a white man.

JACK NICHOLSON

What?!

MORGAN shoves JACK off the MOUNTAIN, then LAUGHS HEARTILY.

But JACK is STILL CLINGING to the SIDE of the CLIFF.

JACK NICHOLSON

Morgan! Please! Help me!

MORGAN FREEMAN

You ain't dead yet?

JACK NICHOLSON

Please! I'll give you anything! Anything in the world!

MORGAN FREEMAN

You need to get busy dying, so I can get busy living.

He crushes JACK'S FINGERS under his BOOT. JACK loses his GRIP and PLUNGES to his DEATH. MORGAN looks on with COMPLETE SATISFACTION.

MORGAN takes JACK'S BUCKET LIST and scratches off THE LAST ITEM, then basks in the GLORY of FINALLY getting HIS REWARD after YEARS of OTHER PEOPLE'S BULLSHIT.

MORGAN FREEMAN

(Narration)

Jack Nicholson died in May. He wasn't a good man or do any good deeds, but he became a little less of an asshole before he died, thanks to a wise black mechanic.

END