

Scholarship

written by

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Rehearsal Draft

Characters

Name	Age	Description
Mel*	20	A typical student and a community college. Sharp. Astute.
The Bursar	46	Self-Important. Frumpy. Monarch of their own little island.
The Dean	54	Kind. Willing to go out of their way to help the students.

NOTE: Gender is irrelevant. Cast the best people you have.

*There are a few instances where Mel uses their full name. Please use either Melvin for male presenting, or Melissa for female presenting.

In regards to Mel's birth year, please adjust the date so they are currently twenty.

Location:

The Bursar's Office at
Pleasant Valley Technical and Community College.

Time:

The start of the term, present day.

The stage is bare, except for the service counter of the business office. From the counter hangs the a signed reading "closed." There is a phone sitting on top.

Welcome to Pleasant Valley
Technical and Community College.

MEL, a typical community college student, stands in front of the podium, patiently waiting for someone to arrive.

THE BURSAR, a frumpy looking person puffed up with their own self importance, rushes on stage. They set their personally belongings down, and straighten the work space.

The Bursar pauses and stares at their watch, and holds their other hand above the closed sign.

THE BURSAR
(consulting watch)

Twelve... Eleven... Ten...

Mel straightens up, getting ready for the office to open.

THE BURSAR
(continued)

Nine... Eight... Seven...

Mel pulls paperwork out of their bag, slightly nervous, but prepared.

THE BURSAR
(continued)

Six... Five... Four...

Mel quickly fixes their hair.

THE BURSAR
(continued)

Three... Two... One...

The Bursar flips the sign to
"open."

THE BURSAR
(continued)

Next!

Mel steps forward.

MEL
Hi, my name is Mel Smell...

The phone rings.

THE BURSAR
(answering the phone)
Pleasant Valley Technical Community College
business office. This is the Bursar...

The Bursar stops mid sentence and
stares at Mel. Who, after a moment,
gets the hint and takes a step
back.

Before returning to the call, The
Bursar flips the sign to closed.

THE BURSAR
(On phone)
This is the Bursar, how may I help you?
Yes... Uh huh... Are you sure?... Yes....
Yes... Yes... No.

The Bursar hangs up, Mel steps
forward.

MEL
Hi, my name is Mel Smellgood. And I was
sitting in my first class, when the professor
didn't call out my name. I guess you take
attendance here, which is weird to me. Anyway,
he suggested that I come down here to see what
was up. I was awarded a full scholarship, and
I thought I had sent my papers back in time to
process everything. But, I wasn't seeing the
information I needed on the website, so I
called and the person said everything was ok,
and there wouldn't be a problem. Anyway, I've
got my papers here if you need to look
anything up.

Mel puts their papers on the
counter.

The Bursar flips the sign back to
"open."

THE BURSAR
Next!

A beat.

MEL
Pardon?

THE BURSAR
Hello! May I help you?

MEL
(confused)
Ummm...

THE BURSAR
(impatient)
I don't have all day.

MEL
Okay, starting over...

THE BURSAR
Watch the attitude.

MEL
Sorry. Anyway, hi. My name is Mel Smellgood. And I was sitting in my first class, when the professor didn't call out my name. I guess you take attendance here, which is weird to me. Anyway, he suggested that I come down here to see what was up. I was awarded a full scholarship, and I thought I had sent my papers back in time to process everything. But, I wasn't seeing the information I needed on the website, and I called and the person said everything was ok, and there wouldn't be a problem. Anyway, I've got my papers here if you need to look anything up.

THE BURSAR
(consulting computer)
Um hmmm... Name?

MEL
Melvin Smellgood.

THE BURSAR
Spelling?

MEL
M-E-L...

THE BURSAR
Last name?

MEL
Smellgood. S-m-e-l-l-g-o-o-d.

THE BURSAR
Date of birth?

MEL
New Year's Day, Twenty...

The Bursar looks up.

MEL
(correcting themself)
January first, twenty oh-three.

The Bursar searches in the
computer.

THE BURSAR
Two thousand and... Click! A there you are!
Smellgood coma Melvin. Now, how may I help?

A beat.

MEL
Really?

THE BURSAR
The line ain't getting any shorter, kid.

Mel, exasperated, draws a breath.

MEL
I was sitting in my first class, when the
professor didn't call out my name. I guess you
take attendance here, which is weird to me. He
suggested that I come down here to see what
was up. And, reminding you, that I was
awarded a full scholarship, and I thought I
had sent my papers back in time to process
everything. But, I wasn't seeing the
information I needed on the website, and I
called and the person said everything was ok,
and there wouldn't be a problem. And I still
have my papers here if you need to look
anything up.

A beat.

THE BURSAR
Nobody likes a wise-ass. Get a grip on
yourself.

More typing in the computer, The Bursar sings to himself. Looks at Mel's paperwork, goes back to the computer.

THE BURSAR
(continued)

Oh, I see the problem here.

MEL

Oh good, easy fix?

THE BURSAR

Absolutely! You just need to go to Admissions...Just go down this hall..

MEL

(interrupting)

Hold up. Why do I need to go to Admissions?

THE BURSAR

Because you're not actually a student here. And you should be! Pleasant Valley Technical Community College is a wonderful school. Just go down this hall...

MEL

(interrupting)

Pardon, just another question.

THE BURSAR

Oh, yes? I love to help prospective students!

MEL

I see that, but, if I'm not a student here. How did you award me a scholarship?

THE BURSAR

Simple, because you were going to be a student here. You enrolled, signed up, and everything. You chose wonderful professors!

MEL

Thank you. But, how did I go from...

THE BURSAR

(interrupting)

I think Admissions may be best suited to answer the applications questions. But I can help with any information regarding scholarships, if you'd like.

MEL

Yes, I see that. And I think this is a scholarship related question. So, If a person, say, *me*, applies to the school, gets in, is awarded a scholarship... Goes through all the steps... How can they be guaranteed that they will have a place on the first day of classes.

THE BURSAR

That's easy...

MEL

Are you sure?

THE BURSAR

All an individual has to do...

MEL

Yes...

THE BURSAR

To guarantee a spot on the registered students list...

MEL

Yes...

THE BURSAR

Is...

MEL

Yes...

A beat.

THE BURSAR

Pay.

Silence.

MEL

I'm sorry, what now?

THE BURSAR

In order to be considered as a fully enrolled student, you must have paid or made plans to pay.

MEL

But, I have the scholarship.

THE BURSAR

And congratulations!

MEL

I think, thank you.

THE BURSAR

We don't give many of those out!

MEL

I see why.

Mel collects their thoughts. The
Bursar goes back to work.

MEL

(stepping in)

Hello...

THE BURSAR

Hello! Oh, it's you.

MEL

Yes, one more question.

THE BURSAR

Hmmm..... Ok, go ahead.

MEL

In order to have enrolled, and received my
scholarship, and attended class today... What
would I have needed to do?

THE BURSAR

Easy, pay your tuition.

MEL

Ok, so then, what's the point of the
scholarship?

THE BURSAR

(doing air quotes)

Is this one of those "multi-part one more
question" things?

MEL

What's the point? If I need to pay to attend,
and then get awarded the scholarship, you'd
presumably just refund me what I had already
paid, correct?

THE BURSAR

I can see where you'd think that.

MEL

That's asinine! Wouldn't it be easier to skip
a step? And just say "Oh, they've got a
scholarship! Better keep them on the books
until the money disbursed!"

THE BURSAR
(offended)

I don't appreciate that kind of language!

MEL
(confused)

What kind of language?

THE BURSAR
(looking around, half-voice)

Asinine! It's dirty!

Mel stares blankly at The Bursar.

MEL
(after a beat)

When do the scholarships get disbursed?

THE BURSAR
(proudly)

Tomorrow!

This is the end of the last frayed
string of Mel's patience.

MEL

Tomorrow? You disburse scholarships on the
second day of classes, after requiring
students to be fully paid before the start of
classes?

THE BURSAR

Listen, I don't write the rules, I just make
them up.

Silence.

MEL

Did you go to school here, at Pleasant Valley
Technical and Community College?

THE BURSAR
(with a laugh)

Oh, heavens no! I spent my four years at State
University, down the street.

MEL

You mean the University of Do You Want Fries
With That?

A beat.

THE BURSAR

Well, there's no need for that. Now, if you'll
excuse me...

MEL
Oh, no, don't you...

THE BURSAR
It's time for my mid-morning coffee break.

MEL
Are you kidding me?!

THE BURSAR
No, since you aren't really looking for help.
And I am *not* going to stand here and be
insulted.

The Bursar reaches for the sign.

MEL
No!

The Bursar stops, then starts
again.

MEL
Don't' do it!

The Bursar stops, then starts
again.

MEL
No, no, no!!!

The Bursar flips the sign to
"closed" and scurries off stage.

MEL
(calling after)
I'd like that supersized, please!

Enter the Dean, who greets The
Bursar as they cross.

THE DEAN
Good morning, Bursar.

THE BURSAR
Dean.

The Bursar exits.

MEL
(aside)
Oh good, The Dean! Woah, deus ex machina!

THE DEAN
(crossing Mel)

Good Morning.

MEL

Good morning! Yes! Hi, Dean. Do you have a moment?

THE DEAN

Sure I do. I'm sorry, I don't believe I know your name.

MEL

Smellgood, Dean. Mel Smellgood.

THE DEAN

Of the Jones Island Smellgoods? I know the family! What may I do for you?

MEL

(taking the deepest of breaths)

So was sitting in my first class, when the professor didn't call out my name. I guess you take attendance here, which. I got to be honest, is kind of weird. Anyway, he suggested that I come down here to see what was up. I was awarded a full scholarship, and I thought I had sent my papers back in time to process everything. But, I wasn't seeing the information I needed on the website, so I called and the person said everything was ok, and there wouldn't be a problem. Anyway, I've got my papers here if you need to look anything up. So, I get here, and I was told that, in order to be a student, I would need to be paid in full. Which, is fine, because scholarship. But, it turns out that the scholarships don't get disbursed until tomorrow. Which means that I'm not a student here, today. Since, it's apparently the policy to make people pay, then award the scholarship, and then reimburse the student the money they probably had to borrow in the first place. I don't want to curse, but that's asinine. And it seems to me that the whole thing could be streamlined, but no one will listen to me, because, as it turns out, I'm not a student here because I didn't pay.

Silence.

THE DEAN

Bureaucracy, man. It's a pissier.

MEL

(on the verge of tears)

I just want to go to class.

The Dean thinks about this for a moment.

THE DEAN

Tell you what...

MEL

Yes?

THE DEAN

Why don't I show you the way to the Admissions Office...

The Dean escorts Mel off stage.

Lights out.