

The Font of All Knowledge
By Lauri & Leigh Jacobs

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Characters

Jen – Female, Age 35-50.

Administrative Assistant. Smart, confident, patient, a little snarky. She is the person in the office that everyone comes to for answers. Takes things in stride.

Heather – Female, Age 30-50.

Administrative Assistant. Clearly not as bright as **Jen** – maybe a bit wifty. She is another in the long line of people that come to **Jen** for answers.

Boss – Male, Age 50-65

Depends on **Jen** for all answers. A bit clueless. Is off stage for much of the play.

Setting

An office presumably located in a large suite of corporate offices.

Time

The present

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(Jen sits alone at a desk. There is a computer and an office phone. Her cell phone sits close by on the desk. A second desk with a computer and phone is close by on her right or left. Jen is attempting to type intently throughout.)

Boss: *(offstage)* Jen, what time is the Miller meeting?

Jen: Three.

Boss: Are you sure?

Jen: Yes.

Boss: I thought it was 3:30.

Jen: No, it's at three.

Boss: I could've sworn it was 3:30.

Jen: *(goes to other desk and looks at computer)* I'm looking at the calendar. It's definitely three.

Boss: Do I have that information?

Jen: Yes, it's on the calendar tab in Outlook.

Boss: Which one is that?

(Jen walks offstage very briefly)

Boss: Oh!! That's great! 3 o'clock. Huh!

Jen (*composes herself and resumes typing. After a few seconds the office phone rings*) Hi, it's Jen We ordered a case of pink post-it notes two weeks ago. They're in the supply closet on the second floor... Yes, there's Wite-Out there too. (*Hangs up and Heather enters*).

Heather: Jen –

Jen: (*her cellphone rings. Jen puts her index finger up indicating that Heather should wait a second*) Hi, Mom. How are you feeling?... Well, did you call the doctor?... Yes, that's right. He told you to take two pills yesterday and one pill for the next four days... Yes, the new ones. They're pink.... Yes, Mom, I know you took two yesterday. Take just one today. Then you take one tomorrow, Wednesday, and Thursday.... No, you don't stretch it out.... Well, if you're not feeling better when you're done taking them, wait a couple of days. The pills have a half-life. That means the medicine stays in your system for about three days after you're done taking them.... Yes, that is really interesting. (*Heather tries to interrupt and Jen holds up her finger again*). Ok, Mom, I have to run. I have work to do....

Boss: (*offstage*) What's the meeting agenda?

Jen: (*to Boss*) Be right there. (*to Mom*): Yes, Mom, love you too. Talk to you soon. (*hangs up, and says to herself*) No doubt (*then says to Boss*) You're discussing new acquisitions.

Boss: You sure?

Jen: Yes, it's on the calendar.

Boss: Oh! (*pause*) How do I get there again?

(Jen walks offstage briefly)

Heather: But, Jen...

Jen: *(from offstage)* One second.

(Jen returns)

Boss: That's incredibly helpful! Does everyone have this program? Things would be so much more efficient!

Jen: *(to Heather)* Sorry, sweetie, what's up?

Heather: Who got voted off last night?

Jen: Kimberly. *(Her cell phone buzzes with an incoming text)*

Heather: Good. I hated her.

Jen: *(Looks at cell phone)* What? *(Narrating as she types)* Your history book was on the kitchen table when I left. *(to Heather)* Yeah, she was incredibly bitchy. *(phone buzzes again. Still to Heather)* He wants me to bring his book to school because he has a quiz. *(to phone as she types)* No, I can't do that. *(resumes typing, phone buzzes again. She narrates as she texts back)* No, Sir William Hastings was promoted to Brevet-Colonel in 1798. *(Office phone rings)* This is Jen... Hi, Marty.... You go into Settings.. It's the security tab.... Did you reboot after you did it before?... Definitely reboot... Sure, I'll wait.

Heather: What did Jane Fonda wear to the Oscars in 1972? I saw an old picture of her and she looked gorgeous.

Jen: A black trouser suit by Yves Saint Laurent. *(to phone)* No Marty, that's not in Settings. I was talking to someone else.... Ok. Click start. Type G-P-E-D-I-T dot M-S-C and press enter.... Good! Now select Administrative Templates... Ok, now Windows Components, and then select Internet Explorer.... Right. Double click Security Zones and choose Not Configured. Yes! Click ok and you should be set.... Great! Talk to you soon. *(Hangs up)*

Boss: *(wanders on stage with a folded newspaper and a pencil)* Jen, 7-letter word, for the science of fermentation. Begins with 'Z.'

Jen *(responds quickly):* Zymurgy

Boss: Is that with an 'E'?

Jen: No, 'U.'

Boss *(starts to spell)* Z -U-M...

Jen: No, Z-Y-M-U-R-G-Y.

Boss: Hey! That fits perfectly! Thanks! *(wanders off)*

Heather: *(astonished)* How do you know all this stuff?

Jen: I don't know. *(sarcastically)* Maybe I'm the font of all knowledge. Google it.

Heather: *(starts to type, stops)* What would I search?

Jen: “Who is the font of all knowledge?”

Heather: *(resumes typing, pauses while search page loads)* Jen, um, you have to see this.

Jen: See what?

Heather: Just come here.

Jen: *(annoyed at having to get up, gets up and goes to Heather’s computer)* This better be important.

Heather: I can’t explain –

Jen: *(arriving at Heather’s computer)* That can’t be – how’d you get it to do that?

Heather: Do what?

Jen: Get Google to say that I’m the font of all knowledge.

Heather: You try it.

Jen: *(returning to her own computer, types)* What the? *(pause)* Did you get Brandon to help you with this?

Heather: Brandon in IT? He creeps me out. Ewww.

Jen: *(typing frantically)* This is impossible. It can’t be.

Heather: Why?

Jen: Because there's no such thing – and it would mean that I know everything.

Heather: I dunno. It makes sense to me, Jen. You're the smartest person I know. Wait! If you know everything, what were last night's lottery numbers?

Jen: I don't know. I don't play the lottery. I don't pay any attention to that crap.

Heather: Just tell me some numbers *(starts typing at her computer – searching the lottery numbers)*

Jen: 29, 33, 39, 60, 66, 21.

Heather: *(looking at her computer)* Exactly. We could have won 226 million dollars. How did you know that?

Jen: I have no idea.

Heather: This is incredible, Jen. Imagine all the things you can do with that. I mean, you'll be rich. You can quit working here and start your own company.

Jen: I could cure cancer. Solve global warming. End world hunger. Figure out healthcare.

Heather: The best haircut for the shape of your face – your perfect eye shadow color!

Jen: Yeah, that too. I'll get right on that. *(Jen's cell phone rings, she answers)* Yeah, mom ...

Mom, I have no idea what Dad's mother's favorite aunt was named ... Sorry ... I dunno – ask dad about it? *(hangs up)*

Heather: You could go to Vegas! You could predict who'll win The Bachelor – and what the Kardashians are going to do next!

Boss: *(offstage)* Jen! What time's the Miller meeting?

Jen: It's ... um ...

Heather: *(stage whisper, prompting Jen)* It's at 3 O'Clock.

Jen: *(to Boss)* It's at 3 O'Clock! *(softly to Heather)* Thank you.

Boss: And what's the agenda?

Jen: I don't know, let me check. *(looking very confused)*

Heather: *(another stage whisper)* Acquisitions.

Jen: *(mouths "thank you" to Heather and speaks to Boss)* New acquisitions!

Heather: Jen, what's going on? You know everything. You're the font of all knowledge.

Jen: You're right. This is simple stuff. I should know ... I don't understand.

Heather: *(typing furiously at her computer – sits back, stunned)* Jen, come look at this.

Jen: *(goes to Jen's desk, looking at her computer)* Who the hell is Prayut Shinawatra?

Heather: Well, this says he – or she – is the font of all knowledge.

Jen: I don't get it – I'm the font of all knowledge! *(pause)* Heather – go to Wikipedia. Type in font of all knowledge – see if there's any information.

Heather: *(types, waits, reads from her screen)* Um, "the little-known font of all knowledge occurs randomly around the world. Those who become the font of all knowledge do so for what it believed to be approximately 23 minutes. It occurs only once in a person's lifetime. It is probable that many recipients are totally unaware of the occurrence, as it can happen during sleeping hours. Some psychologists theorize that this explains vivid dreams. Few fonts of all knowledge are able to benefit from the gift. Those who were able to benefit include: Leonardo DaVinci, Madame Curie and Jeff Bezos."

Jen: So, it's gone? *(walks slowly back to her desk, taking it all in)* Just like that?

Heather: I guess so. Wow. What a shame.

Jen: *(sitting at her desk)* So much for curing cancer and solving world hunger.

Heather: I guess this means I won't know in advance who's this season's Bachelor.

Jen: Does this mean I'm stupid now?

Heather: *(reading her computer screen)* The Wikipedia article says "after the gift has transferred to another person, past fonts of all knowledge return to their previous Intelligence Quotient." What's Intelligence Quotient?

Jen: It's IQ – it's a measure of how smart you are.

Heather: Right, cuz you've always been like uber smart.

(Jen's cellphone buzzes)

Jen: Oh God, it's Noah again, doesn't he ever go to classes? *(looking at phone)* Mom, what do you use to find the area underneath the graph of a function? *(saying aloud what she's typing)* Kiddo, I have no idea. Ask your teacher. Look on the Internet. You're smart, you can find the answer. *(looks at Heather)* You know, it's nice not to be everybody's crutch. I think I like this.

END