

Mr. Bee-Zoo's Lunch

A 10-minute play

By Nicole Burton

Copyright 2019

Contact:

Nicole Burton

4712 Oliver Street

Riverdale, MD 20737

301-892-0402

nicole@nicolejburton.com

www.nicolejburton.com

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Mr. Bee-Zoo, Bald Tech Billionaire, CEO of Amayzn

Patrice, his Executive Assistant. From Seattle, she's worked for him for 15 years

Lil Me, Super Librarian. From Baltimore

SETTING

Mr. Bee-Zoo's Office in Washington, DC

PRODUCTION STYLE

This is a comic documentary about global economics in 2019. It should be played Monty Python style. It lampoons the rise of Jeff Bezos and Amazon and owes a debt to Anand Giridharadas' book, *Winners Take All*. Almost everything in the play is true.

FIRST PRODUCTION

Mr. Bee-Zoo's Lunch was produced with four other ten-minute comedies by Pipeline Playwrights at the 2019 Capital Fringe Festival under the umbrella title, *How's That Workin' Out For Ya? 2.0*

SCENE 1

Mr. Bee-Zoo, CEO of Amayzn, wears a crown of buzzing bees on his bald head. Believing he's the smartest person in the room, he's definitely the most powerful. He sits at his desk most of the play. Patrice, his self-confident executive assistant, enters with Lil Me, who carries an Amayzn swag bag.

As she speaks, Patrice places a water bowl in front of Mr. Bee-Zoo and hands him a straw to sip from. She hands Lil Me a bottle of water and introduces her. Patrice listens in on the meeting and takes notes. She anticipates his needs.

PATRICE

Lunch, Mr. Bee-Zoo. This is Lil Me, Winner of your 2019 Amayzn Customer Award. You loved her essay, "The Eight-Fold Path of Customer Delight."

LIL ME

Mr. Bee-Zoo! What a pleasure. I would like to ask you...

PATRICE

Mr. Bee-Zoo asks the questions.

MR. BEE-ZOO

How do you use Amayzn? What about Spindle?

Lil Me takes out her Spindle.

LIL ME

I love my Spindle, I can carry a hundred books! Our patrons love their Spindles too. Did I mention I run a powerful public platform?

MR. BEE-ZOO

Do you subscribe to "Queen Bee?" That's a profit center. Patrice, my executive assistant, dreamed up that idea.

PATRICE

One of many.

LIL ME

I cancelled it.

MR. BEE-ZOO

What? You don't want free shipping? Or streaming?

LIL ME

Not at \$120 a year. Plus I'm trying to support local businesses.

MR. BEE-ZOO

How's that workin' out for ya?

Mr. Bee-Zoo laughs like a braying donkey.
Patrice laughs her unique too. It's part of her job.

LIL ME

We support breaking up monopolies.

MR. BEE-ZOO

(sing-song)

Not a monopoly / if you give low prices.

LIL ME

You control the platform, the delivery, the products, the whole farm. You've got a media company and a grocery chain...

PATRICE

Do you shop at Amayzn Foods?

LIL ME

No! Though I confess, I browse... Roasted Veggie Focaccia, Braised Fennel with Balsamic Figs, Tahitian Vanilla Flan! Oh!

Lil Me swoons in Delight. Mr. Bee-Zoo dances.

MR. BEE-ZOO

Our Sense & Respond Technology! As soon as we sense your Pleasure, we offer products you'll like even more.

PATRICE

Ensnared by their own Delight.

LIL ME

It's so fabulous...

Mr. Bee-Zoo snaps his fingers. Patrice sprays her back to her senses.

LIL ME (CONT'D)

Oh my!

MR. BEE-ZOO

And how can we increase your Delight?

LIL ME

You can increase my Delight... by pursuing Justice and Fairness. Amayzn pays a pittance in taxes, and the network should be regulated like a utility.

MR. BEE-ZOO

Says who?

LIL ME

Says...

Lil Me sings and reveals her Super Librarian costume.

... Super Librarian!

MR. BEE-ZOO

I hate Libraries! They're a waste!

Mr. Bee-Zoo buzzes excitedly. Patrice calms him with the water bowl. As Super Librarian, Lil Me is strong and confident enough to go toe-to-toe with the most powerful man on Earth.

LIL ME

Our free worldwide network promotes Scholarship, Imagination, and Great Beach Books! As co-chair of the American Library Association Social Responsibility Committee, I bring our demands.

Lil Me gives him a report.

MR. BEE-ZOO

I eat Libraries for lunch, lady. I suppose you want money?

LIL ME

Nope. Philanthropy is still you calling all the shots. We want Fairness.

Mr. Bee-Zoo buzzes. Lil Me points to the report.

LIL ME (CONT'D)

Look, I have data from *The Washington Post*.

MR. BEE-ZOO

I saved that paper!

LIL ME

Doesn't change the facts: All the gains since Ronald Reagan trotted into town have gone to Top Tier Big Bees like you, not a single red cent to half of all Americans.

This agitates Mr. Bee-Zoo. Patrice calms him by spraying mist around him and tidying his desk.

MR. BEE-ZOO

Inflexa! How many people do I employ?

PATRICE

I can help with that: 630,000.

LIL ME

Many in sweatshops for 12-hour shifts. They can't even go to the bathroom.

MR. BEE-ZOO

I pay fifteen an hour.

LIL ME

You make a thousand a second. You could pay twenty-five and have a union.

Lil Me gets in Mr. Bee-Zoo's face. He buzzes and Patrice sprays Lil Me.

PATRICE

Not so close!

Lil me takes the bottle away.

LIL ME

Please do not do that.

PATRICE

You think those thousands of Amayzians prefer no jobs to fifteen an hour?

LIL ME

I think Amayzn should pay a Minimum Corporate Tax on Gross Earnings.

MR. BEE-ZOO

Maybe Net...

LIL ME

Gross! At least four percent. I may be a librarian but even I know "Net" means nothing.

PATRICE

She's right.

Mr. Bee-Zoo buzzes in disapproval.

LIL ME

Mr. Bee-Zoo, I admire what you've achieved at Amayzn. That's why we want to help. Here's the headline: "Bee-Zoo Lobbies for Higher Corporate Taxes."

Mr. Bee-Zoo brays with laughter.

LIL ME (CONT'D)

You're the leader among leaders... The baddest, baldest, richest. You say, "Gentlemen"--they're probably all men--"the way to Delight customers in the 21st century is with... Decency."

MR. BEE-ZOO

Decency? Is there a margin in that?

Mr. Bee-Zoo turns to think.

MR. BEE-ZOO (CONT'D)

I like the idea of a Power Hive with me at the Top. I could be Dictator of Decency. "It's our Responsibility to protect America from... hmm... not Greed... The Chinese!" That might work. Can't crack their markets anyway.

LIL ME

You support Decency and we'll share the news from branch to branch, email every patron, bookmark in every backpack. Now, we also want control of the Internet back.

MR. BEE-ZOO

I *built* the Internet.

PATRICE

Actually, DARPA built the Internet.

Mr. Bee-Zoo takes her notebook and buzzes at Patrice. He tosses it back to her.

MR. BEE-ZOO

I changed my mind, I'm not joining your tax charade.

Mr. Bee-Zoo snaps and gets up to leave.

LIL ME

Dewey Decimal!

Lil Me sets an invisible 4 foot square wall
around him.

MR. BEE-ZOO

What in God's...

LIL ME

I'm not finished. (To Patrice) You, read your book. It's a New Release.

She hands Patrice a book, who sniffs it and falls
under the Book Spell, alert but inert.

PATRICE

Sw...eet. I've been thinking about Library School. (aside to Lil Me) Inflexa wants my job. *

LIL ME

You'd make a great Librarian, Resourceful, Efficient...

PATRICE

And I love that New Book Smell!

MR. BEE-ZOO

You're supposed to assist me! Inflexa!

PATRICE

I gave Inflexa the day off. She annoys me.

Lil Me gives Mr. Bee-Zoo a book. He falls under
the Book Spell.

LIL ME

Mega-Business Goes to Space. Mr. Bee-Zoo, how can we save our planet?

MR. BEE-ZOO

We have to go into Space to continue Innovating. Move heavy industry off Earth and re-zone it Residential. We've seen all the planets, Earth is by far the best to live on.

LIL ME

You want to gentrify Earth?

PATRICE

Have you been to Seattle lately?

LIL ME

That's not saving the planet, that's being... a Megalomaniac!

MR. BEE-ZOO

No, a Super Engineer. And thanks to Amayzn Web Services, I now run the CIA, Target, the Treasury, and soon, NASA. Innovation has no Limit!

LIL ME

"Innovation!" I understand you want to satisfy your youthful dream of going to Space, and with the resources to exercise it...

Mr. Bee-Zoo looks into Space.

MR. BEE-ZOO

You never had dreams?

LIL ME

I dreamed of being a Librarian. Of helping people and giving them free resources.

Mr. Bee-Zoo buzzes.

LIL ME (CONT'D)

I'm curious why you're so unattracted to Kindness?

MR. BEE-ZOO

Kindness is for people who lack Ambition.

LIL ME

I beg to differ! I'm Ambitious and Kind every day. I think your grandfather was right.

MR. BEE-ZOO

I don't know what you're talking about!

Mr. Bee-Zoo tries to get free.

LIL ME

"Buff, my boy," he said, "one day you'll figure out it's harder to be Kind than Clever." If you mistake Kindness for Weakness then Cleverness is... what, Strength? No wonder it's hard for you to be Kind. Or, loved.

Mr. Bee-Zoo puffs out his chest with bravado.
He recently went through a notorious divorce.

MR. BEE-ZOO

I have a beautiful family.

LIL ME

You're not responsible for what you may not have known, but now we've told you, you are.

Lil Me removes a gift card and an Amayzn
lollipop from the swag bag,

LIL ME (CONT'D)

And we want a lot more than a gift card and a lollipop.

She licks the lollipop.

LIL ME (CONT'D)

Oh! Oh dear...

The lollipop makes her lurch with Delight into
Mr. Bee-Zoo. He grabs her. They struggle.

MR. BEE-ZOO

Gotcha! Call Security!

LIL ME

Wait! I've been with you since '99! I was in for the Final Stock Split!

PATRICE

She's a Shareholder, let her go!

He finds this attractive and holds her.

MR. BEE-ZOO

So, my flower, you're one of us?

LIL ME

I've been with you twenty years...

PATRICE

Twenty? That's longer than me!

LIL ME

But I must divest.

MR. BEE-ZOO

No! You'll lose Convenience and Delight!

LIL ME

I can't say one thing and live another. Decency trumps Delight.

Lil Me breaks away. Patrice thrusts her book under her nose. The Smell revives Lil Me.

LIL ME (CONT'D)

Thanks! When you were young, did you ever experience Delight at the Library?

MR. BEE-ZOO

No. I worked on my grandfather's cattle ranch fifteen hours a day every summer.

LIL ME

Poor man.

PATRICE

I have an idea that might awaken Decency.

Patrice hands Lil Me the Spindle.

LIL ME

It's a long shot but let's try. My Librarian Superpower.

Lil Me reads. Mr. Bee-Zoo slowly responds. As he leans in for the story, Patrice removes his crown.

LIL ME (CONT'D)

Goodnight moon, goodnight spoon...
Goodnight glory goodnight story
Goodnight space jobs goodnight door knobs
Goodnight antitrust goodnight tech bust
Goodnight bossy boss goodnight profit-and-loss
Goodnight big creative mind
Goodnight books... for all mankind.

END OF PLAY