



What If Beetlejuice Was An Amnesiac, De-Aged Adoptee?

Beetlejuice (Cartoon 1989) · Beetlejuice (Movies) · Not Rated · 2301 words

by Arukir

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What If Beetlejuice Was An Amnesiac, De-Aged Adoptee?

Fandom: Beetlejuice (Cartoon 1989), Beetlejuice (Movies) Rating: Not Rated Category: Gen

Warnings: Creator chose not to add warnings

Relationships: Beetlejuice & Jacques LaLean

Characters: Beetlejuice (Beetlejuice), Jacques LaLean

Tags: Memory Loss, High School, Magic, Age Regression/De-Aging, Possession, Adoption, Blackmail, Friendship, Secrets, Backstory

Words: 2301 Chapters: 2 chapters Status: In progress Published: 2024-09-16

A series of random moments from BJ's childhood, which will be updated inconsistently. The first chapter is just my backstory for him, which more-or-less applies to all BJ fics I write, and is the only one necessary to read for the series. Note, I may decide to contradict something in here in later installments of this series, but unless directly contradicted everything that happens in this is 'canon' to the rest.

My 134th fanfic! Only 66 to go before March 7, 2025...

Chapter 1: Backstory

Beetlejuice's first memories are of living with Dolores as a 20-30 year old, but already in the Neitherworld. His memories of that time period are fuzzy, and he's not sure whether he was her lover or her prisoner — sometimes he remembers liking her, other times he remembers hating/fearing her, and in general his memories are too tangled for him to tell whether or not he was abused or cherished. His memories of her are how he knows that the world 'Beetlejuice' summons and banishes him, but he's not sure whether it's really his name or something else.

His first *clear* memories are away from Delores, but he doesn't know how that happened. He spent some time in relative obscurity, learning about himself and his love for causing trouble. He as well learned that his powers and general nature don't really fit anything in the Neitherworld; he's sort of a ghost, sort of a demon, sort of a Spirit, etc. One of the most important things he learns is that he can't say 'Beetlejuice' (but he can write it), and that puns/wordplay activate his powers without him being able to control them.

Before he could really cause enough trouble to be well known, he makes the mistake of saying something along the lines of 'I feel like a kid again!' (like in the cartoon, during the babysitting episode). He doesn't manage to turn himself back, having to grown

up all over again (which does not help his muddled memories), this time with powers — he's fairly certain he wasn't a whatever-he-is the first time he grew up, as the events that followed his babyhood proved he would have been known.

Now with almost no control of his powers, the mind of a baby, and the soul of a trickster, BJ causes massive chaos — including starting a *war* (again referencing that episode). It isn't long before most of the Neitherworld has heard of him, though no one knows his name (by the time he remembers how to write, he as well remembers how his name can summon/banish him, so keeps it secret). He gets adopted a few times, always returned when his personality and/or powers started causing problems.

Then a demon couple by the names of Nathaniel and Beatrice Lawrence (based on his canon parents and a name I'm pretty sure was his in the musical) decides to take him in. And they didn't return him, not even after they had a biological son of their own (Donald/Donny). For the first time, someone kept him, despite everything. He eventually reveals certain things to them, including the whole Beetlejuice summoning thing. They keep it secret, registering him as 'Nathaniel Junior' at school and such (explaining why they call him Junior). Over the centuries, his name and its power eventually become common knowledge, especially as he becomes more and more of a trickster.

This is more-or-less the backstory I use in all my Beetlejuice fics, maybe changed a little depending on the needs of the story. The following fic is just a series of moments from BJ's childhood, random and out of order, that uses this backstory. Unless something directly contradicts, it can be assumed that my Beetlejuice fics (whether related to each other or not) mostly share this past. It's random and self-indulgent and will be updated inconsistently, but it will let me write stories easier if I don't feel the need to try and explain parts of this backstory in every single one.

Oh, and if he knows the Maitlands in a story: they lived and died decades earlier than in canon, and hired him to help them 'evict' mortal residents of their house (not the Deetz). He uses his powers to mess with and terrify the mortals, causing the horrified Maitlands to let the mortals have the house and sequester themselves in the attic until they could move on to the Neitherworld. Him and them have a lot of bad blood, but it's cooled down over time.

Chapter 2: It's Better That Way

Teenaged Betelgeuse practices his powers, considers blackmailing Jacques, and has some adoption angst.

If anyone could give me tips to fix my poor attempt at a French accent, I'd appreciate it. My attempts to search it resulted in 'don't try, it's offensive'...

Betelgeuse hated Highsgghoul. He hated following rules, he hated bullies, he hated how boring classes always were. Not even the delightfully stinky smell of his gym socks could make him like the place, mostly because of how many bad memories he had of the gym itself.

There was, however, one very important reason he kept going — okay, actually, getting away from Donny might've been part of it too. He lo- the l-worded his brother, but there was only so much 'perfection' and neatfreakness he could take before he began to seriously consider turning the brat into a lobster and dropping him in the ocean.

The other reason was even more important than Donny's safety and his sanity, and was what brought him to a secluded area of the school grounds every chance he got. Floating crosslegged and feeling like an idiot, Betelgeuse stared at an old shrub, forcing even breaths through his non-existent lungs.

Before long, he managed to put himself in a trance, posture naturally straight now that he wasn't consciously slouching. Green energy started crackling around him, filling his eyes and seeping towards the plant (if one could call such a rotted thing a 'plant').

He mentally traced the branches, feeling the roots deep underground, memorized every weak bud that would never manage to become a leaf or a flower. He was closer than he'd ever been, his own form fading and flickering into transparency as the first hint of stripes began to decorate the bark, his limbs numb as he thought he could just maybe move a branch...

"Ah, Beetlejuice! What are you doing here, mon ami?"

Betelgeuse startled, shooting into the air and out of his trance, his name sparking like electricity in his soul. He whirled around in midair to face the familiar skeleton, feeling wary at such a... direct address. Writing his name down for the guy had been a mistake, yet one he couldn't quite bring himself to regret for reasons he wasn't entirely clear on.

"I wasn't doin' nothin', bonehead." He crossed his arms, momentarily startled when he only had two. He must have been deeper in the plant than he'd thought... Oh, if only he'd had just a few more minutes, he was sure he would have gotten it!

"Oh, don't be like zhat!" Jacques pouted. Well, as much as a skeleton could pout. "I am merely curious! I did not know you were interested in gardening, Beetlejuice." He smirked.

Betelgeuse wasn't proud of it, but he whimpered when he felt his name a second time. The tiny hooks and threads of a banishing were already around him, awaiting the final command to whisk him away to who-knew-where. "Jacques, stop it!"

He was already close to being suspended as it was, he couldn't afford to 'skip' school again. Not that it would be his fault, of course, but the teachers wouldn't know that. Couldn't know that. The fewer people that knew about his... Condition, the better.

"Do not fret, my friend, I am only joking zhis time." Jacques chuckled, leaning to peer around Betelgeuse at the plant. "What *are* you doing out here, zough? You are not, how do you zay, an 'outzide person'?"

"I like outside plenty." He liked mud, and bugs, and being as far away from people as fucking possible. Plants, on the other hand, weren't normally something he bothered with. Despised and stomped on, more like. He'd probably have set the old bush on fire by now, if he wasn't...

He could tell Jacques, right? For all the skeleton's flaws, the guy was more than willing to keep a secret, but maybe that was why he *shouldn't* tell him. How many of his secrets could he trust to Jacques before he decided to start *using* them? How many secrets before Betelgeuse fell into a cage of his own making?

It didn't help that he didn't have a *single* bit of dirt on Jacques. Betelgeuse knew he was clever; all he needed was *one* secret, then he could do *much* more than anyone else could with *dozens*. One big secret he could twist as he liked, and he'd be safe from the skeleton forever. But to get that secret, he had to stay close, had to throw a line once in a while.

That's the reason he gave himself, at least. He ignored the part of him that knew Jacques wouldn't blackmail him, drowned the part that knew he wouldn't blackmail Jacques, forgot the part that grinned every time he heard 'Mon Ami'. This was nothing more than an attempt to protect himself, giving up something so he could get something. He couldn't care less if he had someone to talk to about *this*.

"I, I'll tell ya..." He said slowly, watching Jacques light up. "...if ya promise to keep it a secret, bonehead. Ya gotta zip yer lip on this."

(A moment of trying to *unzip* his own magically-sealed lips passed, much to Jacques' amusement. *Bastard.*)

"Oui, my friend, of course I will not tell anyone. I promise." Jacques agreed easily. Too easily, really. He liked Jacques well enough, but the guy could be too fucking *trust-ing* sometimes.

"I was practicin' inanimate possession." He said, quickly as he could. There, it was out there, no taking it back.

"Zhat usually involves less alive zings zhan ze plants, does it not?" Jacques asked, incomprehension as clear on his skinless face as it could be. Because he apparently knew next to nothing about possession, and Betelgeuse could still keep the important part of it a secret.

"It's easier with plants." Betelgeuse lied, shrugging. Truth was, possessing dolls and streamers and signboards were the easy bit for him. It was proper possession — animals and people, the type that supposedly came naturally to *real* demons — that was hard. Plants were a common bridge for someone who was good at one and wanted to learn the other.

And if Jacques didn't pay enough attention in the only classes worth it to know that? If he had absolutely no idea how powerful Betelgeuse already was and how much moreso he was trying to be? Well, all the better for Betelgeuse.

"Ah, well, I wish you luck, mon ami." Jacques frowned. "But perhaps you should take to practicing at home, no? After all, you have missed ze last classes of ze day."

"Wait, what?" He can't have heard that right. Sure, he'd lost time to the meditation required for possession practice before, but never *that* much.

"Mrs O'Ghoul is quite upset, Beetl— ah, *my friend.*" Jacques shook his head. "She is making ze call to your parents. I zink you are finally being suspended, I'm afraid."

"Jacques, ya idiot," Betelgeuse hissed, turning his very real panic (Ma and Pop were not going to like this) into easier-to-deal-with anger, "why didn't ya lead with that instead o' wastin' my time with chitchat?!"

"I guess my curiosity got the better of me, Beetlejuice." They both flinched, but it had been long enough for the count to reset, for the hooks to fade. "Sorry, mon ami."

"It's fine." Betelgeuse muttered, not entirely sure whether Jacques was apologizing for wasting his time or for almost banishing him, but not really caring. His flash of anger, which he knew he should apologize for but as well knew he wasn't going to, had passed. "I supposed I gotta be home soon. Bye, bonehead."

"Au revoir, my friend." Jacques waved sympathetically as Betelgeuse floated off to his locker.

"Practice at home, yeah right." Betelgeuse growled as he packed his backpack. He needed to think up a lie better than 'I was doing weird magic stuff and hiding it'.

Maybe he could pretend he'd been involved in illegal Sandworm smuggling, or starting a homework cheating ring, or trying to run off to the circus... If he hurried, he could set up some prank on the principal and pretend it had taken him all day — no one ever realized how easy prank magic was for him, after all, and they'd totally buy that a five-minute spell had taken hours.

Honestly, anything was better than admitting what he'd been doing. Admitting he'd been hiding problems with his powers *again*, after all the times Pop and Ma had said he could tell them if he couldn't figure something out.

But how was he supposed to do that? To just give them another reminder that he was *different*? That the things that were supposed to be easy were hard, and the things that were supposed to be *impossible* were so, so easy?!

He slammed the locker door shut, averting his eyes before he could see the nameplate on the metal. None of this was fair. He couldn't even tell people his real name because it was fucking cursed. He was cursed and blessed in a thousand different ways, and he was never going to fucking find out why.

So, no, he couldn't practice at home. He was going to say he skipped classes on purpose, he was going to get grounded, and he was going to keep the fact he was doing something as innocent as practicing magic a secret as long as he could.

Because how in Hell and Hades was he supposed to remind his 'parents' what he was? Or, more importantly, what he wasn't? No, he couldn't let them see his magic, couldn't let them know he was practicing it.

It was better that way.

— end of “What If Beetlejuice Was An Amnesiac, De-Aged Adoptee?” —