



ERICA WERNICK

Meant for This

THE MINDSET AND STRATEGY
TO ACHIEVE YOUR MOST
“IMPOSSIBLE” DREAMS

ALSO BY ERICA WERNICK

LA Bound: The Ultimate Guide To Moving To Los Angeles

Meant For This

The Mindset And Strategy To Achieve
Your Most “Impossible” Dreams

ERICA WERNICK

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For Mom, Dad, and Meryl, who have supported every dream I've felt meant for.

Praise

So real. So relatable. So refreshing.

ROSS CHISARI

It is now 1:15am and I can't put the book down even though I usually go to bed at 10. Content is extraordinary, voice is unique, and the system is easy to follow. Would reread 100 times and recommend to everyone!

MALAK DABCHA

I have been a successful, working cinematographer for 30 years. Even with all my years of experience, Erica astounds me with novel insights, fresh, actionable strategies and fierce inspiration to level up my career.

I mentor young and aspiring filmmakers. As I read the book I was continually excited to share these words with each of them, so much so that on several occasions I snapped and texted photos of specific paragraphs which spoke directly to a particular individual's questions, concerns or challenges.

This is the very best, most honest, and affirming coaching I have ever experienced for this notoriously tricky industry. To quote Erica herself, reading this book is like "taking an Opportunity cake out of the oven."

BRAD RUSHING

Erica, as a teacher, has such exciting and motivating energy and I think that's what makes this book stand out. It makes the artist feel like they are a star already. I would recommend this book to EVERY actor!

AMANDA KRUGER

This book is amazing and addicting and exactly what this industry needs.

KARLA OJEDA

As someone who has worn many hats in this business, I can tell you first hand that having a game plan in this town is essential. In "Meant for This," this witty, honest, and vulnerable look behind the curtain of tinseltown, gives you just that: a blueprint for success, a strategy for following your dreams and the mindset needed to be fearless in the pursuit of them. "Meant For This" is the perfect balance between self-help book and good storytelling. My only regret is this book was not around 15 years ago when I was starting out on my own journey.

MARK HAAPALA

I just finished this book and I'm literally in tears because it's so beautiful and positive and inspiring. Erica's genuine positivity is truly astounding. I've never read a book like it before.

EMMY NEWMAN

Erica's book takes away the mystique of Hollywood. Her strategies, how to inhabit your next level before you get there and her own personal rise shows artists anything is possible. This book will change your life.

AMY SHAFFNER

It's so good! I genuinely wish I had a book like this in college. It would have saved me so much heartache (and time, probably).

CHELSEY MARCH

“Meant for This” speaks to the star inside of you and awakens the dreams you’ve kept on the back burner for far too long. This book makes you an instant Hollywood insider, who not only knows the secrets to making your dreams come true, but understands the common blocks that stand in the way and how to overcome them immediately. If you’re ready for a book that goes beyond self help cliches and gives you a practical path directly to the red carpet, get this book and get ready to take notes, because your career is about to change. There’s nowhere you can’t go using the inspiration, principles, and practices taught by Erica!

STEPHEN LOVEGROVE

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Being realistic is the most commonly traveled road to mediocrity.

WILL SMITH

INTRODUCTION

There is no dream too big or too impossible. Whatever it is that's calling you, you can have. The problem is that not enough people are telling you that. In fact, most people are telling you the opposite. And they've told you this for so long, that you've likely bought into it and repeat it to yourself.

After spending a decade in Hollywood, the industry notorious for big dreams, I've heard every discouraging belief under the sun: "You want to succeed in Hollywood? That's like winning the lottery. Good luck!" (The most sarcastic "good luck" you've ever heard.) "You're going to be waiting tables your whole life." ("Starving artists" are, after all, two words that are rarely seen without each other.) "That's going to be really hard." "It's rare that you'll make it." Blah, blah, scarcity. Blah, blah, fail, fail, fail.

This narrative is so deeply ingrained that you hear it from books, from mentors, from teachers, from peers, even family members. One time, I read a chapter or so of a book for actors, written by a famous actor, and I basically had a temper tantrum and dramatically tossed it to the floor after reading discouraging statement after discouraging statement. I know, totally mature and easy-breezy cool. But the feeling was mutual amongst my clients, and that brings me to today: **I've had enough of this limiting bullshit.**

Here's the thing—I know our biggest dreams are going to come with some challenges. They are big dreams for a reason, and every big accomplishment comes with its own set of obstacles. But you, you fancy dreamer, need to hear something beyond, "This is going to be hard." Because, chances are, if you're anything like me, that "hard" nonsense isn't going to stop you from pursuing your dreams. It might rattle you a little. It might make you second guess, and ponder pursuing something more "realistic." But that dream you feel meant for will not go away.

That dream will never shut up. It will whisper, it will scream, it will shake you—whatever it needs to do to get your attention and tell you that you must pursue this. So if you *must* pursue this, wouldn't it be great to finally talk to someone and say, “Cool, it's going to be hard. I'm up for it. Now what?” The conversation must continue. That's what this book is for. I see you. I see your dream. I'm honored to hold space for it and let it flourish. I'm here to inspire you, cheer you on, and show you how to make your “impossible” dreams totally possible.

I'll be the first to admit that I have a bit of a fairy-tale idea of dreams. But that's never been a hindrance for me...in fact, it's been the key to my success. It's how I keep going when the obstacles show up, or when I feel impatient. It's why I go for it in the first place. And it's led to over 60 television shows and films for myself and my clients on Netflix, Hulu, HBO, and every other major network (even in the “hardest” industry). My belief in what's possible, and the positive narrative I've cultivated, has literally led to countless artists achieving their dreams through the systems I've developed. So, the naysayers can suck it! We can totally live in a fairy tale world where our dreams come true, and I have the proof to back it up.

In this book, you're going to learn everything you need to succeed at your biggest dreams. I walk you through a step-by-step process, with tangible actions you can take **today**. This book will inspire you to believe in yourself like you've never believed before. Whether you dream of being on Broadway, winning an Emmy, starting your own business, or making millions of dollars, your “impossible” dream is just a few chapters away.

Twelve years ago, I had a dream in my heart to design graphics for television. That dream kept calling me, and it led me to Los Angeles. I was from a suburb outside of Philadelphia, so 3,000 miles away from LA, and I didn't know a single person in the industry. Hollywood is so much about who you know, and I knew no one. No uncle's best friend's neighbor, no high school friend's parent, no hair stylist's cousin. I was alone. But I didn't let that stop me and I freaking broke in, anyway. Within two weeks of moving to Los Angeles, I booked my first TV show. So I know what it's like to want something so badly that it hurts when you don't have it. And I also know what it's like to finally get the dream. The latter

feeling is so indescribably fulfilling that I want you to feel it, too. That's why you need to read this book.

If I were your dream, you know what I'd say to you? I'd say, "Thank you. Thank you for not giving up on me. I'm still here and I know we can do this." You *can* do this.

The systems in this book have worked for actors, writers, directors, VFX editors, singers, makeup artists, high school teachers, entrepreneurs, talk show hosts, producers, music supervisors, artists, production assistants, psychologists, and even a retired U.S. Patent Commissioner. It will work for you, too, as soon as you begin to implement.

You deserve all your dreams. I don't care how big or impossible others deem them.

Read this book. Prove them wrong. And live the life you've always dreamed of.

Xo,
Erica

PART 1

Think Like A Star

You don't attract what you want. You attract what you are.

WAYNE DYER

CHAPTER 1

Making the “Impossible” Possible: The Blueprint

The list had been posted. I frantically scanned it, searching for my name. I desperately wanted to see it on there, I needed to see it on there. If my name wasn't on that list, I didn't know what I was going to do with my life. My dreams would be crushed before they even began. The list wasn't long, there were only 20 names, so it only took a moment to discover...

“OH MY GOD!! I GOT IN!!!”

There was my name, “Erica Wernick,” on the list of students who had been selected for the Graphic Design major. The list that says only 20 out of the 45 of us were moving on to pursue graphic design in college. My dreams were officially beginning.

See, the design school I was trying to get into didn't open up the major until junior year. That meant I spent my first two years of college not even knowing if I'd be able to study the thing I wanted to study. I had to take prerequisites and put a portfolio together, and then, maybe, I could pursue this major halfway through my college experience.

Even though I had never taken design classes before, I still knew this was my calling. It was confirmed one day when I spoke to a friend who was a year ahead of me.

“How's the program? Do you love it?” I excitedly asked. I was hoping to get a glimpse into my dreamy future.

“Eh, it’s OK. I’m taking this class that’s all about fonts. It’s so boring,” my friend replied. To a normal person, this would totally burst their fantasy bubble, but for me, it did the opposite.

“An entire class about fonts? THAT SOUNDS AWESOME!”

A design nerd was born. And that’s when I knew this dream in my heart was a true one.

When I finally made it to my first official class, I couldn’t have been more of a cliché: sitting at the table closest to the professor, eager as hell to learn everything about graphic design. It was my own little Rachel Berry moment. I was here to succeed and live my dreams, and no one could get in my way!

Our first assignment was a crazy project for a first time graphic design student: we had to combine photography with typography (fonts, essentially, my favorite thing in the world—oh my gosh, please still like me, I swear I can be cool.). I put so much energy and work into this assignment. To quote Morales from *A Chorus Line* (and give a little foreshadowing), “I dug right down to the bottom of my soul and I tried.”

The day we got our grades back, I was floating on top of the world. Not only did I receive an “A” but the professor held my project up in front of the class as an example of a great design! I mean, holy crap. Could it be any clearer that I’m on the right track? This validation solidified it for me.

Then came the second assignment. I channeled my inner High Achiever and got to work. The same enthusiasm carried me through, my work ethic never dipping below excellent. When you find something that feels like your calling, and you really care, you go all in. That’s what I was doing. No half-assing for me.

The fateful day came where we received our grades for this second project. When I got mine, I couldn’t believe what I saw. It was a “D.” I had never gotten a D in my life. The computer lab was buzzing with energy and the light from the screens felt bright and cheery. But darkness loomed around me as I felt my own light begin to dim. I sank deep into my chair and felt completely crushed. How did this happen? There were no notes of explanation so I was at a total loss. I had no idea how I went from the star pupil to almost failing. What came next changed my life forever.

As I was sulking, the professor wheeled up next to me in a computer chair. “What happened there, Erica?” She asked. “I guess you just got lucky on that first one.”

A proverbial knife stabbed me in the heart. With that one phrase, my dream was destroyed.

I ran to the bathroom and balled my eyes out. I was devastated. Here I was, pursuing my dream, and my professor, the person who is supposed to teach me, said that anything I had done well up to this point was just luck.

As I went through the rest of the semester, I learned that this professor used fear as a teaching tactic. By December, I hadn’t really learned anything new about graphic design. But I did learn one thing: that I’m the only one who gets to decide whether or not I can succeed at my dream, and I’m definitely the only one who determines if it’s worth pursuing at all. So I packed up my stuff and pulled a Morales—I found another class. The next year I transferred schools and finally learned how to be a good designer.

My dream was destroyed in a moment, but that moment was exactly that—a *moment*. I reconnected with my belief in myself. I reconnected with my dream. And I decided it was still going to happen. After graduating from my new university, I moved to Los Angeles and broke into Hollywood. Over the past 12 years, I’ve designed graphics for over 30 television shows and films. And not a single second of it was due to luck.

The attainability of our dreams is a decision within us. It begins with a belief and that’s the seed we plant. Greatness is more accessible than we think...as long as we can hold the vision through any obstacle thrown our way.

Even now, when I have a new dream, the doubts still come rushing to the surface. Who am I to achieve this? I’m not special enough. I’m not lovable enough. I’m not talented enough. It sounds like my voice, but those doubts are inevitably built by ghosts of failures past. It makes the dream feel outside of me, like this unreachable thing that’s cute in theory, but ultimately destined for someone else. Those old stories combined with the “bigness” of the dream builds a strong case for it being impossible. But I know that greatness is accessible for *all of us*. Abraham Hicks has said the first mistake we make in this process is calling it a “big” dream.