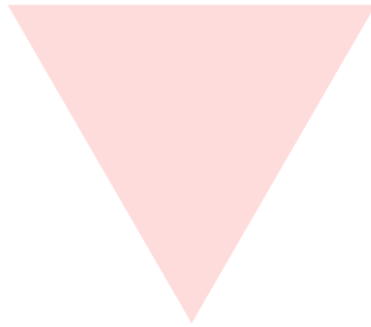


SAMPLE SCRIPT

“DISNEY CHANNEL STARS WHO RUINED THEIR CAREER”

MAGIC

WESH



Disney Channel Stars Who Ruined Their Careers

I may be wrong but I believe most of us, Disney fans, have fond memories around Disney Channels stars who made our childhood just a little bit more magical. Unfortunately, while these stars seemed on a definite path to greatness, not all of them managed to keep the spark! So, in today's video, we take a deep dive into 5 Disney Channel stars who somehow ruined their career with some trying to salvage things and get back on the right track.

1. Mitchel Musso – A DUI That Hit Pretty Hard

Kicking us off is Mitchel Tate Musso, a 32-year-old actor (also a musician) hailing from Garland, Texas. Before losing his edge, arguably, Musso had a solid career at Disney. He was particularly famous for his role as Oliver Ken in Disney's sitcom "Hannah Montana". That role also propelled him into a leading role in "Pair of Kings" where he played King Brady. Also, in 2010 he became host to a hidden camera reality show, PrankStars. Now, these are only highlights of Musso's accomplishments because his acting portfolio is much more elaborate. He got into acting at the tender age of 8 and even before his Hollywood debut in 2004 on the show Secondhand Lions, he had been cast in other films like Am I Cursed and The Keyman. Also, in the time between his role in Hannah Montana and Pair of Kings, he featured in several films in different capacities including voice acting. For example, he was the voice of Curt, Bobby Hill's friend in some episodes in King of the Hill. He was also the voice of Jeremy Johnson in Phineas and Ferb, voiced Aang in an unaired version of Avatar: The Last Airbender, and DJ in Monster House. Musso is also featured as Raymond Figg in Life is Ruff. So, clearly, he had a lot going on. And still, that was not all. He had a music career running parallel to his acting. In 2009, he released his debut album under Walt Disney Records. He even got to create original tracks and perform remakes of existing songs for Disney

films. For example, he sang a remixed version of Lean on Me for the film Snow Buddies, and then, alongside Tiffany Thornton, a co-star, he recorded the song Let It Go that was used in the film Hatching Pete. Also, in 2009, Musso opened for Metro Station, the pop-rock band that gave us the incredible Shake It song. Again, these are just some of his musical highlights. His accomplishments as a musician are just as impressive as his acting ones. Now, what did Musso do to tarnish such an impressive resume? Well, it is alleged that it is all thanks to a 2011 DUI. As reported by People, the popular online publication, on early Sunday morning (3:43 am) on October 16, 2011, Musso was arrested under the suspicion of DUI with the police confirming that his blood-alcohol level was “well over” the legal limit of .08. Musso had driven through an intersection and failed to do what an officer instructed him to do. At the time, Musso was 20 years old which was below the legal drinking age of 21. He went to jail but was released on posting a \$5,000 bail. He eventually accepted a plea deal and got 36 months of probation with no jail time. In an interview with E Online, he said, "In becoming an adult, I have learned firsthand that stepping up and taking responsibility is the best way to move forward. I am especially thankful to my family and fans for their unwavering support and encouragement. I am glad to now put this in the past." This was after the plea deal. According to TMZ, while Disney and Musso had been in talks to move the actor from Kids' shows to young adult projects, the DUI arrest led to the move being made immediately. So, instead of Disney waiting for another season of Pair of Kings before making the decision, they quickly replaced him with a character played by Adam Hicks. At the time, Musso was also hosting the PrankStars show which had aired 4 episodes by the time of his arrest. Learning of his DUI issue, and fearing any bad publicity, Disney immediately canceled the show, making it one of the shortest-running shows on Disney Channel with only 6 episodes ever being produced. The 2 episodes that had been slated to air were also pulled from the programming schedule. Musso's acting career took a big hit after the DUI

incident and his music career flat-lined (only picking up in 2022). He did however manage to salvage the situation given he did voice acting for Phineas and Ferb and Milo Murphy's Law. It is alleged that Musso's saving grace was that Disney had quietly kept him on their payroll even after binning his show and acting slots after the DUI.

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2. Jake T. Austin – Drunk Drove, Crashed into Multiple Cars, and Fled the Scene?

Full name Jake Toranzo Austin Szymanski, and professionally referred to as Jake T. Austin, our second Disney star definitely took DUI to a whole other level. Hailing from New York City, and proudly embracing his Puerto Rican heritage, Jake's acting career goes back as early as 2002 when he was appearing in commercials. He was aged 8 at the time. He made his first credited acting appearance a year later, in 2003, for a role in Kid 1698, a comic sketch in The Late Show with David Letterman. And he kept growing from there! In 2005 for instance, he landed a major role where he voiced Diego, Dora's cousin, in Nickelodeon's Dora the Explorer. He voiced that character even on the spin-off, Go Diego Go. He then did voice roles in The Ant Bully and Everyone's Hero before his first live-action role in The Perfect Game. However, his debut at Disney was under the role of Chris in Johnny Kapahala: Back on Board before he then got cast as Max Russo in Wizards of Waverly Place. This role, Max Russo, made him particularly famous and cemented his career at Disney. Riding on that fame, he landed other roles between 2011 and 2014 including voicing Fernando in Rio and Rio 2 (the animated musical film by 20th Century Fox), a guest appearance in Drop Dead Diva, and a role as Rob Fisher in Law & Order. Impressive, right? Well, there's more. In 2013, Jake landed his next major role after Max Russo, he was cast as Jesus Foster in the famous teen drama The Fosters. It was at this point, 2 seasons into the show, that his career would take a hit; should we say, a self-inflicted hit? And he is still trying to come back from it! So, what happened? Jake got into two DUI incidents and they were pretty insane. First, on October 8, 2013, he was arrested after being pulled over for driving at night without headlights. Apparently, police officers had smelled booze when they approached his vehicle and Jake had performed poorly in the

sobriety test that they administered on site. A little over a month later, on November 19, 2013, he got into a more serious DUI incident. This time, it is alleged that under the influence of alcohol, while driving a 2010 Audi with New York Plates, Jake rammed into three other cars in the wee hours of the morning. The [clip](#) of the accident, as shared by TMZ, went viral. He had been with a friend in the car and, in a bizarre twist, immediately after the crash, he left the scene. Witnesses reported seeing him throw a bottle of vodka out of the window and fleeing from the scene in an Uber. His lawyer then called the cops and told them that all the victims would be fully compensated and so there was no need to prosecute. Oh, and he did not get charged for fleeing the scene because he apparently left to seek medical treatment at the ER due to an injury to his mouth. Now, the rumor is that Jake was dropped from another season (Season 3) of The Fosters due to his trouble with the law. He later made a comment that might corroborate this version saying that taking a break from acting helped him from getting out of hand. This is just speculation though. And the reason I am saying the whole “issues with the law” leading to him being dropped from The Fosters, could be speculation is because there is an alternate explanation. Movie Web for instance writes that Jake left the show because he wanted a bigger part. The Jesus character was going to get smaller parts after the second season and so he decided to take the chance to play new characters. Either way, he was replaced with Noah Centineo for season three. Also, regardless of the version of events around him leaving the show, his career took a hit. The DUI incident has followed his reputation ever since and some people feel that he did not end up doing as great as he could have. He has however tried to salvage his career and shake off the scandalous past. For instance, he got voice acting roles in 2017 including in The Emoji Movie and has some upcoming projects as of 2023 such as Black Friday, Pledge Trip, PAW Patrol: The Mighty Movie, and Daft State. We can only hope that he un-ruins his career in time.

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3. Adam Hicks – A String of Robberies in CA

So far, we have just talked of DUIs, and if Disney Stars getting ruined by DUIs has surprised you, then this next story will knock you off your seat. Our next star is Adam Hicks whose full name is Adam Paul Nielson Hicks. Hicks was born in Las Vegas, Nevada in November 1992 and is a well-known multi-talented individual who has dabbled in acting, rapping, singing, and songwriting. While it is unclear at what age he began acting, it is undeniable that he is good at his craft. He is known for being cast in *The Boy Next Door* as Jason Zimmer, *Pair of Kings* as a replacement to Mitchel Musso, *How to Eat Fried Worms* as Titus, and a co-lead role as Luther Waffles on *Zeke and Luther*. However, among all these, being on *Zeke and Luther* made a significantly positive impact on his reputation and he arguably grew popular under that show which had him for 77 episodes. Hicks' other notable acting projects include his role as Wen Gifford in *Lemonade Mouth*. His music career was also solid as he wrote, recorded, and got featured in remixes of songs that were used in Disney's productions. For instance, he wrote "Determinate", "Breakthrough" and "Livin'

On a High Wire", and all three were used in the movie Lemonade Mouth. He also did a remake of "U Can't Touch This" by MC Hammer with a co-star and "In the Summertime" by Mungo Jerry. Of course, these are just some highlights of his entire musical catalog. Now, one thing I found interesting is that Hicks's career had been solid up until he took up the role of King Boz in Pair of Kings where he replaced Mitchel Musso. And just to refresh your memory, our first Disney star to ruin their career as featured in this video was Mitchel Musso. He got into trouble with the law and somehow ended up losing his part in Pair of Kings. So, what are the chances that the dude they got to replace him also ended up ruining his career? Although to be clear, his run-ins with the law started in 2018, and between 2013 when he last featured in Pair of Kings, and 2018, he had been in other acting roles. Some of the shows he featured in include Shifting Gears, Freakish, Little Savages, CSI, Windsor, and Texas Rising. Anyway, as reported by Variety, on Wednesday, January 24, 2018, Hicks was arrested on suspicion of a string of armed robberies. Yeah, you heard that right! Not one robbery; multiple robberies. According to the Burbank Police Department, Hicks had been accused of robbing several people on the streets of the San Fernando Valley area. Apparently, Hicks (25 at the time) and his girlfriend (Danni Tamburo, 23) would go up to people walking in the area, stick a gun in their faces and demand cash and other valuables. Two of the victims were elderly women in their 70s. A SWAT team was sent to his house, in the 1800 block of North Niagara Street, later that day (at 2 pm) to arrest him. On his premises, they found a gun and stolen property. This incident was of course shocking to a lot of people but some felt it was within Hicks' capacity to do so especially after TMZ revealed that he had 2 prior arrests on his record for, first, firing a gun and shooting himself in the leg, and, second, for battery. These two prior arrests had however been dismissed for lack of sufficient evidence. Regarding the robberies, it is interesting that he did them all within minutes of each other and it makes one wonder if he just got bored and decided to seek a

thrill in a despicable dare with his girlfriend or if this was just a part of who he had become (we get this answer later). Regardless, after the arrest, he was held on \$550,000 bail while his girlfriend was also held on \$350,000 bail. Hicks's hearing had initially been set for March 23, 2019, but it got delayed after a judge appointed a doctor to help determine his mental state following a claim by Hicks' lawyer that the star was not fit for trial. Later, he did appear in court and pled not guilty to three felony counts of attempted second-degree robbery and two felony counts of second-hand-degree robbery. Three years after the incident, on June 18, 2021, Hicks was finally sentenced to five years for one count of robbery. His girlfriend received her sentence back in 2019 where she got three years of "formal probation". In March 2022, Hicks was released on parole after he got credited for the 1,460 days that he spent in jail while awaiting sentencing. Now, another interesting part of Hicks' story is that he gave an interview after his jail term and it got a lot of people sympathizing with him. In the interview, he opens up about struggling with anxiety and panic attacks which were worsened by the pressure of being a child actor. He also talks of self-medicating with alcohol, marijuana, and Xanax from a young age. Even worse, he had family troubles with the mom suffering from multiple sclerosis and the dad refusing to work. At 18, he was basically in debt and trying to transition from a child actor into adult roles. He also struggled with mental health issues – like delusional episodes – that were worsened by his mother's death. Going forward, he seems to be only interested in focusing on his music. He has had singles out periodically since October 28, 2022, with many of them being about his mental health and time in jail. We can only hope his career picks up from here on.

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4. Stoney Westmoreland – Enticed a Minor into Sex

We started with DUIs, went to robbery, and now you might wonder, what could top that? Well, lean in because our next Disney star ruined his career in a way that he may never come back from. I am talking about Stoney Westmoreland, a well-known American actor and producer born in Kingsport, Tennessee in 1970. Now, before we talk of his scandal and downfall, just like our previous starts, he had a solid career going on, spanning from 1996 to 2018. He for example

featured in prominent films including *Godzilla* (1998) as a tunnel guard, *Golden Boy* (2018) as a producer, *Matchstick Men* (2003) as a man in line, and *World Trade Center* (2006) as Paddy McGee. He also made appearances in popular TV shows like *Scandal*, *Breaking Bad*, *Better Call Saul*, and *NCIS*, among others. In his most recent, and quite significant role, he was cast on the show *Andi Mack* on Disney Channel as Henry 'Ham' Mack, a grandfather. It was during this role that things would take a very dark turn. In December 2018, Westmoreland was arrested for a pretty serious crime: enticing a minor into sex. He was accused of soliciting sex from a 13-year-old teenage boy via the Grindr app after he, unknowingly, communicated with an undercover officer on the app. The profile had been set up by police detectives and operated near the area where the Disney sitcom *Andi Mack* was being filmed. According to TMZ, the arrest took place on Friday, December 14, 2018, in Salt Lake City, Utah. He was taken into custody by Salt Lake City Police Department and FBI Child Exploitation Task Force who also found two novelty sex toys in his hotel room. He also admitted to sending nude photos, and that the male who he was speaking with told him he was 13 years old. His actions fell into two felony categories; enticing a minor by internet or text and dealing in materials harmful to a minor (aka exploitation of a minor). He had apparently asked the teen to engage in acts with him and to send him nude photos. He also sent over pornographic images. And just in case you have never heard of Grindr, the court records termed it as "an Internet app used for dating and meeting people for the purpose of engaging in sexual activity." Leading to his arrest on December 14, Westmoreland had taken a ridesharing service to meet the boy and take him back to his hotel room. Given the serious nature of the incident, Disney immediately fired him. Within hours of his arrest, the station issued a statement saying, "Given the nature of the charges and our responsibility for the welfare of employed minors, we have released him from his recurring role and he will not be returning to work on the series which wraps production on its third

season next week.” So, he was basically let go in the middle of filming the third season of Andi Mack. This swift action by the station seems reasonable when you consider that Westmoreland had been working alongside co-stars aged between 14 and 17 and the target audience of the show was youngsters aged 6 to 14. Now, in his defense, according to his lawyer, Westmoreland was evaluated by a doctor who said he (Westmoreland) did not actually believe he was communicating with a 13-year-old. He thought the exchange was a roleplay with another adult online. Still, this does not make things better because why would their roleplay involve having sex with a minor? The initial charges (six felony counts) on him attracted a sentence of 10 years but he entered into a plea deal that brought down the charge to 2 years in prison for using interstate facilities to transmit information about a minor. As part of this deal, he must cooperate with DNA collection and also register as a sex offender for 25 years once he is out of federal prison. In addition, he will be required to avail all his computer devices to random searches and inspections and to notify authorities of all the accounts that he uses for electronic communications or storage including things like email and social media. These supervised release terms will be in effect for 10 years after his release and will also mean he cannot interact with people aged 18 years and below without the supervision of another adult. Now, given that Disney already cut ties with Westmoreland, and the fact that his charges were of a very serious nature, there is probably minimal chance that he will be picked up by any other shows and studios in the future. We can pretty much say that his career is dead.

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5. **Bella Thorne – Channelling Controversy?**

Last on our list is Bella Thorne, full name Annabella Avery Thorne. Born in Pembroke Pines, Florida, Bella is probably the youngest in terms of career kick-off amongst the Disney stars on our list today. She was born on October 8, 1997, and began her acting career in 2003 with an uncredited role in a 2003 film called Stuck on You. She must have been around 6 at the time which is pretty young. Just like our other stars, she has an impressive portfolio. Notably, she has played Margaux Darlin in Dirty Sex Money, Ruthy Spivey in My Own Worst Enemy, and Cece Jones in Shake It Up. This last role, as Cece in the Disney Show, is what she is really well-known for and was a significant step in her career. She also won awards along the way including Young Artist Award and the prestigious Imagen Award. Following the Disney role in the 2010-2013 period, she went on to be cast in other popular films including Blended, Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Road Trip, The Baby Sitter series, The Duff, Infamous, and the series Famous in Love. These roles span between 2014 and 2020. Also, she ventured into music, and her single, Watch Me, from 2011 made it to the US

Billboard Hot 100, coming at number 86 on the charts. Overall, she is well accomplished. So, how did she ruin her career? Well, the biggest consensus might be that she has curbed an image that is so distant from her Disney self. She has transitioned into a controversial and “sexualized brand” which is as far as someone can be from the Disney image. And she knows it. For instance, while at Disney she had the appearance of ‘perfect’, she later admitted in an interview that this was part of the pressure that she did not appreciate while filming the show Shake it Up. She said, "There are definitely a lot of pressures in Disney's eye to be so perfect and I think that's where Disney in a sense goes wrong because they make their kids seem perfect". She added, “That image is very difficult. It’s also never been me”. So, what is the real her? According to Bella, being real about poetry, sexuality, past struggles with abuse, and other areas of her life was a better way to connect with her fans. Again, this is pretty much the opposite of what Disney would allow near their brand. Moving on, her controversial stance did not stop there. This is because later on also, while filming for Freeform’s Famous In Love, she was called a diva who was "uncontrollable and crazy". Those are pretty strong words coming from a studio. Anyway, the bigger hit to her image however was when she leaked nude photos of herself to get ahead of a hacker who was threatening her. In June 2019, Bella, in a stance to 'take the power back’, posted on Twitter messages from an anonymous person revealing topless selfies of herself in the process. She said, "Yesterday as u all know all my s*** was hacked. For the last 24 hours, I have been threatened with my own nudes I feel gross, I feel watched, I feel someone has taken something from me that I only wanted one special person to see.” She added, “I’m putting this out because it’s MY DECISION NOW U DON’T GET TO TAKE YET ANOTHER THING FROM ME." This was a bold move for her and fans praised her for it. However, the internet being the same old dark place, those nude photos have followed her reputation ever since. And, to make it worse, Bella has continued to find herself in tricky conversations. For instance,

in 2019, she directed a film Her & Him for Pornhub. And while there is nothing inherently wrong with directing an X-Rated film, it is pretty insane to do so as a debut into directing shows. Also, doing so with a resume largely supported by having been on Disney Channel. Regarding the experience directing the film, Bella said filming actual sex was "quite a fun environment". Then, just a year later, in 2020, she joined Only Fans and riled up a significant portion of her fanbase. Why were they mad? Well, she came in and gentrified the whole thing. In an interview with RollingStone, one content creator on the platform thought it was not good that a former Disney Channel star with many sources of income would come in and dilute revenue for regular sex workers. Now, definitely, Bella's career is nowhere near being over but it just seems interesting how different her it turned out from that of her Disney co-star Zendaya. To some, it seems she went down the wrong path. However, only time will tell.

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