

WEST HARTFORD SCREENWRITERS GROUP / MINUTES

Meeting of: 6/28/06

Moderator: Patrick Lee

Scribe: Denning Powell

Snacks: Darryl Johnson

ATTENDEES:

Liz Cipollina

Tom Murphy

Geoffrey Saunders

Denning Powell

Jonathan Parizer

Patrick Lee

Darryl Johnson

Jen Evans

Joe Cadieux

Jacque Devlin

Cindy Drozd

Rita Isaacson

Tessa O'Sullivan

Nancy Rossi

Val Utton

Laura Rizzo

Andrew Soltysile

Zach Shoher

INTROS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

(1) The library and the Webster Hall meeting room year-long shutdown related to Blue Back Square construction will begin this September. The church next door will provide space for the group to meet during the approximately 12-month construction period; details will be forthcoming soon from Joe.

(2) Jonathan reported there are some good deals currently available for purchase of *Final Draft* script-writing software.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

(1) Patrick showed a 2-minute segment of the 1990's movie *Witness* (starring Harrison Ford) as a classic example of how action can be used subtly and effectively to replace dialog and convey meaning. The scene involves an Amish boy's identification of a bad cop in a Philadelphia precinct house, with no words being spoken. The scene is at page 28 of the script.

REVIEW 1: Java Fix, by Jen Evans (full script).

Logline: When newspaper employees begin dying, a serious journalist is forced by a profit-minded corporate owner/coffee king to work with an egomaniac TV anchor to uncover a diabolical media consolidation plot.

Why writing it: After 10 years in the media, wanted to make a humorous commentary on the state of the industry.

Theme: How vanity and blind pursuit of a goal affects judgment of people and facts.

Genre: Dramatic comedy; mainstream audience, skewed toward women.

Wants from review: All comments on any aspect of the work.

Synopsis of group review: The concept is great: the newspaper becomes the news as the bodies pile up. The dialog is crisp and realistic, with some neat metaphors and humor that seems appropriately indigenous to the profession. The story flows along nicely. The characters are well drawn and realistic, with some (intentional) stereotyping. Some uncertainty about the true nature of the script (dramatic comedy vs. black humor vs. slapstick – it seems to have elements of all) makes it difficult to assess just what kind of story it is and how to understand it. The April-Barrett relationship could be drawn out and developed a bit more, with some possibility for growth to appear in April en route. Having the first 21 pages take place in the same setting (newsroom) may be problematic. The clues that led April to the warehouse may not be clear enough to readers, and the bodies piling up so fast may strain credibility (unless it's a pure spoof). Overall, a very promising premise and initial effort.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, July 26, 2006, 7:00 PM, Webster Hall.

Moderator: Rita Isaacson

Snacks: Liz Cipollina

POST-GELAMEN:

Usual suspects decamped to Cosi's afterwards. No bodies piled up there, reportedly.

~DSP 7/4/06 :-)