

WEST HARTFORD SCREENWRITERS GROUP / MINUTES

Meeting of: 7/26/06

Moderator: Rita Isaacson

Snacks: Liz Cipollina

Scribe: Denning Powell

ATTENDEES:

Liz Cipollina
Tom Murphy
Denning Powell
Jonathon Parizer
Patrick Lee
Darryl Johnson
Jacque Devlin
Cindy Drozd
Rita Isaacson
Tessa O'Sullivan
Nancy Rossi
Valerie Utton
Laura Rizzo
Steve Olechna
Victoria Freeman
Nancie Welch
Gina Leogrande
Perdita Maxwell
Jonathan Francois

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 Cadieux.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

- (1) Liz showed several scenes from *The Anniversary Party*; discussion followed about how scenes get played out from the written script.
- (2) Discussion about the nature of work submitted for review. The basis consensus of the group was that scripts should be as close to the spec format as possible (i.e., the form and content suggested in *The Screenwriter's Bible*, as lean and mean as possible). Author explanation or exposition needed for a basic understanding (of the writer's intent, or of where the story is headed if it's a partial draft) are best done apart from the script and not inserted in it.

REVIEW 1: *Mere Mortal Men*, by Nancy Rossi (full script).

Logline: A middle-aged man experiences a fleeting moment of goodness thanks to a young college girl, and decades later finds a way to thank her and tell her that goodness did not go unnoticed.

Why writing it: To explore the various ways people react to goodness (aka morality) in others, and to explore the concept that “the fastest way to destroy a man is to give him rational excuses for his behavior”.

Theme: Never too late for even the most despicable character to restart his life in a kindness mode if the person has the courage to choose that.

Genre: Drama.

Wants from review: Do the first 10 pages make it come alive; does the material work as a screenplay; do the characters work; are you in the scene?

Synopsis of group review: The concept is great, a Thanksgiving disaster of memorable proportions, with lingering consequences years down the road. The dialog is crisp and realistic. The story flows along nicely. The characters are realistically drawn and play well off each other. Several reviewers felt the reader didn't share in George's redemption, or that it came too late (decades after), or that the personal cost to George wasn't high enough, or that there wasn't enough rooting interest in George because he never ultimately recognized that he was a scumbag -- he just bought off his conscience with money. The form of the script is too 'novel-ly' (meaning too much narrative and authorial intrusion); several reviewers suggested some of the narrative could be converted to dialog. Two of the flashbacks were difficult to follow and didn't do much to move the story forward. Overall, a very promising concept and initial effort.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, August 23, 2006, 7:00 PM, Webster Hall.

Moderator: Tessa O'Sullivan

Snacks: Jacque Devlin

~DSP 8/6/06 :-)