

WEST HARTFORD SCREENWRITERS GROUP / MINUTES

Meeting of: 9/27/06 (deferred to 10/4/06)

Moderator: Steve Olechna

Snacks: Nancy Rossi

Scribe: Denning Powell

ATTENDEES:

Joe Cadieux

Geoff Saunders

Andrew Soltysik

Denning Powell

Jonathon Parizer

Tessa O'Sullivan

Nancy Rossi

Rita Isaacson

Steve Olechna

Patrick Lee

Tom Murphy

Lida Boynick

INTROS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

(1) Pending any advisory to the contrary by Joe Cadieux, the next monthly meeting (October 25) will be held in the Congregational Church library.

(2) West Hartford Hauntings, to which Tessa and Jacque contributed, will run on October 27 and 28, tickets are available but are expected to sell out quickly.

(3) Recent NYT articles passed around -- director David Lynch is shooting his new movie all in cheap digital video; screenwriter Joe Esterhaz has authored a book dissing Hollywood.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

(1) Two handouts -- an interview of Silence of the Lambs screenwriter Ted Talley, and a piece on inspirational films from Shift Magazine -- for information, not discussion.

REVIEW 1: **Monkey Trap, by Denning Powell (Act 1 ~ 30 pgs).**

Logline: Aliens invade the minds of two lovers, distort their perceptions of reality, pit them against each other in a battle to the death... while the fate of humanity hangs in the balance.

Why writing it: Book-to-movie conversion.

Theme: Love triumphs over power.

Genre: Sci-fi metaphysical thriller.

Wants from review: Do the first 10 pages grab attention? Are the flashbacks effective or distracting? Did the Big Event on page 29 work?

Synopsis of group review: The concept is great, but will be difficult to convey. General agreement on:

(1) the first 10 pages grabbed attention; (2) the true nature of the protagonists John and Lara and their respective FLBW's isn't clear enough from their early attitudes/actions; (3) both protagonists seem a little too blasé about aliens in their minds; (4) portions of the dialog seem too "on-the-nose" (i.e., give exposition about the backdrop of the story). Mixed opinion on: (1) flashbacks -- some liked them, some didn't, John's worked better than Lara's, they both might possibly work better in a later position in the script; (2) the Big Event -- worked for some, but others didn't like it embedded in a flashback, took away from the immediacy. Suggestions for going forward: (1) don't use dialog to tell any part of the

story backdrop, use only character actions/attitudes/inferences; (2) put both protagonists in as much emotional pain as possible as early as possible to maximize their emotional depth so we start to root for them (but without perturbing the flip-flop ambiguity of who's the good one and who's the evil one).

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, October 27, 2006, 7:00 PM, Congregational Church Library (unless otherwise advised).

Moderator: Geoff Saunders

Snacks: Tessa O'Sullivan

~DSP 10/5/06 :-)