

WEST HARTFORD SCREENWRITERS GROUP / MINUTES

Meeting of: 3/28/07

Moderator: Tessa O'Sullivan

Snacks: Tessa O'Sullivan

Scribe: Denning Powell

ATTENDEES:

Geoff Saunders

Denning Powell

Tessa O'Sullivan

Rita Isaacson

Lida Boynick

Tom Murphy

Valerie Utton

Jeffrey Boggio (new)

INTROS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

(1) Jeff Boggio has written scripts commercially. (2) Geoff has received expressions of interest in his vampire saga *Rising Darkness* (reviewed by the group last year).

OPEN DISCUSSION: None.

REVIEW 1: *Anna*, by Val Utton (5-pg script for a short drama piece).

Logline: Nine-year old Anna weaves innocence and inspiration into a perfect godseye, but in looking for help with the final touches she ____ (insert phrase of choice).

Genre: Short drama.

Theme: The artistic innocence and inspiration of a child should always be ____ (insert adjective(s) of choice).

Target Audience: Philosophically inclined adults and young adults.

Why writing it: An experiment in conveying a message in short form.

Wants from review: Best phrase for logline? Best adjective(s) for theme?

Synopsis of group review: General agreement on: (1) a fascinating message, with ambiguities left to the interpretation of the audience; (2) raises interesting questions of moral priorities (compassion vs dogma); (3) an interesting exercise, allowing reader input. Mixed opinions on: (1) phrase of choice and adjective(s) of choice (probably reflecting the range of possible interpretations of the message); (2) the emotional coldness of the priest being realistic. Suggestions for going forward: (1) play up the end a bit more with the implied downstream consequences of rejection; (2) have Anna set the godseye and the unicorn picture side-by-side on top of the dresser and study them from her bed -- when she falls asleep the godseye tips over.

REVIEW 2: *Monkey Trap*, by Denning Powell (revised opening sequence ~ 14 pgs).

Logline: Aliens invade the minds of two lovers, distort their realities, 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: Does the script flow more cleanly in this revised opening? Is the intensity ratcheted up? Are the early flashbacks still a problem?

Synopsis of group review: General agreement on: (1) the pacing is much improved, really rips along; (2) the early flashbacks are less intrusive; (3) Lara's first flashback should be a run, not a bike ride, to avoid confusion on the timing of events. Mixed opinions on: (1) does the Goddard setup need more explanation; (2) Lara still accepting the alien too easily; (3) too much of Aaron in early scenes, since he's not a main player; (4) showing messages scrolling on laptop. Suggestions for going forward: (1) rename the early flashbacks as what they are (memory unspoolings by aliens) to avoid the problem that some script readers would have with flashbacks that early in the story; (2) use a device (maybe like Duc Li's face) becoming superimposed on John's flashback to imply the alien's unspooling of John's memories; (3) emphasize Lara's different belief that the alien is not external, that it comes from within her own mind.

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday April 25, 2007, 7:00 PM, West Hartford Senior Center. First in the queue will be Rita's presentation on loglines. Liz may also have a presentation.

Moderator: Tom Murphy

Snacks: Valerie Utton

~DSP 3/30/07 :-)