

Title: ***Our Fantasies Are Eating Us Alive!***

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Category: Comedy/Adventure/Fantasy/Romance

Expected Rating: R

Location: St. Paul, MN

Log Lines – Two Sides of the Same Fantasy

“A Side”

A quarreling husband and wife comically attempt to cover up her lover's murder only to realize that they are actually characters in a neurotic writer's unfinished screenplay. Facing death... or worse, the couple must put aside their marital difficulties and defeat the writer to reclaim their lives.

“B Side”

Struggling in life and love, a screenwriter labors to overcome obstacles of his own conception to complete his masterwork and keep the love of his life. When the levee between reality and fantasy breaks, the writer must face vengeful characters of his own works bent on retribution for the wrongs they feel he has bestowed upon them. Can he create a happily ever after?

Style, Structure, Character and Plot

“Our Fantasies Are Eating Us Alive!” is a comedy with elements of adventure, fantasy and romance. Sharp comedic dialogue, quick-paced action, and intriguingly imperfect characters engage the audience as the plot unfolds across three dimensions (fiction, limbo and *reality*). Scene by scene audience support of the characters grows, as we root for their survival and happiness, yet question whether the flaws inherent in all of us will prove insurmountable for the hapless writer and his characters.

The Story

In shaky-cam, cinema verité footage, REAL-LIFE WRITER/DIRECTOR, a mid-30's hipster creative-type dressed in an ironic t-shirt and corduroy blazer is framed in a camcorder's viewfinder, which he addresses directly. Awkwardly, he practices the introduction he dreams will one day precede his films like the roar of MGM's lion, “Hello, and welcome to my movie – that I've created.” His REAL-LIFE GIRLFRIEND, operating the camera is quick to fire, “I don't

think you should do that. I think it's weird." Tension between the two is palpable. Writer/Director composes himself defiantly and repeats his introduction with forced bravado.

Drizzle falls lightly on a dark street of a small American city. WILSON, a nervous, jittery man in his 30's turns to enter an empty dive-bar where he sees his down-in-the-dumps thirty-something best friend HAZZARD DEAN (portrayed by Real-Life Writer/Director). Hazzard sits alone, staring down forlornly at his untouched beer. Breaking from his dark reverie, Hazzard turns and says flatly, "This is it, Wilson. This is the end." Hazzard has hatched a plan to catch his wife in the act of cheating with his camera at the ready. "What if it's all in your head?" Wilson, perpetual worrier, objects. Hazzard, determined, appeals to their friendship and persuades Wilson to accompany him.

Outside the Dean family home, Hazard loses his mojo - what he will say after he busts in and finds his wife and her lover in throes of passion? Wilson is quick to complete the picture, "completely naked...still partially attached to each other." Brilliantly, Wilson suggests Hazzard shout "Aha!", which Haz immediately dismisses, "nobody says *aha*." After acting out the scene with outstretched arm indicting the imaginary lovers, Wilson concurs that the words' ring impotent. Eager to support his friend in need, Wilson sings the few lines he knows of Matthew Wilder's "Nobody's Gonna Break My Stride". Hazzard seems inspired. Wilson continues to sing, each repetition of the lines more loudly than the previous. Confidence restored, Hazzard runs towards the front door in heroic fashion as Wilson continues to sing, filled with pride and gusto.

Inside, Hazard's wife SARAH DOUGLAS DEAN, a strong dark-haired beauty in her 30's labors to kick out her oafish beau HOYT after she learns that she and Hazzard's son Danny has had a fight at a sleepover and needs to be picked up. Not yet satiated, Hoyt uses his every ounce of charm to seal the deal, "Not even a quickie?", until Sarah abruptly asks him to stop— "Do you hear singing?" The door bursts open, a flash illuminates the naked lovers and Haz ... pauses awkwardly, points his finger in condemnation and shouts "Aha!"

Outside, Wilson paces nervously and explains to us that he decided to pop yet another Xanax to help get the Wilder song out of his head and calm his overwrought nerves. Just as he begins to swallow the tiny pill, a gunshot rings out *bang!* in the night, causing Wilson to choke on his little helper. Fearing for his life, Wilson bursts into the house in dramatic style. Sarah has shot Hoyt in defense of Hazzard, who claims he needed no such help, "He may have had the upper hand for a few moments, but that's only because his – it was hard! And it kept grazing my leg as he punched me and it threw me off!" Heimliched by Haz, Wilson pretends to pass out at the sight of Hoyt's body. Haz calls Wilson's bluff. Wilson opens one eye and then the other, disappointed; he sits up, surveys the scene and insists they call the police. "We can't call the police," Sarah explains ominously.

Large New York City buildings loom close outside the apartment window. A movie-version of WRITER/DIRECTOR (not played by Real-Life Writer/Director), 30's, handsome, unkempt and smoking, asks his GIRLFRIEND (played by Real-Life Girlfriend), blond, innocently attractive mid-20's for feedback. She looks up from his glowing laptop and responds, "It's about the same thing that all of your scripts are about, "Woman betrays man."" To prove it, from his script-

strewn desk and file cabinets, she produces hard copies of various screenplays on the subject: one in which the bearded lady leaves sword-swallower for lizard-man and another simply titled, *Untitled woman-betrays-man screenplay*. Strained love emanates from the couples' tense discourse - Girlfriend points out that Writer/Director has never succeeded in finishing anything, let alone managed to produce a film. Writer/Director pleads that he is certain this time it will be different.

Inside the dimly lit Dean family home, Wilson narrates - Hoyt is a real Mafioso, and going to the police will attract unwanted attention from his shady associates. Tensions build as, Hazzard, Wilson and Sarah debate how to get rid of the naked, engorged corpse: "In movies they chop the body up before they bury it, but why? Is it strictly a transportation issue or are they destroying the evidence?" Ridiculously, the planning session derails into an argument about who's the leader of the group—Haz says he's fastest, "*Race Day*... you remember". Flustered, Wilson recalls wearing flip flops, but then insists that speed has nothing to do with leadership potential. The trio finally decides by vote to forgo all chopping and bury Hoyt out in the woods, *whole* in Danny's sleeping bag ... before discovering it's woefully inadequate to hold an adult man, "The dimensions are a little less ... wide and long than I remember." Suddenly, there is a knock at the door—Wilson and Sarah struggle to hide the body as Haz answers, only for the knocker to be gone.

Girlfriend and Writer/Director discuss the nuances of screenwriting in their kitchen. "You can't just arbitrarily have knocks," complains Girlfriend. Writer/Director asserts that if he can get away with never explaining the knock and having audiences not realize it until after the movie's over, he will have "won." "Won what?" queries Girlfriend, now visibly annoyed. Later walking down a bustling New York City street, Girlfriend asks him if the jealousy theme omnipresent in his work is because he thinks he's being cheated on. Writer/Director quickly denies the accuracy of her hypothesis, but admits he can't help but think about her possible infidelity when she's not around, as well as his own fantasies of "vague breasts... of many hues... lot's of ochre". "So you imagine me fucking other people and you fucking other people—do you find any time for us to fuck each other in your imagination?" Girlfriend asks. They part, still at odds.

En route to pick up Danny from his failed sleepover, Haz requests that Xanax-dazed Wilson officiate an "emergency divorce." Sarah interjects ironically, "Pretty sure there are some documents and lawyers required..." The debate quickly comes to an end when they realize they do not have a shovel with which to dig Hoyt's grave. Wilson takes the opportunity to pop another Xanax. He can't believe the house-dwelling Deans don't own a shovel, but says that as an apartment person, he shouldn't be expected to either. Haz notes that all the holes he's needed as an adult have already been there.

The trio park in front of a well-kept, suburban home. Hazzard ascends the long walk to the front door and knocks. The solid door opens, illuminating Hazzard on the front stoop. Out steps a healthy, well-groomed man in his mid-30s, Mr. McCALLISTER. He and Hazzard engage in faux-pleasantries, while unseen by McCallister, Sarah and Wilson not so stealthily tip toe around the to the back of the McCallister garage. Sarah and Wilson find the door open and proceed to succeed in stealing a shovel, despite Wilson's now drugged state, "Sarah, I feel weird. Do I live here?" Wilson says in garbled speech. In this work-in-process screenplay world, Danny is

invisible, apparently Writer/Director has failed to complete yet another character, though none of the movie-verse characters note it as highly unusual. Mr. McCallister, however, is quick to joke about Danny's disability claiming that he is "a little hard to read..." "Ohp, didn't see you there sport," Mr. McCallister quips as Danny's backpack glides past him out through the doorway and past Jeremy, whose bruised cheek Haz acknowledges in response, "I guess they really did get in a fight."

Still arguing about Writer/Director's neuroses when they meet for dinner, he and Girlfriend discuss the script. Girlfriend loves the musical numbers, but Writer/Director has decided to cut them. Writer/Director goes on to complain about movies that think they have something to say—if *he* thought he had something to say, he'd make it the title and put an exclamation point on it—and about movies with too much talking where not enough happens—"just people talking and staring out windows—either have something happen or end it!" Girlfriend sarcastically suggests he end his movie by blowing up a giant dark castle. Writer/Director loves the idea: "End the movie by blowing up a dark castle. That is fucking brilliant!" Girlfriend is nonplused. Writer/Director then reveals he's writing them into the script, but says he doesn't want to play himself. He wants to play Hazzard. Writer/Director informs Girlfriend she's too young to play Sarah, as she would have been a teenage mother, before generously offering her the part of Danny – Girlfriend questions this kind offer as Writer/Director has already admitted that he hates working with kids. Girlfriend leaves in a huff for a previously unheard of audition for a play, "The Falcon Has One Eyeball", piquing the writer's suspicion. He stops writing to play keystone cop and follow her covertly.

Sarah, Haz and Wilson, the latter now in a near-catatonic state from Xanax, find themselves in a bleak, beige office waiting room. Exploring the dilapidated complex, complete with a dingy cafeteria, Haz and Sarah encounter ninjas, circus performers, Roman soldiers, Vikings—leftovers from other unfinished scripts of their writer—and PHILLIP SOMETHINGWORTH III, a verbose British toff with an absurdly large mustache. Somethingworth becomes unhinged as he explains to Sarah and Haz that he has been left to languish for eternity "somewhere between the beginning and the end. Tossed aside—incomplete." Somethingworth explains the vagaries of slipping out of one's story: the characters possess self-awareness in the waiting room, but won't remember the place if the writer resumes their story. Hazzard and Sarah realize the absurdity of their son's invisibility. Distraught, Sarah blames their problems on the writer. The fictionalized version of Girlfriend—her story now not being worked on either—appears to commiserate, revealing the tragic end Writer/Director plans for his characters: Sarah is to decapitate Hazzard with a shovel; Danny is to shoot Sarah; and Wilson is to fall into a pit and become a quadriplegic. While Haz dithers over whether Sarah is capable of beheading him, "...maybe a child's head, or a cat or something - if it was immobilized. But not mine... *I work out,*" Sarah determines that they must take their fate into their own hands.

Stealthily rounding a corner at a safe distance, Writer/Director, plays detective and follows Girlfriend into a large building. Interrogating the clerk at the reception, he is told there is no audition – Writer/Director has found himself in a library. Now certain of Girlfriend's infidelity, he leans in and offers to the CLERK manning the front desk, "Good place for a date," to which the Clerk dismissively replies, "No, it's a terrible place for a date. It's a library." Later, Writer/Director asks Girlfriend how her audition went – she lies, further fueling his jealousy. In a

dark room, the couple later lies awake in bed at night facing opposite directions with their eyes open, tension building. The next morning, Writer/Director resolves to complete the bloody ending he had planned and opens his laptop.

We find Hazzard, Sarah, Wilson and Danny burying Hoyt in the woods, the waiting room forgotten, and Haz and Sarah back at each other's throats. Frustrated with Haz's insistence that they are divorced, Sarah knocks him out with a rock. Shovel held high over head point down at Hazzard's neck Sarah prepares to kill him. Wilson narrates lamentingly that Haz should have listened to him, "I told him it was all in his head." For the first time Sarah hears Wilson's narration – "All in his what?" The walls between reality fiction begin to crumble, jarring Writer/Director from his entranced work state in front of the glow of his laptop. "Whoa," he explains in disbelief as his story quite literally escapes him.

Liberated, memories of the waiting room come flooding back to Sarah as she lowers the shovel, previously held menacingly over Haz's neck. Reluctant to break from his character/narrator duties, Wilson pleads, "Just do it already! Don't you see? This our final collapse. The end." "The girl told us... The script, Wilson! We're characters," Sarah responds with newfound spirit. Hazzard regains consciousness, and in a daze asks, "What's wrong with you guys?" Wilson is quick to apologize, "We've had an awakening. Unfortunately you were unconscious for it. Sorry." Sarah looks lovingly to Hazzard, "I think we should kiss now. I think that would be appropriate." The smooch quickly wins Haz over. Sarah, comprehending Wilson's power of narration, instructs him to take them to the writer. After a few overly dramatic failed attempts, Wilson succeeds, creating a magical doorway to the writer's world.

Determined not to accept the fates they've been dealt by their maker, the heroes set off to change writer's mind or do what they must ... but the doorway Wilson has opened has freed the vengeful band of other abandoned characters, lead by Phillip Somethingworth III. Can the writer overcome the demons in his head to give his characters the happy endings they desire and can Hazzard, Sarah and Wilson keep the writer safe from his other characters long enough to get their happy ending?

One thing's for sure: we are definitely blowing up a dark castle!