

Last week we were chatting (and by chatting I mean me ranting while you read) about getting a career. I told the story of how I sort of landed a writing gig by taking some initiative.

It had to do with a little more than taking some initiative though. I had to have a “take” on the project.

So what does that mean?

I’m going to assume that there are more than a couple of you out there that have no clue what I’m talking about so I’m going to take a moment and let you in to how shit works around here.

Here’s how it goes:

You write a script.

You send script to Executive at company A.

Executive gives script to some fucktard intern to read said script.

Intern does coverage on script.

Coverage (which includes a summary) is handed to Executive.

Executive, once done doing Executive type things, reads coverage.

Executive gets the gist.

Executive either A) flips through the script or B) reads the script.

If A) insert 2 weeks until you hear anything.

If B) insert 4 weeks until you hear anything.

Executive passes on your script, but wants to meet with you to “discuss ideas.”

You pop wood. (or subsequently get a little damp.)

You meet with Executive, get blown a little bit, then Executive says “We have this idea...” and would like to get “your take” on said idea.

You leave with newly slobbered on nether regions and a pocket full of “things to think about.”

Insert a week.

You call Executive.

Insert a minute or two for Executive to remember who the fuck you are.

Executive says, “So whattia got for me?”

You pitch YOUR take on THEIR idea.

One of two things happen: A) "That's great! You're a real winner! I'll get back to you." Or B) "That's great! You're a real winner! When can I see the script?"

If A) happens: Delete the number. Forget their name. Fuck the company. You will never hear from them again and in a year or two you MIGHT see a smattering of a ghost of one of your ideas on the big screen.

If B) happens: Insert 6 months of bullshit writing and getting notes upon notes on a script that isn't even really yours.

For sake of argument, let's follow B's path.

So, insert 6 months.

You turn in first draft.

You get notes.

You get manipulated to do a re-write.

You get notes on the re-write.

You get asked to do another re-write.

You either A) agree and do it begrudgingly or B) Tell them to go get fucked cause you ain't doing shit without money in your hand.

If A) happens: Insert 6 weeks of more writing.

If B) happens: You're fucked. You'll have arguments with the Executive, who will tell you that he doesn't need you anyway right before he tells you to go fuck yourself and then hires some other fucktard to re-write the script you just finished writing that wasn't even your idea.

Once again, let's assume you chose A.

6 weeks later: More notes, asked to do another re-write.

You either A) agree and do it begrudgingly or B) Tell them to go get fucked cause you ain't doing shit without money in your hand.

If A) happens: Insert 6 weeks of more writing.

If B) happens: You're fucked. You'll have arguments with the Executive, who will tell you that he doesn't need you anyway right before he tells you to go fuck yourself and then hires some other fucktard to re-write the script you just finished writing that wasn't even your idea.

Once again, let's...

Okay...I think you get the picture. Now, in all fairness this is sort of a funny quick “what’s what” and showcases the negative side of how things could go.

Take away the negative parts and you still get the idea on how this shit works. You write a script, they pass on the script but like your writing and then get you in the room for “your take.”

So be prepared.

Be ready.

Nobody sells a script in this town. Sure, EVENTUALLY, you will write something and someone will like it enough to give you money for it. But as young, NOOB writers, you’re nothing but a sea of fucktards with a sign around your neck that says “HUNGRY: WILL WRITE FOR FREE!!”

And you will little birdie, you will. And when momma bird chucks up spit and worm guts and shoves it down your throat? Not only will you eat it. But you’ll like it.

Fun, huh?

Really makes you want to sit down and get cracking on your next million dollar script, right?

Hey, if anything, this town is uber-motivational.

Okay, so back to the point.

A take meeting.

Ya gotta be able to think on your feet. If you want to have a career and not a job, you’ve got to be able to be creative. Any fucking one can write a script.

(SIDENOTE: Last week Kristin Wiig was on The Daily Show promoting Braidsmaids. She was asked if she wrote the script and she said that she co-wrote it. This is what she said: “Judd (as in Apatow) asked if I wanted to write something. So I said sure. So me and my writing partner bought some screenwriting books, got a hotel for a weekend and wrote the script. But at first we totally didn’t know what we were doing.” Doesn’t that just fucking burn you?)

So as I was saying, ANY fucking one can write a script. But can you write two? Can you write a script based on some Executive’s wet dream of an idea?

Here’s the thing: Producers (sans your J.J. Abrams and your Spielberg’s) are creatively RETARDED. You know the old adage, “those who can’t do... teach?” Well in this town, it’s “those who can’t write... produce.”

They NEED you. And they don’t want what you’re selling. They want your abilities to write. A lot of them think they’re creative MASTERMINDS when in reality they’re nothing more than that guy at the water cooler who thinks up inappropriate jokes that aren’t funny.

And they're angry about not being able to write. ANGRY. So they take it out on YOU.

Hitler: evil dictator or frustrated painter? I don't know, you decide.

THAT is what you will deal with.

So when you're in that room? And they tell you THEIR half-baked idea? Dazzle them! Wow them with your ability to make their idea better than it ever could be. Treat them like a cat and shake your keys at them. Entertain them! You'll make them feel like the masterminds they think they are.

Give them a lot of "AND WE COULD DO THIS!!" and "OR WHAT ABOUT IF WE..."

Make them happy.

Gets you a writing gig.

Puts you in a better position to pitch your fucktarded alien pot road comedy with the M. Night twist that ends up in a vampire laden brothel that's really an allegory for the Detroit race riots of 1968.

Yeah. They'll eat that shit right up.

Till next week...