

Before I came out to Hollywood and realized that my wheelhouse as a writer was large scale action movies, I used to write nothing but Rom Com's.

That's right. Rom Com's.

The cynical, sarcastic prick you read every week is secretly a romantic.

As much as I hate people, as much as I can't stand most things in this world...the only thing I am ever optimistic about is love.

How twisted is that?

Now, before we go on, let me clarify one thing. When I say Rom Com, I'm not referring to the Kate Hudson/Matthew McConaughey schlock (although I do enjoy that crap too...I'll explain in a minute) but what I mean by Rom Com is Chasing Amy. Manhattan. Annie Hall. Deep philosophical explorations by filmmakers, who in their own right, fight the same things I do.

When it came to writing my thesis film in grad school, my goal was to write my Annie Hall. I wanted it to be the story about the "girl that got away" and much like what Alvy Singer did at the end, I wanted to rewrite history.

So if I'm going to write the fictional story of "the one that got away," guess what? She doesn't have to get away! Awesome!

It was a fucking awful script and will never see the light of day. More importantly, it wasn't very much fun to write. Diving into yourself and remembering all of the shitty things that went wrong in a relationship isn't much fun. Even if you DO get to change them.

You know, it's funny...as much as I love watching Rom Coms, I've long been on record as (sometimes jokingly) someone who rails them for giving women a false sense of reality.

"All I have to do is be a hooker with the heart of gold and a rich man will show up in a white limo and sweep me off my feet."

Shyeah! Right!

But, after thinking a lot about it, Rom Coms actually give men a false sense of reality as well.

Let's go back to those Kate Hudson/Matthew McConaughey flicks (or, let's face facts...ANY McConaughey flick.)

Who does he always play? The lovable man-child that has no ability to grow up. The charmer. The guy that you hate to love. He can fuck up in the biggest way possible but as long as at the end of the second act, he shows the woman just a FLASH of fucking change she'll see that he is indeed a different person and her heart will melt and everything will be fine. Right?

You see this over and over and I think it starts to rub off on a person. You start writing the script in your head and thinking about everything you do in terms of scenes in a movie. You rationalize and justify so that your actions fit into the eventual outcome...Happily ever after. 'Cause no matter what you do, they always end up together in the end, right?

I wish I was making this up, but this might be one of the most embarrassing things I ever did in my youth. I had just broken up with the high school sweetheart and I was a fucking wreck. Like crazy-scrambling-to-make-things-better crazy. Looking back on it now, had I just given her some space and time to cool down, things might have worked in my favor.

But I didn't have a very high opinion of myself and even though we had spent three years together I thought that if I walked away in the slightest, I'd be forgotten.

So I did the next best thing (translation: the worst thing).

sigh I so wish I was making this up.

S had agreed to go to the movies one night with me. We were going to see Blade. It was an attempt to be civil and see how things went. A good thing, right? Right.

I was at home PACING the fucking floors, counting minutes down because I couldn't wait till the movie to talk to her and try and fix things. I'm a selfish only child...I wanted my Christmas present NOW!

I knew she was going to be at the mall for a job interview at The Body Shop. Then it hit me. Like a lightning bolt. I hopped in my car and sped to the mall. Literally. I even ran a red light or two. I zipped into a parking space and sprinted through the mall. I found her standing at the counter in The Body Shop chatting with the manager.

And I busted in. I know! C-R-A-Z-Y!

Me: I love you.

Her: What? What are you doing here!?! I'm in the middle of a job interview!

Me: I know. I'm sorry but I don't care. I love you. (← Selfish)

Her: Wait outside. I'll be right out.

So I went outside and paced. She came out and to say she was pissed would be a slight understatement. But I didn't care. (← Selfish)

We stood out there, in front of The Body Shop in the mall and I said the following:

Me: I'm sorry I couldn't wait till tonight. I had to come tell you that I love you.

Her: I know you do.

Me: No, you don't. I love the way you do blah blah blah. I love when you say yadda yadda. I love that you do XYZ when you're sad. I love the...etc..

(sound familiar yet?)

Me: and I think we should get married.

Yup...right there...on the 3rd floor of the mall outside of The Body Shop...I proposed.

Her: What?

Me: I think we should get married. I love you so much that I want to marry you and when you have the realization that you want to spend the rest of your life with someone, you don't want to wait any more.

That's right peeps...I busted out the end sequence to When Harry Met Sally. Pathetic. But in my mind, at that moment...it was going to work. And I didn't even think two things about it. I wasn't bullshitting her. I didn't say the lines word for word. I truly meant every word and it had worked in a movie so it had to work for me. I mean that's what women want, right? The hero in the movie to realize they're flawed, grow the fuck up and admit they can't live without them? That's all it takes.

I was simply using a device that I saw work before. It made sense in my head and I never once thought how she would see it. Which I later found out she thought it was desperation. Obviously she was right.

Although, funny part is...she never got that it was When Harry Met Sally.

One of the worst relationships I had, I fell into because it started like a movie right off the bat. I mean fate fucking colliding! It was weird because we had these crazy ties that we didn't know about and had been at the same events but never ran into each other and was even working on the same film but hadn't met yet because we were in different departments.

After the first date I WAS SOLD! I ripped up the little black book. I told the other girls I had gone on dates with goodbye. I even told one of my professors that "I'm pretty sure I found 'the one.'"

And this was in grad school when I was 26. It was a movie romance.

Oh wait...but we're not characters. We're real people. With real problems.

She ended up being way up into religion and was only "letting loose" and being cool cause she was 2000 miles away from home and away from mommy and daddy. As soon as she was home...COMPLETE 180. The fantasy was done. We never made it into the second act.

The fact of the matter is this. Women don't want a man-child. There is no Hollywood ending. We're not living a movie as much as sometimes we all wish we were.

Life is a fucked up road and as I get older the realization that many women have already realized is that there are no happy endings. What I see on the big screen and what I've tried to write, doesn't exist.

Romance isn't about flowers or grand gestures or riding in on a white steed. Romance is about being part of a team. Being partners with someone that you put before yourself. It's about stepping in and helping lift the heavy stuff life throws on you every fucking day.

Mortgages. Car payments. Taxes. School. Work. Cancer. Death. (just to name the basics)

If you're lucky enough to have a partner... do your part. We might want to act out that suave shit-eating grin, and we might even be able to pull it off, but at the end of the day nothing is more Hollywood romance than just helping with the heavy stuff.

Maybe I should write that movie. Boy meets girl. Boy gets girl. Boy keeps girl cause he does right by her.

Yeah. You're probably right. Won't work. No drama there. Imagine that.

Till next week...