

Last week I started a series on the kinds of writers that you don't want to be at a pitchfest. Well, I didn't even scratch the surface. So shall we continue?

And the list goes on:

THE LIFERS

Lifers are an interesting breed. Lifers go to EVERYTHING!

I mean everything.

They actually have a reputation. As executives, we all know them. They go to every pitchfest. Every conference. Every function.

Every year they spend so much money on airfare and conference fees that you have to sit back and wonder just how do they make their money?

This shit isn't cheap people. You can upwards into the 300's for a conference. How are they doing it?

So why don't you want to be a lifer?

Cause, secretly, you're kind of a joke. Yes, just like high school, we all talk about you behind your back.

We (the executive) all know you. You're always around.

Now, I've ALWAYS been very blunt in my columns. This time? I'm going to let you get there on your own without pointing out the problems.

You're a "lifer" and everyone knows you, but you've never sold a script or got anyone interested in your shit.

So what does that tell you?

Okay, I said I was going to let you get there by yourself, but alas, I can't remain silent.

STOP PITCHING!

Or, at the very minimum, take a break.

When a lifer sits down at my table, I already know them. I may have not met them, but I know them.

You know the one that I know about them before they ever sit down?

The people that I know and trust, that have heard pitches from them before, didn't buy.

So why would I?

They passed. I'm going to pass.

End of story.

It sucks, I know, but when you go into a pitchfest, you don't want ANY negativity when you sit at that table. You don't want to start in a hole and have to dig yourself out.

Lifers ALWAYS start in a hole.

Speaking of holes, that brings me to the next kind of writer...

THE "I'LL WORK WITH YOU" WRITER

These type of writers have no faith in their project.

They think if they're "flexable," you'll want to work with them.

These writers are the most perplexing. They will sit down and say, "I have a drama.... But it could TOTALLY be a comedy if you want it to be!"

You know what I say to you?

Fuck you.

I want a writer that sits down and is passionate about the script that, hopefully, they spent a great deal of time on. When they tell me that I can change anything in their script, it clues me in on a couple of things.

- 1) They're not sure about the script that they wrote.
- 2) They are only in it for the, to quote Indiana Jones, the "fortune and glory."

They have no respect for the process.

I sit down at that table and want a writer to wow me. End of story.

When they sit down and immediately compromise they're script, I automatically shut off. I say, "Fuck this writer."

Writers write for one reason and one reason only... they HAVE to.

Writers are Gods. They create the world and the people who are in it.

Would you question your God if they came back and said... "well...maybe..."

NO!

You are the rulers of your universe. Accept the responsibility. Sit down and have faith in your creation. Confidence, like dating, goes a long way.

Whioch brings me to the next "pitcher" you shouldn't be...

THE NERVOUS TYPE

The greatest piece of advice I can give you is the following...

For the next five minutes, you're the expert.

You thought it. You created it. You wrote it.

I have no idea what your idea is, but during those five minutes, I'm the idiot. I'm the guy who has no clue what's up. You're the expert.

Don't be nervous. Be cocky. You're the expert.

I've seen them all.

I've seen them ALL.

One girl sat at my table and was literally SHAKING with fear.

Why?

I don't know your story.

You're a God. Act like it. Be in control. Don't be nervous.

Which brings me to the story of Terry.

Terry sat down at my table and asked me what I was looking for.

STRIKE ONE.

I told him what I was looking for and said that he had "one of those."

He launched into his pitch and had his eyes closed the entire time. At first I thought he was thinking, but then I realized that he had a nervous tick. He couldn't talk about his project and keep ryr contact. He was too nervous.

Now translate that.

Let's say Terry had the idea of a century.

How would I translate that into a writer that I could sell?

How am I going to take him into a studio and have him pitch the idea of a century to the head of the studio?

The head of the studio would that I was a fucktard for bringing such a weirdo to him.

What does that mean to MY credibility?

I would be laughed out of the fucking studio and they would never return my calls.

On the other hand, there's the other kind of writer...

THE "I HAVE MY WAY IN" WRITER

These are the cocky motherfuckers that think that they have an original way into the industry because their story sets them apart from everyone else.

Anecdote time...

I was given an assignment at work one day to contact the winners of the UCLA screenwriting competition. My task was to ask the winners, who made the list, and get their scripts sent to me.

I was then supposed to read them and pass the good ones up the line.

One guy sent me his script with a very nice note attached.

In it he "bragged" that his script was co-written by his five year old.

Are you kidding me?

Look people. Listen closely.

The people who are rewarding your script? They are screenwriters themselves.

When you tell us that your script was co-written by your five year old, all you're doing is shitting on the very people reading your script.

You're basically saying, to people who take this shit seriously and have dedicated their life to this process that...

"It's so easy, that a five year old can do it!"

Do you know what people, who have dedicated their life to this process, think about that?

GO FUCK YOURSELF!

WITH A 12" DILDO!

WITHOUT LUBE!

In fact, stick it in and twist around until you bleed!

Never, EVER, belittle the process.

EVER.

Wanna know the funny thing? It's not even an original tactic.

At the first pitchfest I attended, there was girl at the table next to me that was from ABC family entertainment.

During a down moment, I overheard that a guy had pitched to her a script that was co-written by his 12 year old. Not only that but his visuals (see last week) were drawings that his daughter did of the characters that they had come up with.

In crayon.

I'm not making this up.

Do you know what happened after he left?

We laughed. Heartedly.

We made fun of him.

Is that the impression you want to give? I think not.

Next week, I'll clue you in to another few things that you don't want to do at a pitchfest.

Till then...