

Today is going to be a hodgepodge of stories I've collected over the past week...so bare with me if I don't find any clear segues.

First up, JP. I want to share this email with you because it goes to show just how much I don't pay attention to dipshit loglines. A couple of week's ago I posted a submitted logline that read:

STIFFED: (Buddy action/comedy) - A rookie cop uses an experimental potion to bring back the dead witness that could put his father's killer behind bars. Together, they battle the clock and each other in a night-long darkly comic manhunt through the bowels of New York City.

JP wrote sent this email in response:

Hey Manny,

*I always enjoy your rants, which always make logical sense to me too.
I had to laugh when I read about this pitch you posted in the BOSI Newsletter, Stiffed.*

I agree that besides not fitting with the type of thing you're company would be interested in, I don't know if you also recognized a major flaw with this premise? If the rookie cop has a potion that can bring back a dead witness to put his father's killer behind bars, then why not just use that potion to bring back his dead father instead of the witness?

What a tool!!

This cracked me the fuck up, cause I didn't even think about that...cause you know, I just kinda went on livin'.

But now that JP sorta forced me to actually think about this, I came up with two things. First of all, he would HAVE to explain why he didn't wake the father. If he did, you know he did it in a throw away line like:

"Too bad I can't just wake my dad, cause of the such and such."

Which would, as it should, piss every single one of us off for using such a blatant writer's cheat.

Second, if he DIDN'T explain why he couldn't wake the dad, (which would have to happen early...like page 30-ish) then we'd spend the rest of the movie (well over half) asking why he didn't just wake up the dad and play some catch and shit.

BOOM.

You've lost your audience.

Not that you had one to begin with, but you know...why shoot the other foot too?

Here's another funny thing, if I was at the tables and this dude pitched this script and I said "why doesn't he just wake the dad and play some catch and shit?" I guarantee you it would cause him pause, he'd look at me stupid faced and then reply with an "um...cause...he doesn't."

Or something like that.

I know, cause I've seen it.

Moving on!

I was at an industry thing last week and got into a discussion with a couple of colleagues about where the state of movies were going. Actually, more where they're going back to. Anyway, we started talking about you guys. The Writer's. We shared stories, like i keep telling you, about the dumb shit writer's keep telling us.

More specifically about how writer's try and dictate the course of the market.

Twilight hits, we need more vampires. Time to bust out vampire shit.

Mission Impossible films in Dubai, I gotta set my film in Dubai.

I guarantee there's a whole flock of fucktards out there that are turning their fan fiction into "mommy porn" in order to cash in on the 50 Shade of Grey wave.

(AUTHOR'S NOTE: If you don't know ANYTHING about 50 Shades, then not only are you NOT trying to dictate the course of the industry, but you're so far behind you're out completely. When I make fun of you, I use a 30's radio voice and say the phrase: "These talkies are gonna be huge!" Get with it.)

One of my friends in the group said this (I'm paraphrasing.): "They don't know that coming up with this shit is already behind! It's there now and by the time you pitch your project, set it up at a studio, cast, shoot, edit and distribute...it's already gone. Moved to something else!"

And we all agreed.

It's one thing to think smart. It's another to THINK you're thinking smart.

As you know, I'm from Detroit. A few years ago, Michigan started their film tax incentives. Word spread that Michigan was the new New Mexico.

So everyone wrote a Detroit script. I still see them. But guess what? That shit is dried up. Some other state comes up with their incentives that beat your incentives and Hollywood moves on.

The Detroit thing lasted about 3 years. Maybe 4.

You can't pitch a Detroit script in year 3 and think it's gonna last.

I just asked a producer friend of mine, who has several fairly large titles under his belt, what the average was for setting those movies up. From the time the script was required, to the time he stepped on set...his answer?

3-5 years.

And these are movies you've seen and loved.

So if you're pitching Detroit movies, or Vampire movies, or mommy porn...you're already behind the wave.

As a fan, I listen to a lot of Kevin Smith's podcasts and he talks a lot about Wayne Gretzky and how, when he was a kid, his father and coach Walter Gretzky, taught him to "skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it's been."

And that's kinda what you have to do.

And I'll be honest, I have no idea where the puck is gonna be. But I do know one thing, when I sit down and write, I don't write something that's out there and popular now. I write things that I like. That my friends like.

I'm my biggest audience.

And given the fact that I love movies and I'm hyper fucking critical of EVERYTHING, all I have to do is satisfy the inner child in me.

Would I, as a kid, watch this shit and say to myself "I want to be in movies when I grow up?"

If I write something...that makes the kid inside of me want to grow up and be me...then I've stayed true to myself.

That's all that matters. Because I know, people who love movies as much as I do, will connect with that shit too. They'll be on the edge of their seat, excited to see it too.

And if they don't? Fuck 'em. They just don't get it. Which is totally fine. Someone else will.

There's always going to be cycles and waves. Vampires have their time, then werewolves, then witches, then zombies...it all comes back fucking around. Sometimes you just have to play the waiting game. And when you see YOUR creature coming back around...be ready. Polish it up. Update it for the time and get ready to jump on the train.

Then...find someone that gets it and touch their inner child. (Yup. Know exactly how that sounds.)

Till next week...