

Some days I just need to be punished



Written by bubba



Ah yes...the days when the self-loathing runs deep. I question my work ethic, curse myself for missing my 500 word daily writing quota and find 20 things to follow up on that I never cared about until my subconscious grabbed the wheel, hit the gas and started steering me down the path of most resistance. And I know when I do this. I'm aware. I'm doing it now as a matter of fact. And despite being aware, instead of buckling down and churning out product, I *prepare* myself to work. Here's what that consists of: turning on the tv, connecting to the internet and plugging my headphones into aol radio. Then I sit and wonder why nothing creative rains from my head to my fingers, assembling into letters then sentences, words then brilliance. And *then*...I get negative. I get down on myself, saying I know better, *why won't I do better? Because soon I'll tap into "it"* I tell myself... "It" being the time I wrote The Ring at one sitting in a 5

by 7 upstairs office that shared a bathroom with a bar in Santa Fe – straight to finish, all night, no editing. Then I think about when I wrote The Exchange, sitting in a vacant house in San Francisco during a very wet winter. I remember writing Free Tommy Fallen, my first full-length script, and how cathartic it felt to write something that was loosely about my life and my friends. I use memories like that to rationalize my inertia, wanting to believe that if I just wait long enough, another creative spark will ignite under my ass and then I'll be a writer...because then I'll have 'it'.

It's a struggle I have with my process and it runs deep. The sweet taste of true inspiration is so exquisite that sometimes I don't think anything I produce outside of those rare, sparking moments is worthy of a second read, so why torture myself? Why push it? During the day I can usually avoid the fight, shoving real work (i.e. employment) to the forefront of my day and believing my duties as a provider and partner are reason enough to put what is currently and undesirably a hobby on the back burner for a few more hours. Night time is a little harder because my subconscious is more worthy an adversary. If I'm tired enough, I can just fall asleep.



Then again, I've ruined two computers by peeing on them in my sleep. Two.

So how do I activate myself? Knowing something needs to change is one thing. Making that change happen? Something completely different. It's not enough to remind myself that I barely have enough time in a day to write. It's not enough to remind myself that my most recent treatment (23 pages) took me months to get it where I wanted. No, sometimes I need just a little bit more. Some days I know I need to be disciplined. That's when I decide to take a little jaunt to www.scriptsales.com and marvel at the amounts of money paid for scripts with premises so horrible that I wouldn't even let my friends read them...if I wrote them. But I wouldn't.

Here's a glance at some of the gems that sold in the last 4 weeks:

Title: Cockblockers

Log line: A new couple has but one problem, the woman's ex-boyfriend keeps blocking the advances of her new beau.

Buyer: Paramount Pictures

Price: \$1.2 million against \$1.8 million

Title: Chasing Dinner

Log line: In a small town, the residents' lives are turned upside down when three pigs escape being butchered to become "hams on the lam," spurring a media circus during the holiday season.

Buyer: Yari Film Group

Price: n/a

Title: Killing on Carnival Row

Log line: Set in the future in a town called Burgue, the citizens, which include both humans and other creatures, are being targeted by a serial killer.

Buyer: New Line Cinema

Price: Mid-six figures

Title: Venus Kincaid

Log Line: A female African American government agent finds herself shrunken down to a teenage girl but retaining all of her special sleuthing skills.

Buyer: Fox 2000

Price: n/a

Title: Big Stan

Log line: A wimpy con man panics when he learns he's going to prison for fraud. He hires a mysterious martial arts guru who transforms him into a kung fu expert who can fight off inmates who want to hurt him -- and love him.

Buyer: Crystal Sky Pictures and Silver Nitrate Pictures

Price: n/a

Title: Perfect Pet

Log line: A divorced genetic engineer designs the "perfect pet" to impress his kids, but finds his creation soon goes awry.

Buyer: New Line Cinema

Price: n/a

Sigh. Now the real question – what do I do about it? Draw a line in the sand, protest against selling out and say THAT'S the reason I'll choose to not pursue the Hollywood machine? I write to write, not to sell. Never until recently have I become interested in the idea of changing careers and pursuing the one career that I feel is most central to who I am as a person. Am I good enough? I don't know. Are the people who wrote these scripts? Apparently. What to do, what to do... I really do long for the surge of creativity that allows inspiration and motivation to coexist in the thin space between my two ears. Where is it? Sigh... *Get back to work*, that's what I do. It's what I'm going to do now.



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