

Every Grain

A Screenplay

Jesper Degerman

FMPM06

Master's thesis in Film & Media

Producing

Spring 2012

Centre for Languages and Literature

Lund University

Supervisor: Olof Hedling

Abstract

This is not a traditional thesis in any sense and certainly not by the actual definition and proper meaning of the word in itself. I have instead chosen to produce a creative work in relation to the field of studies. This Master's work consists of a screenplay with additional supporting texts connected to that screenplay, a logline, a premise, and a synopsis. The logline is intended to describe the boiled down plot of the story told in the screenplay in, basically, an as short a manner as possible or which the words will allow. The premise lays out the thematic background for the story, the intentions of the writer, and the underlying questions being raised, in a way it represents the hypothetical animating force of the story. The synopsis summarizes the story with the beginning, middle and end, to give the reader an idea of what s/he will find in the full screenplay, in a way functioning as a teaser in that if the synopsis doesn't seem interesting or intriguing enough, then why read over a hundred pages of the complete story, or vice versa, enticing the reader enough to jump straight at it, hopefully the latter. And finally the main body of the work is the screenplay. And it is a full feature length screenplay formatted and adapted as closely as possible to adhere to the generally accepted approximation rule of one page equalling one minute of screen time; with an extra emphasis on the word approximation.

The intentions with the work was to produce a screenplay that would be commercially viable, yet stick out enough to get noticed and not disappear in the mix as yet another "good but not particularly interesting tale", as well as creating something rather different and unique in the way of tone, mood, pace and imagery. At the same time I wanted to try to keep the page count down as much as possible and in that aspect I believe I've succeeded. And I wanted to create a story, and tell that story, in a way that would take production budget restraints into certain consideration. It should be possible to produce the story with a relatively low budget if that would end up being the case, and in this way making sure that whatever money is spent is not spent on unnecessarily extravagant special effects, and so on and so forth, but instead on getting the best possible crew together to realize the story with an emphasis on quality in every detail.

The script is written in the English language, partly because it's a requirement of the actual thesis, naturally, but also because I want this story to eventually be produced in the same language. The reason being that the reality of it is that English language films tend to

reach far larger and wider spread audiences and I think this is very important. An unfortunate truth perhaps but understandable. The delusional underlying aspiration being that, in this manner, if *Every Grain* ends up being produced, it could then easier reach some level of successful distribution. Pushing the odds. Because why not?

The story is a tragic one, told with plenty of dark comedy elements, and a touch of crazy. It is a character focused or based drama influenced by surrealist ideas and magical realism.

Logline

A depressed therapist, dealing with the death of his wife, ends up indirectly and unknowingly catching his wife's killer when falling in love with the murderer's girlfriend, who has just moved in next door, and suspecting her of stealing his coffee, which leads him to finally overcome a subconscious obstacle, that's been haunting him for so long, and move on with his life.

Premise

Every Grain is about relationships, angst and frustration, and about a man dealing with the fragility of the human condition, and the fear of nothingness, realized by the unexpected death of his wife. And the answer, to the unstated question, is that there is no solution, but that we all simply have to deal with it.

Synopsis

The protagonist David Angler is a fifty-five year old occupational therapist who still has trouble dealing with the unexpected death of his wife six years ago. He has dwelt so deeply on his wife's death that it has affected most everything in his life. His relation to his two children, his job, his patients getting fewer and fewer, referrals getting sparse, and he has alienated his old colleague and best friend. He drinks. And he has developed a rather unhealthy need to keep record of his coffee especially, though he keeps telling himself, justifying it with, that it is all part of an unspecified research project. He has gotten stuck in a bad rut. He leads an unhealthy and unhappy life. Each new day coping is a small victory. But he's about to push himself off the edge.

A new neighbour moves in next door, Julia Cichlid, together with her daughter Clarissa. With them comes Julia's new boyfriend who stays more with them than at his own place. The boyfriend is Martin Gourami, who, six years ago took part in a failed robbery attempt in which he accidentally ended up shooting an innocent woman. This woman was Galina Angler, David's wife. Martin and his associates were never caught. But then, events involving two of David's patients, one who has been coming to him for a long time, Hana Whiptail, and one who has his very first appointment, Simon Cobbler, both of whom are seeking therapeutic help independently of each other, though they are in fact engaged to be married; and Martin who is secretly cheating on Julia with Hana, leads to David suspecting the new neighbour of stealing his coffee, and he decides to investigate.

David breaks into Julia's flat, encounters Martin, who thinks David is there to seek revenge for the woman he killed, after a news article about a possible new lead, via an anonymous tip, in the matter having forced the memories back to Martin's conscious. David, not knowing that he has planted the seed for a growing guilt-ridden paranoia in his wife's murderer, flees the scene, but not after helplessly falling in love with Julia. Eventually Martin cannot cope with the guilt building on him anymore and he tells the story to Julia. And Julia cannot live with what Martin has told her and informs the police who soon enough arrests Martin. The anonymous tip however is proved to lead nowhere. David later finds out about Martin and can finally begin his journey back to a healthy way of living.

PLEASE NOTE: A screenplay of 115 pages was created as part of this thesis work. This was the main body of the work. The full screenplay may be available upon request *directly* from the author. (jesper.degerman@gmail.com).