

Cheeky Monkey Pictures

TITLE:

AUTHOR: SUB TO: Cheeky Monkey Pictures

FORM: Script SUB BY: Sanders/Long

PAGES: 104 ANALYST: Chris E. Gepp

GENRE: Romantic-Comedy PERIOD: Present

LOCALE: Northeastern U.S. DATE: 04/21/16

LOG LINE: An aging, insecure supermodel after an unfortunate accident is no longer recognizable as herself and must endure great hardship in order to get her old life back again, assuming she still wants it.

RECOMMENDATION: Recommendation/**Pass** WRITER: Recommend/**Pass**

BRIEF: Random, unmotivated scenes erode audience confidence in the overall story and engagement with characters.

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
Concept:				X
Story Line:				X
Characters:				X
Dialogue:				X

SYNOPSIS

ISABELLA an "aging" 27-year-old supermodel on the eve of a lucrative perfume commercial deal with prominent designer JASPER drinks too heavily one night and injures herself while celebrating, encouraged by her teenage rival, CHLOE. The next day Isabella, much worse for wear, chases her model boyfriend ANTONIO outside her home who now seems to be turned off by her. She manages to lock herself out.

As Isabella desperately tries to break back in, two POLICEMEN, RODRIGUEZ and JOHNSON, catch her in the act, not recognizing her as famous thanks to her injuries and her lack of makeup. Instead, they take Isabella for a stalker and attempt to arrest her.

Isabella escapes and races to the shoot on her own, with the cops hot on her tail. On the subway she meets SAM, an unfashion-conscious, normal guy who doesn't recognize her as anyone famous either.

When Isabella's entourage, concerned by not having heard from her, arrives to pick Isabella up for the shoot, they run into the two cops. The cop decide to break into Isabella's house, and they discover evidence that leads them to believe that the stalker from earlier must be involved in Isabella's disappearance. Once Jasper learns Isabella has gone missing, he informs Isabella's entourage that she must be on set by noon or her contract will be voided.

Meanwhile, Isabella during her journey keeps running into Sam and learns that he is headed to the same place she is. In the process She narrowly avoids being caught by the two cops, mostly aided by their bumbling behavior. And even though Isabella is not very pleasant to Sam, she is penniless and becomes dependent on him. He takes pity on her, though, and consents to buying her a bus ticket for the last leg of her journey. This is a deal with the devil, though. From this point on, the two are subjected to one hardship after another: stranded along the highway, shot at, and nearly bitten by a snake before they finally stumble within sight of Jasper's mansion.

Just as Isabella is hiring a cab, she runs into Chloe again, having inadvertently snuck into Chloe's mansion to use the phone. Chloe calls the police, and there is a showdown between Isabella, Chloe, and the two cops. Isabella escapes the cops and bests Chloe, though, and manages to arrive on set a minute shy of the deadline.

Sam finally learns that Isabella is really Isabella, but leaves feeling out of place in her world. Isabella's entourage restores Isabella's model exterior and Isabella is put in front of the cameras -- but she is unable to proceed with the shoot. Her experience with Sam has changed her back to her old self: a geeky oceanographer wannabe. She leaves to go find Sam, leaving Jasper scrambling to find another model.

Sam is at first unwilling to take Isabella back, but caves after Isabella proves her love to him. Isabella goes on to sail the open seas with a research team -- sans makeup.

COMMENTS

When Isabella is introduced, she seems like a very typical supermodel: self-absorbed, excessively pampered, and shallow. The only sense of a deeper core to her is an awkward quality that comes across through bad jokes she makes. (This quality seems to perhaps be here to prepare us for the flashback very late in the story in which she remembers her life before she became "Isabella.") Initially, though, the qualities we are presented with do not really make for a very sympathetic character, and in that way it is hard for us to engage with Isabella as the story progresses.

Without earning our engagement at the beginning, the story then fails to provide organic situations that might help create sympathy for the character by testing her and bringing out other qualities. To be sure, there are plenty of tests placed upon this character and she responds in surprising and sometimes funny ways, but these occurrences seem more like the universe punishing her (perhaps for being a model) than happening organically through her motivation as a character.

The many hardships that Isabella experiences along the way seem driven by the need to get Isabella to act and do things, rather than springing from her own motivation. A case in point are the two bumbling cops who at the beginning mistake Isabella for a stalker because they don't recognize Isabella without makeup. Their reason for being outside Isabella's home at dawn at just the moment when she is about to break in is not explained. (A potential motivation for the cops being there might have been how obsessed they are with her, but this is not brought out until later in the script.)

By having so many random scenes the characters here are often forced into not being as intelligent; they are rendered as chess pieces rather than as autonomous beings. For example, late in the script Isabella and Sam, up against the clock in terms of making it to the commercial shoot on time, randomly gain access to a mansion. Ignoring the ease with which this occurs for these two characters, we eventually learn that this mansion belongs to no one other than Chloe, Isabella's teenage rival we meet at the beginning. We then learn that Chloe lives a mere mile from Jasper's mansion, the location that Isabella has been trying to reach the entire movie and where we also know Chloe wants to be. Yet, Chloe did not know that the shoot was happening. It seems implausible that if Chloe were motivated enough to try to bring down Isabella, she must certainly know exactly when a shoot is happening a mere mile away. Instead this choice of this scene seems calculated to have Isabella and Chloe in one final showdown, as has been promised from the beginning.

While experiencing hardships is certainly implied in this type of story, the unfortunate precedent set here is that Isabella's complications stem from the universe itself, rather than being motivated by Isabella's character. Randomness erodes the audience's overall engagement because it overshadows the characters' active participation in the story, who form that essential bond between the audience and the story. We can only focus on the seams of the story and how we are being manipulated into accepting what we are watching. The story experience can only suffer from there.