FRANKENScribe

by

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EXT. BEVERLY HILLS - STREET -- DAY

A silver Volvo parks along the curb. RUFUS FRANKEN gets out, 30s, film snob with a Goth T-shirt and receding hair.

Hands in his pockets, he trots across the lawn of a beautiful brick house. Unlocks a side gate that leads to the BACKYARD.

Rufus approaches a jacuzzi. Inside, puffing on a cigar, is WALLY JACOBS, 40s, if asshole were a religion he'd be Pope.

Wally looks askance at Rufus as he sips a scorpion bowl.

WALLY
There he is... my favoritest, grumpiest screenwriter friend.

RUFUS
And good afternoon to you, Wally. You wouldn't have an extra one of those lying around, would you?

WALLY
Wouldn't I? Over on the table, along with your script. Snag it.

Rufus grabs his script and drink, sits at a nearby table.

RUFUS
So what'd you think?

WALLY
Have a look for yourself.

Rufus flips through the feature-length screenplay. Edits in RED riddle every page.

RUFUS
What the...? Holy Hell... is there anything you liked about it?

WALLY
Are you kidding? It's fabulous.

Rufus is befuddled.

WALLY
Except for one thing. Your monster. Not scary enough, Pal.

RUFUS
You don't think so?
WALLY
I know so. I been doing this for twenty years. Trust me.

He puffs a smoke ring Rufus' way.

WALLY
My grandmother's scarier when her Bundt cake comes out wrong.

RUFUS
So you didn't pitch it to Tom yet?

WALLY
Did you really want me to pitch shit?

RUFUS
I thought you said you liked it.

WALLY
I do like it. But a monster movie without a scary monster? Come on, now. You'd be better off writing a coming-of-age story about a hundred-year-old virgin. I need you to tweak it a bit. Give him brontosaurus balls or something. I don't really care. Then I'll go talk to Tom.

Rufus rifles through the remainder of the script. The red doesn't stop. Turns the script over. More red.

He drops the script onto his lap and downs his scorpion bowl. Wally proudly blows another smoke ring into the atmosphere.

INT. VOLVO -- DAY

Rufus screeches away from Wally's house. The script on the passenger seat beside him.

RUFUS
Asshole.

He flips on the radio as he barrels down the road. Nothing. He PUNCHES the dashboard and the radio blares to life.

INT. RUFUS' APARTMENT - OFFICE -- NIGHT

Rufus slouches at his desk. His laptop glows blue in the dim light.

The script lies open beside the keyboard. Rufus reads Wally's note.
RUFUS
"Make your monster terrifying."
Yeah, like you wouldn't be pissing
yourself if a green scaly beast gnawed
a hole in your ass...

He scowls as he reads from the computer screen.

RUFUS
The monster lunges through the screen
and into the front row of the theater.

He looks down again at the hard copy. A flurry of typing.

RUFUS (V.O.)
The monster -- terrifyingly huge,
dripping in RED INK... YES! Its
jagged teeth clicking in anticipation
of its next meal.

As Rufus continues to type, mumbling to himself and paging
through the script, a shadow grows behind him.

At first formless, it solidifies as Rufus types faster.

RUFUS
...claws like razors...
(backspaces)
...scimitar claws...

The shadow has now assumed the shape and size of the MONSTER
Rufus describes. Oozing red, jagged teeth, scimitar claws.

It drops one lethal-looking hand onto Rufus' shoulder. Rufus
stiffens into stone.

MONSTER
Scooch over, will ya?

Rufus turns. SCREAMS! Scrambles to his feet, makes for the
doors.

MONSTER
Where ya goin'?

Rufus stops, looks perplexedly at the Monster.

MONSTER
We're not done yet. Let's show that
jackass agent o' yours what Rufus
Franken is made of. Scare the shit
out of 'im.

Rufus gapes at the Monster, still poised for flight.

RUFUS
What's that?
MONSTER
Come on. Let's bang this sucker out tonight, so Wally can pitch it to Tom tomorrow. You know he's got the attention span of a three-year-old.

RUFUS
You're gonna help me?

MONSTER
You created me. It's the least I can do. Plus, I wanna make it to the big screen. Get my shot at the multiplex. My own action figure. Starring role in little Nancy's nightmares. The whole enchilada.

RUFUS
And you're not gonna... hurt me. I'm not sure I buy that.

MONSTER
Rufus... now why would I do that? I wouldn't even be here if it wasn't for you. Besides,
   (flashes claws)
I'm not exactly a world-class typist. We make a great team, don't you think?

Rufus sidles back toward his computer.

RUFUS
So... what should I call you?
Monster?

MONSTER
My friends call me Red.
   (glances down)
Sorry about the stain.

A pool of red ink forms a circle around Red.

MONSTER
Hey, you sell this thing, and I think you'll be able to buy yourself a new carpet.

He smiles, Rufus steps back a pace when he gets a load of Red's jagged teeth.

MONSTER
Sorry. I don't exactly have an arresting smile.
   (lowers his head)
RUFUS
It's okay. I've got a bean bag chair in the other room you can use.

MONSTER
Then what are we waiting for?
Parallel development? Let's get cracking!

Rufus skedaddles. He's back in a jiffy with the bean bag chair. Sets it down next to his ergonomic one.

Red doesn't waste any time making himself cozy.

MONSTER
So let's see what you got here.

He takes hold of the mouse, rolls back a few pages and reads.

MONSTER
Okay, so we got this big-ugly-ass red monster. Yours truly. I come out of the silver screen and devour the first row of moviegoers. Right?

RUFUS
Right.

MONSTER
Why?

RUFUS
Why what?

MONSTER
Why am I eating the nice people that make up the front row?

RUFUS
Whaddya mean? Because it's horror.

MONSTER
Rufus, Rufus, Rufus...

He shakes his head. Poor, naive, fledgling screenwriter.

MONSTER
Don't hide behind the genre. Invent it. Re-invent it. Create, my friend! That's what separates the elite from the hacks.

RUFUS
So what are you saying?
MONSTER
Give the monster a motive. He goes after the front row because he's got a quick getaway back through the screen. Yeah, I can see that. But why kill them in the first place?

RUFUS
Maybe... they snuck in without paying?

MONSTER
There ya go. See! That works. What could be scarier than a beast covered in red ink who knows the bottom line?

Rufus nods as he types away like mad on the laptop. A twinkle in his eye, a little grin.

RUFUS
Thanks, Red.

Red leans back in his chair, cradles his head in his hands.

MONSTER
Now we need to talk a little bit about your character arcs. But, think we can order a pizza first?

RUFUS
(picks up phone)
You like mushroom?
(off Red's look)
Right. Meatlover's special.

LATER

Rufus polishes off a crust, claps his hands clean. He turns, watches in awe as Red devours a large pizza whole.

MONSTER
(wipes his mouth)
I think it's time we made me scarier.

RUFUS
If you say so.

MONSTER
I mean, I like the red. I like the scimitars and the jagged teeth. But I still don't think it's enough. We need something fresh and entertaining.

RUFUS
(typing rapidly)
How about, we give you spikes on your thighs and biceps?
MONSTER
Uh huh.

Spikes spring from Red's arms and legs.

MONSTER
Poison?

RUFUS
Sure, poison is good.

Green venom drips down from the spikes.

MONSTER
You know what? I think we might have something here.

Rufus gets caught up in the moment, high-fives Red. He cuts himself on a scimitar claw.

RUFUS
Ow! SHIT.

He waves his hand in pain, sucks on his pinky finger.

RUFUS
So. You like it?

Red is too bedazzled by the blood to respond.

RUFUS
Red!

MONSTER
Oh. Hey. What's up?

RUFUS
Should we print this sucker out?

MONSTER
Oh yeah sure.

MOMENTS LATER

Script is printed. Rufus hands Red a brass brad.

RUFUS
Here, help me with this.

They bind the script together. Rufus smiles at his completed work. He looks up to find Red staring at him.

RUFUS
What?

MONSTER
Nothing, nothing.
RUFUS
Am I forgetting something? Think I should use three brads? If I'm missing something, you can tell me. We're in this together, right?

MONSTER
Do you have an envelope big enough to stuff this in?

RUFUS
I dunno, I need to check.

He searches the bookcase for an envelope. His back to Red, the Monster begins to drool red ink. It pitter-patters on the carpet.

MONSTER
You're a bona fide writer, aren't you.

RUFUS
I'd like to think so.
(snags an envelope)

As he turns around, Red takes hold of his right hand. He inspects the inside of Rufus' middle finger.

MONSTER
That's some callus you got there.

Almost casually, he BITES RUFUS' FINGER OFF.

RUFUS
AAAAAaaaaaaaaaaaaaa! What the FUCK...?!

He clutches his hand, blood gushes out.

MONSTER
Sorry 'bout that.

Red crunches down on the finger, swallows it.

MONSTER
(disheartened)
Nobody makes meatlover's like they used to. Lemme see your hand.

He takes Rufus by the wrist, gazes at the wound, then BITES his hand off! Rufus SHRIEKS, collapses to the floor.

RUFUS
(writhing)
Why are you doing this?! I made you. From scratch! Why, WHY?!
MONSTER
You write horror. How did you think
this was gonna end?

Red crouches down and takes Rufus' head for dessert.

INT. RUFUS' APARTMENT - OFFICE -- DAY

Daylight seeps through the blinds. Red sits at the computer
with a toothpick. The final draft rests on the desk.

ON THE COMPUTER

The Writers' Guild website.

Red types in the name of the script:

THE PROJECTIONIST

He ponders, backspaces. Instead types:

RED, THE MAGNIFICENT

MONSTER
Now we're talkin'.

He slices open Rufus' wallet with a claw. Hunts 'n pecks
his credit card number, and his Social Security number off
of his driver's license.

Satisfied, Red picks up the script. Grabs the car keys from
a hook on the wall and bounds away.

INT. VOLVO -- DAY

Red zips down the street. Flicks on the radio. No response.

He BANGS the dashboard with his fist. MUSIC plays. He
settles on a Classical station.

Red passes a group of CHILDREN in Halloween costumes on the
sidewalk. One dressed up as FRANKENSTEIN waves at him.

FRANKENSTEIN
Cool costume, Rufus!

MONSTER
(waves back)
Thanks!

He taps his claws on the steering wheel.

EXT. BEVERLY HILLS - STREET -- DAY

Red pulls up in front of Wally's house.

He strides up the front walk and rings the bell.
WALLY (O.S.)
Who is it?

MONSTER
(brandishes script)
Special Delivery.

Wally opens the door. Red stands with his arms outstretched.

MONSTER
Scary enough for ya?

WALLY
Now that's what I'm talking about!
Come on in...

Red follows Wally inside.

WALLY (O.S.)
Don't forget to wipe your feet.

Red smiles as he wipes his feet, shuts the door.

THE END