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DICE FILMS

TITLE: Change of Heart

Type of Material: Screenplay

Number of pages: 120

Publisher/Date: Stonebridge Entertainment, Koala Productions

Number of scenes: 138

Author: Holly Goldberg Sloan

Submitted by: -

Circa: 1990s

Submitted to: -

Location: Berkeley, California

Analyst: Zeynep Pinar Ucar

Drama Category: Drama

Date: -

Elements: -

The Film: Young woman, Rachel Mathews, learns a truth about herself and suddenly she finds herself in an artificial type of family, consisting people who are genuinely hoping to be a part of a family.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Premise			X	
Characterizations				X
Dialogue				X
Story Line				X

RECOMMENDATION: PASS

SYNOPSIS 'CHANGE OF HEART'

It is time for a groundbreaking change for both RACHEL MATHEWS (17) and her mother, her only parent, SARAH MATHEWS who is in her forties. Rachel finds out something is wrong as she is doing her science project because her mom's blood type is an A, her late father's blood type is an AB negative and she is a O type, which is scientifically impossible, so, she starts to look for her real father when her mother, Sarah tells her the truth. The truth, that she was artificially inseminated.

After the death of her husband whom she loved deeply, Sarah decided that she wanted a baby, so, she went to a sperm bank and got her self a baby however, hasn't thought that this day would come. Now that Rachael knows all the truth about herself and she is frustrated with her mother for lying her about her father for all this time, just because she thought Charlie, her late husband, should've been the real father anyways. After finding out that his real father is alive, Rachael starts to look for him with JOSH's help. They first, look for the phone numbers of the sperm banks around and go to the first one they find. Rachael sneaks into the doctor's office by making Josh, who is very embarrassed donates some sperms. The doctor tells her he can't share any information about donors but she tricks her way down to get an access for the data they have been keeping and finds her father's name and information. Then together with Josh, they go to the Department of Mechanical Vehicles office to find out her father's current information like his address and number by pretending like they've been in an accident together. Her father, HALBERT JACKSON who is in his fifties is living with a girl called STACY, 25, and selling Chevy trucks with good deals. Hal is, however, not really satisfied with the life he is living.

Rachael goes down to his garage and Hal, the jerk from TV commercials, who is now flirting with her a little, makes her get into his truck which only has cigarettes, a cowboy hat and handcuffs in it. Hal is now late to the shoot for his new commercial with a bear as Rachael keeps following him around to confront him. She finally screams him that she is his daughter when he tries to get rid of him in his busy schedule. They have a big fight when this caught Hal unguarded and he ends up telling her he has nothing to offer for her than a good deal on a truck. Rachael rushes down to home and tries to appreciate her mother Sarah the next day by making her a nice dinner. Sarah gets shocked by this gesture and Rachael ends up telling her what happened with her father the other day. Meanwhile Hal tries to soak this huge piece of new information in at the house he lives in with his young girlfriend Stacy, who doesn't really care about what's going on in his life. Rachael ends up again at Hal's office when Josh gets very excited about a possible deal on a truck.

Sarah closes up her bookstore, THE BOOKWORM, early to drive her bicycle down to Hal's office to confront him. As he was dealing with a work crisis about Toyota, going for a huge sale, Sarah arrives. As she gets angry at Hal, Rachael walks on them and their weird family alike chemistry starts. Sarah is proud of Rachael who is very smart and Hal is impressed with his potential daughter, also, he makes Sarah drink hard liquor, which isn't a usual behavior of her. Josh races in front of them in a truck as they say their

goodbyes to each other, very drunk Sarah starts to ride her bicycle, Hal starts to follow her. He pulls her over after witnessing her terrible driving skills and gets her and her bike inside of his trunk. He drops her off to work, they start to grow a bond, bond he doesn't have with Stacy. Sarah tells that neither her nor Rachael needs him Hal steals a picture of her and Rachael on his way out.

Hal starts to question himself and his skills as a potential father as Rachael and Sarah talk about him. Sarah approves the fantasies of Rachael, who is now waiting for an approval from her dad she just met. Hal starts to realize the crooked things in his life like how his girlfriend is too young, how they can't even have a proper conversation and how he has rushed with this. Josh and Rachael start to question the life itself as Josh is now actually thinking about donating his sperms and his affection towards Rachael starts to get more obvious as Rachael only starts to think that his father might need her more than she needs him. She runs into his shooting for his new commercial with an elephant, to tell him she will be there for him, this gets Hal threatened. He feels like he has to validate that he is the adult in that conversation, not her. Rachael meets DIEGO; who is in his early 20s, on her way home, he is her new date. Hal's producer for his new commercial mistakes Stacy as his daughter as Josh also gets irritated when he learns about Rachael's future date.

It's Hal's birthday and nobody remembers it except for his long-term assistant, ALBERTA. Stacy keeps teaching that night not remembering his birthday at all while, Hal goes over to Sarah and Rachael's to find Sarah, who is doing laundry, wearing nothing but sweatpants and a bra, by following Sarah after work. He buys Sarah a helmet and reflectors while he gives Rachael leather bound atlas with a meaningful note in it. They have dinner that night like a real family and have passionate conversations where everyone is intrigued and equally involved, unlike the ones he has with Stacy. As he suddenly remembers that he is late to pick up Stacy, he starts to rush to pick her and randomly thanks them for the best birthday he had in a while.

He finds Stacy and a guy named BRUCE at their house since he was late to pick her up. Stacy goes to a party with Bruce, still not remembering Hal's birthday, Hal realizes they look like Barbie and Ken together. Hal starts to become a nicer person, as he lies to hang out with Sarah and Rachael as Sarah starts to care more about how she looks, he even gets irritated like a real dad when Diego comes to pick Rachael up for their date. They end up going on the date together as a team. Rachael ends up going to Diego's place where she refuses to go too far with him as Sarah and Hal end up having sex. He finds Bruce, again, when he arrives to his home and they break up with Stacy. Rachael opens up about her thoughts of having sex to her mother, Sarah lie her about Hal and her. Sarah goes to Hal's office, irritated about lying to Rachael, tells him they don't need him and he isn't the prince charming. Sarah gets into an accident. They first think it's probably okay but then they find out about the accident and rush into the hospital where they have to make a decision as a family. Sarah gets into a serious surgery that she survives and Hal and Rachael start to take care of her. Meanwhile, Hal learns that Rachael isn't just his daughter, they've been mixing up sperms back then to keep the identities as a secret, this devastates him. He thinks he can't be her father anymore but he just can't help it. He ends up going back to them, to his family.

COMMENTS

Rachael Matthews, finds out everything she knew was a lie. She doesn't know who her father is, doesn't have a traditional type of family, but she is sure to build one for herself. She sneaks into sperm banks, tricks people working at DMV just to find her real father, to have a real family. From this perspective, the story has so much passion and strength in it. However, it is an inevitable fact that this is a very familiar, outdated even, premise and the author goes over it without any ironies or convincing perspectives of underlying issues. Change of Heart as a heartwarming premise, which is unfortunately, also very outdated with the easiest solutions.

Although it might be a real struggle for people to reach out the identities of their real fathers who are the sperm donors, it is not that hard for Rachael which is making the course of events nothing but predictable. Since it is already a very familiar, parent trap alike story, it is important to find new angles to make it outstanding amongst the others and prevent it from becoming predictable. The plot lacks of conflict since everything usually has very simple solutions, although the situation should be very hard in reality for each side, like how Hal immediately accepts Rachael and very easily gets rid of Stacy. There is almost no feeling of urgency, because the ending is obvious from the beginning, the moment the doctor says there is no way to fully identify the donor. The story could've just ended there, everything happening in between doesn't really resemble a highly dramatic point or earth shattering events. It always vaguely mentions anytime something critical happens, like when she first finds out that she is a product of artificial insemination or when Hal first finds out that he has a daughter out of the sudden. The story never reaches it's dramatic climax, since crucial moments are underdeveloped, randomly mentioned and the characters are usually okay with them. There are no obstacles for them, and if there is any, like the character Stacy, who stays as an underdeveloped potential antagonist, they just simply get vanished. There are already too few subplots in the story that are lacking deepness, like Josh's crush on Rachael and what's happening around Hal's work environment.

Since the story doesn't spend enough time with background information, the relationship of Sarah and Rachael before all of this events or Hal's life hasn't been given in the story, it is hard to build a strong relationship with the characters, who don't have any contradictions and act in a formulaic manner. They are all looking for a family and never really surprised with what life has brought them out of a sudden. They are all very nice people with naïve personalities. The characters lack strong arcs since the author always portrays them as nice people, except for Hal, who is slowly leaving his bad habits as he hangs out with Rachael and Sarah, figuring out the crooked parts of his life. The characters have no distinctive voice and they decrease the dramatic feeling of events with their on the nose speeches.

It is truly a heartwarming story that effected many lives before. Change of Heart has a very soft approach against such a complicated story that might've been much more original with heavy dramatic feelings and complex events as opposed to ending exactly where it has started.