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DICE FILMS

TITLE: Come West with Me

Type of Material: Screenplay
Number of pages: 128
Publisher/Date: Craig Bolutin
Number of scenes: 95

Author: Craig Bolutin

Submitted by: -

Circa: 1867

Submitted to: -

Location: Wyoming Territory

Analyst: Zeynep Pinar Ucar

Drama Category: Drama

Date: 6 September 2018

Elements: -

The Film: Young and brave woman, goes to the West with the hopes of empowerment and freedom where she ends up meeting her lifelong best friend, her soul mate.

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

RECOMMENDATION: CONSIDER

SYNOPSIS ‘COME WEST WITH ME’

The story of the ones who wanted nothing but ‘to call themselves beloved, to feel themselves beloved on the earth’. May 14, 1867, Boston, ELIZABETH DORTHEA STANFORD is forced to get married to some stranger she doesn’t know by her family as she reads Chapman’s book ‘Out Where The West Begins’. She gets into a train car and leaves everything behind to go into the unknown, to meet her new future fiancé, WILLIAM CONKLIN CURTIS. She believes that the west is the last frontier where ‘a woman can still flourish and make a name for her self’. She meets EMMA BROWNE, the perfect bride to be during her ride. Emma is a firm believer in her love story with her pen-fiancé whom she has never met as well she has the letters after all whereas only goal of Elizabeth is to shoot a buffalo. Emma and Bess are complete opposites with Bess’s cigarettes and Harper’s Weekly, her beliefs that the women and men should be equals in contrast with Emma’s dreams of her life with her fiancée whom she has never met before and her bible on her white lace dress. They start to talk with each other about their fiancées and slowly bond during this train ride. When the train is attacked by the INDIANS, Bess protects Emma who gets terrified and their bond starts to get stronger. After Emma’s first drink ever served by Bess, they finally manage to get to the Burnt Forks Station where they are going to meet their future husbands, JACK RILEY and Mr. William Curtis.

Deadly handsome Jack, who is still a mess, mistakes Bess with Emma and kisses her as he sees her. Emma gets disappointed with her fiancée because he is nothing but a drunk and he kissed Bess first. Two women start to write each other from their new houses that are thirty miles away from each other. Will gives his ex-wife’s ring to Bess, Jack tells Emma how she was actually going to get married to his late brother, Mike, but he made him promise to take care of her as he passed away. Emma and Bess write to each other about their first nights with these strangers they are now married to in their first letters that are going to get followed by many others in the future. William keeps his distance with Bess while Jack is way easier to approach for Emma. They are in this, together and they understand each other better than anyone. They get married to these men with the help of a MARRYING SQUIRE who mistakes their names and announces Bess’s marriage to Jack instead of Emma’s with four additional couples. The marriage ceremony ends with a picture of them that’ll stay forever. Their first night is unexpected for both of them, Will goes out and leaves Bess alone, Jack fails to get an erection with Emma, which frustrates him. Bess sees Jack kissing another woman who is NOT Emma, as she watches the photographer taking a picture of a CHAYENNE while her marriage to Mr. Curtis remains distant. Bess wants to get on to the Oregon trail to go farther West as her expectations of West stays unsatisfied but Emma tells her she has a family now that she is married and pregnant, she gets frustrated with the other girl and Jack. Bess needs more than Will so she tries to convince the wedding photographer to teach her take photographs of buffalos. Their marriages remain their strangeness with Jack and Emma’s monetarial problems and Bess, who now sold a picture to Harper’s Weekly, and Will’s issues of intimacy while the chemistry between Bess and Jack is still alive. Jack tells Bess about his passion about the dead-end gold mines as they celebrate their first anniversary.

Bess criticizes him now that they are actually expecting a baby, they have a drama when Jack dares Bess to shoot him, Bess doesn't hesitate that much.

Jack leaves town with his axe on his shoulder leaving Emma who is now very pregnant behind, alone. Emma asks Bess to stay with her and when she enters their house she finds Emma as she is in labor, she becomes the mid-wife for her. Will wants a child, Bess doesn't. A CHEYENE BRAVE finds the baby and Emma alone at the house as Jack leaves again, he leaves without hurting them taking nothing but a flour and getting shocked about them being alone. Bess makes fun of Emma and her suppressed desires towards the Cheyene then tells her how she get rid of their child with Will on their next anniversary celebration together where Bess gives Emma a locket with their picture in it. Bess tells Emma about her need to get away from there, Emma gets kidnapped by a Cheyene Brave at the end of the night after a long fight where Will gets wounded. Jack goes to KICKING HORSE to find help to look for Emma leaving Bess and Will behind to take care of LIZZY, the baby. Bess keeps showing the pictures of Emma to the baby and the baby calls her 'aunt' as the time passes. Jack finds the locket that Bess gave Emma as he searches for her amongst all the white dead women. He turns back to home after more than six months with the locket in his hand making everyone think that Emma is dead. Bess keeps staying with them now that the baby needs care and Jack is a mess as they try to repair the house. Bess, Jack and Lizzy, together, start to form a family portrait which gets stronger when Bess and Jack confess their feelings for each other and Bess leaves Will. Kicking Horse comes back with the news that they found a woman after a while, they go to the hospital to see that it is actually Emma, alive. Emma turns back home as a Cheyene who is now being excluded by the society for her tattoos and looks. She is even not being welcomed by her own daughter who now calls Bess, who quickly gets her stuff out of their house and is the only one who is always there for her no matter what, as her mother. Bess wants to end her thing with Jack now that Emma is back but Emma, who now got an offer by ALEX BRYNE to publish a book about her memories with the Cheyenes, finds out about them as she finds Bess's photos at the house, she runs away leaving them behind, Bess goes out to look for her leaving Jack who is now almost willing to let Emma go forever and Lizzy behind.

Emma while Bess finds Emma but she doesn't want to come back now that she has a son there. A The Blues Coats were about to come, the chaos throws the baby into the river. Emma loses the baby in the river as she struggles in her wounded situation, Bess jumps into the river to save the baby. They get dragged into separate ways, Jack gets killed as he looks for them slipping Emma and Bess's locket from his hand. Five years later, Bess keeps taking care of the baby, Adam, as she manages her 'A Wild West Shooting Gallery' in Boston. Bryne leads us to Emma who is talking about the book she has about her memories at an auditorium. Emma finds a picture of Lizzy taken by Bess slipping down from Lizzy's, who now calls her as her mother, book. She goes to see Bess where she meets her son, Adam. Emma asks Bess to come with them to the West to start over and try to make everything work in the 'right way' this time. They all vanish in the darkness, together, in a train that goes to the West.

COMMENTS

Elizabeth Dorteia Stanford runs away from a passionless marriage, straight to another one. Bess is a strong, opinionated young women who believes that women are and should be as powerful as men and both genders should be nothing but the equivalent of each other. However, despite her strong, open-minded beliefs, she ends up doing exactly what she despises which is an enormous strike for the premise that is being intended to explored by the story. *Come West with Me*, has a strong premise with characters who have powerful natures, that is of course the case at times the story doesn't struggle getting lost in between the highly examined melodramatic elements and characters losing their uniqueness.

The author damages the strong premise of the story about female empowerment and not settling down for anything less than real love and passion, by choosing to explore more of the melodramatic events that these two women go through together, rather than their passion to be powerful and free individuals from an original angle. Although this approach feeds the realness of the strength of the bond they have, it is mostly contradicting with the main premise. Therefore the theme that is mainly based on the idea of finding their real selves and empowerment also stays underdeveloped with the shallow approach of the script. After all, even Bess, the strong female figure with fierce passions settles down with Will, a guy she doesn't like and performs her stereotypical duties as a mother, a mid-wife and a housewife for the rest of her life. The story has an uneven pace since the first two acts are way too slow only driven by the dialogue, without any remarkable action, in the frame of typical melodramatic events such as love triangles, forbidden relationships.

The story finally finds it's pace when Emma, who is almost the only character with an obvious arc, gets kidnapped and her transition begins from a close-minded part of the system to a rebel more like Bess, the main character, before she gets more stereotypical, losing her uniqueness and edge. Even then, the stakes are never too high, it is always predictable that Emma will be found at the end and from the moment she gets a book offer, the story pretty much reveals itself. However, the fact that the male characters are never too important or significant for the sake of the course of events, especially how the story ends with them together without anyone, in this female driven story with a very intriguing premise, still keeps serving in favor with the existence of the premise. On the other hand, there are still subplots thrown by the story and stays almost irrelevant such as the love relationship between Bess and Jake, which is only there to underline the fact that no matter what these two women are the only thing that is important to each other, when the author gets too lost in the love story that at some point Emma starts to stay outside of the story and their new form of family becomes more sympathetic. The Indians and their new world also stay poorly explored even though they are a huge part of the story. They are only there to create tension, however, since they are not introduced as strong antagonists, the story can't reach it's potential dramatic climax because there is no actual danger or a ticking bomb since their dangerous side is never clearly stated or shown. The only moment the story reaches the climax, is when Emma gives birth and their bond reaches up to it's peak.

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The hope of empowerment and free future turns out to be a professional nanny while, stereotypical turns into a rebel, while they both end up at the exact same point that they started in their life. The only difference is that they have children with them now. *Come West with Me* is a beautiful female friendship story with a strong premise that stays underdeveloped focusing more on melodramatic perspectives with no real stakes that ends up moving nowhere.