Address

Xiao Li

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.rit.edu/theses

Recommended Citation

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by RIT Scholar Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses by an authorized administrator of RIT Scholar Works. For more information, please contact ritscholarworks@rit.edu.
ADDRESS

by

Xiao Li

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN FILM & ANIMATION
COLLEGE OF IMAGING ARTS AND SCIENCES SCHOOL OF FILM AND ANIMATION
ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK
MAY 2016

_______________________________________
Skip Battaglia (Thesis Chair)
Professor

_______________________________________
Jack Beck (Committee Member)
Assoc. Professor, Production Program Chair

_______________________________________
Adrianne Carageorge (Committee Member)
Associate Professor
Abstract

Not only does this 21-minute long narrative short film serve as my graduate thesis project, but it is also my personal tribute to one of my favorite movie genres: film noir.

This film tells a story of a female protagonist, Felicia. She enjoys a poor yet happy life with her fiancé, Ryan, a young striving filmmaker who needs funding to continue with graduate school. After selling his car in order to cover school expenses, Ryan moves into Felicia’s house. One day, Felicia accidentally opens an envelope that was addressed to her ex-husband, Ed. The letter reveals that Ed is entitled to inherit a huge fortune from a recently deceased uncle, a distant relative residing in Europe. In need of money to support Ryan and out of her own greed, Felicia fakes a similar inheritance letter and manages to lure Ed into remarrying her. Once Ryan stumbles upon their affair via the answering machine, he fills with jealousy and confusion and leaves Felicia’s house. Unfortunately, things get out of control when the ex-fiancé Ryan confronts the now-husband Ed in front of Felicia’s house. One of them does not make it.

This film was shot in HD format using the Canon 5D Mark II camera and lenses. It was edited in Adobe Premiere Pro CC. Sync sound was recorded using Sound Devices 702.

This paper discusses the processes of creating the film, as well as the goals and actual legwork from idea and conception until the film’s screening at Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT).
Finding a story to tell: Preproduction

It has been a long and winding road. The most frequent thing I remember saying during the production process was, “Don’t worry, we are film students, we always figure it out…” This project took me more than two years to complete. I considered this to be fairly slow progress. My crewmembers and I encountered a great number of obstacles. Some were expected, such as location, background noise, and a shortage of shooting time. Others came unexpectedly, for example, abrupt changes in terms of planned shooting locations, actors’ schedules, etc. Fortunately, our team tried the best we could and managed to put pieces together, even though we had gone through several different lineups during the production process.

I enrolled in the School of Film and Animation at RIT in fall, 2009. In 2011, I started a two-year leave of absence due to family issues in my hometown Anyang, Henan, China. When I returned to RIT in 2013, everything had changed except for the winter chill. All the classmates and friends I knew were gone, graduated. As for myself, I had studied hard and earned enough credits during my first two academic years. The only thing left to meet the requirements for the Master’s degree was the thesis film project. First, I sought a professor to serve as my advisor. I remembered having read some materials as well as watched several classic Hollywood films, such as Sunset Boulevard (1950), and Psycho
(1960) in one of Professor Skip Battaglia’s classes (Film Language) during the first year of my study. He also screened a few European documentaries and experimental short films, such as works by Czech filmmaker Jan Švankmajer, during his seminar session. This inspired me a lot. I considered Skip as my main advisor, believing his knowledge about classic movies would fit my project perfectly. Unfortunately, when I returned to RIT, every professor had already engaged with other students and wouldn’t be able to assist me on my thesis project. Skip encouraged me to start writing the proposal, and told me that if I still was not able to find any professor in the next quarter, he would take me in. Finally, by the time my proposal was done, Skip was available to serve as my main advisor. The next step was seeking committee members. Due to everyone’s tight schedule, I was not able to get anyone to join my production. Nevertheless, Skip visited many people in the building on my behalf. Luckily, we had Professor Jack Beck and Professor Adrianne Carageorge on board. With their advice and approval of my proposal, I was allowed to move on to the next step.

Since there were no familiar classmates around, I was in dire need of talent and crew. After checking out all the actor’s books that were available at ‘the cage’, I failed to find anyone that fit the main characters of my script. This was partially due to dated information and a lack of live footage from those actors. I then recalled when I was in Professor Jack Beck’s Production Process class and each student had one opportunity to
be the director of his/her own story and had to go through every single on-set job in terms
gaffer, art director, sound mixer, even boom operator) while other classmates directed
their own film. That sounded to me like the best idea to follow. I could kill two birds with
one stone: I would meet more people and make new friends, as well as improve my skills
with the shooting equipment. Soon I became an all-round crewmember on multiple
fellow students’ projects. I think I was welcomed because I drove a fairly large SUV, and
this was useful for transporting both people and equipment. With help from my
professors and these new-made friends and crewmembers, I was able to take one big step
forward.

Origin

I consider myself a film noir fan. Classic works such as Billy Wilder’s *Double Indemnity*
(1944), John Huston’s *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) and Howard Hawks’ *The Big Sleep*
(1946) are among my all-time favorites. To better understand this movie genre, I read
books and related articles that Skip recommended to me. I also watched the entire film
noir collection DVD box set at the RIT library, and revisited some of the classics
mentioned above. As scholars have stated, “Nearly every attempt to define film noir has
agreed that visual style is the consistent thread that unites the very diverse films that
together comprise this phenomenon.”1 In addition to its distinguishable visual style with

1 Source: *Some Visual Motifs of Film Noir* by Janey Place and Lowell Peterson.
low-key lighting, high contrast images, non-traditional camera angles, shadows and smoke, an overall dark tone as well as a few other identifying characteristics can be found in most noir style movies. These are investigations, the femme fatale, doomed characters, flashbacks and convoluted story lines.

After some analysis of the elements used in this genre, I chose some and incorporated them into my own story. For instance, there must be a murder case. In addition, in must not really be what it looks like. One character cannot simply kill another. The case slowly unfolds like the peeling layers of an onion. Everyone will be involved. In the end, nobody wins, and everyone becomes victims. I also wanted the protagonist to be a female, in opposition to the female characters traditionally depicted in classic era noir films, which frequently had hardboiled male characters as protagonists. I also wanted this female character to have intelligence and be able to manipulate the male characters, rather than simply being a femme fatale. However, a happy ending does not fit in a film noir, so she eventually fails and loses everything she planned to have.

Another two inspirations for my project were handwritten letters and the manual typewriter. When I came to the United States, I moved from one place to another almost every year and received countless letters that had been sent to the wrong address.
Although most of these letters were printed commercial mail, there were some handwritten ones as well. I always believe there could be some unexposed interesting stories, or some dirty secrets, in those unopened envelopes. The typewriter was just a manifestation of my fascination with mechanical things. It only cost me $10 at a garage sale a few years ago. It makes letters, and it sounds amazing. Sometimes it makes a sound that resembles the cash register as well. Everything instantly comes together: a typewriter, a letter that conceals dirty secret, a woman in love, jealous men, and then a conspiracy which soon becomes out of everyone’s control. In the end it’s a fatal failure. Having all the fragments of the ideas and elements in mind, I completed the first draft of my film script. However, I was not satisfied with it because of its loose structure and somewhat senseless plots. Soon after I finished the fourth draft, I found each version had its own storyline and the four were not similar to one another. I realized that every time I added new ideas and plots to the story it became somewhat different and would go in some other direction. I had put lots of my desired details in the script, however I had to make some choices and discard some ideas, lest they make the plot too complicated. The completed short film has the same storyline as the final draft of my script.

During the script-writing process, I had deliberately taken notes from the classic movies I had been watching. I tried to collect the words and sentences that I thought would fit the characters of my own script, because English is not my native language. In this way, the
dialogues of my characters that have different occupations and backgrounds would make more sense for native English audiences. For instance, one of the lawyer Jared’s lines, “how can a lawyer help someone who won’t tell him the truth”, came from the movie *Illegal (1955)*, where it is said by actor Edward G. Robinson who played the role of District Attorney.

**Casting**

Nicole Skelly, an actress whom I had worked with simultaneously in two projects, portrays Felicia. She has starred in a great quantity of RIT student films. Throughout all the work I have done with her, as well as her solid acting performance demonstrated in her previous clips, I found that she is a warm person with the abilities and experiences to depict various characters. I also think that she has the sex appeal of a grown female who is capable of using it when necessary. All my observations told me she was perfect for the role.

Ryan Whalen portrays Ed. I only saw his performance once in a fellow student’s production. Once the camera was rolling, he transformed from an apparently humble and quiet guy into a mean character. He is great at acting and has plenty of room for possibilities.
Nicholas Nevinger portrays Ryan. He is young and has ‘the look’. I met him during a classmate’s production process. His appearance and performance served the character very well.

James Toepper portrays Jared. James (or Jim) is a veteran talent who has been supporting RIT film students for decades. From my own perspective, the performance he delivered in my film is one of his best ever.

**Location**

Originally, the whole lawyer’s scene was supposed to be shot at the Mayor’s office, which was used once by a fellow classmate, Runze Zhou, in his film. The office features a large desk with an American flag standing behind the chair and plenty of room for setting up all the lights. All the office peripherals were great props, resembling a spacious, successful lawyer’s office that also creates an air of intimidation. Unfortunately, just one week before our shooting taking place, I received a message informing me that there was going to be a schedule conflict and the Mayor’s office would not longer be feasible anymore. All the talent and crews’ schedules were also packed, so this was going to create problems. The pace of our schedule could have been extremely dragged down and it could have perhaps affected our new team’s morale. As I mentioned above, “don’t worry, we are film students, we always figure out…”
Reluctantly, I relocated our shooting to the big studio in our department at RIT. Within a small amount of time, I used several moving walls to form a half-open office. It didn’t look real until I borrowed a table and chairs from other classrooms to fill it up, as well as some lamps that could be used as fill light in the background. I then installed blinds that I had prepared and used before in multiple scenes on the window. Outside the walls, I pulled down a street view sheet, which functioned as the window background. Finally, I set up a 2k open face letting the warm light penetrate through the window. Surprisingly, this rough set turned into an interrogation-style room. To compare with the original open and bright Mayor’s office that I’d envisioned, I think this new vibe provided quirkier atmosphere in a different yet better way. Coincidentally, the lawyer, Jared, is indeed interrogating the protagonist, Felicia, at this place, only in a legal manner.

Beginning the search for the location of the Chinese restaurant, I found several real Chinese restaurants by visiting and eating there in person. Luckily I was able to acquire shooting permission from one of them. However, I found that place was too busy to let me have enough time in the evenings -- the scene was a night scene after all. The restaurant scene used up four pages of the script, making it a relatively large scene that required an adequate amount of shooting time. Soon after this hurdle, I happened to have dinner at an Indian restaurant named Raj Mahal, which used to be a Chinese restaurant
before it was sold and remodeled into an Indian restaurant. I accidentally discovered there was a banquet room, which was practically unoccupied during their business hours. I reached out to the owner and had a very pleasant conversation with him, and he gladly signed the location agreement for free. I received his signature in May 2014, however the shooting actually took place in November that same year. At the time, the chilly weather outside almost revealed that it was not summer anymore and would have created a continuity issue.

Production Design

Props: stamp stickers featuring Curta Calculator, and typewritten envelopes with fake letters inside.

I always approach filmmaking as if I was bringing up babies. I give birth to them, dress and polish them the way I prefer, and impart my taste of sound and music on them. Therefore, when working on the details of the film, I always let my interest step in first. For example, I own a Curta calculator—a vintage mechanical pocket sized calculator. These were produced in limited quantity in Liechtenstein soon after the end of WWII. This item was a great inspiration and boosted me with lots of ideas. While I was
searching for information on Curta, I saw a picture of the stamp that was officially issued in Liechtenstein, featuring the calculator. Besides, I have learned that Liechtenstein is one of the smallest countries by territory, yet one of the richest. As a result, I brought the picture of the Curta stamp to a print shop and made a sheet of stickers, which I later used on the envelopes as props. They looked realistic in my film.

**Aesthetics**

All the raw footage was shot in monochrome on a Canon 5D Mark II digital camera. In one of my previous quarter films titled *Slide Away*, I used monochrome and was happy with the final visual result. First, I chose black and white because it appeals to me. All events in the script occur in modern days. I thought colors would add little to the dark tone of my story. Second, in this way, I could spend more time focusing on and experimenting with contrast and exposure. Lastly, but unwillingly, my own plan was definitely forced to be busier due to actors and crews’ availability. Many shots and rapid location changes did not allow me enough time to tweak color filters or keep an eye on color matching on each set. If I had a chance to reshoot it in monochrome and had more time to concentrate on lighting, the outcome would have been significantly better. I take this as a lesson: plan everything first and plan it well.

During post-production, I used several movie stills from *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) as
reference while I was working on visual adjustments for my own film. My goal was to simulate the black and white film look that I have seen in most classic-era film noir movies.

**Long and winding road: Production in progress**

The further I crawled on this long and winding road, the more frequently I said “don’t worry, we are film students, we always figure out...” Since day one of production, problems hit every aspect of our set like tidal waves. Having to cancel the shooting at the Mayor’s office was just one of many. Another one I remember vividly is that by the time when we only had four pages of the script left to finish (the Chinese restaurant scene and a short transition scene), one of the actors informed me that his father had to go through cardiac surgery. The original operation date did not conflict with our shooting schedule, however, it had to be shifted to an earlier date that happened to be the same day I had planned to shoot. If we postponed, the next foreseeable shooting day would be after a 3-month summer break, in the upcoming semester. Things could possibly become a task to match, referring to actors’ physical appearance, weather changes, and perhaps have greater chances to make mistakes. He felt sorry for the inconvenience. However, I understood that family comes first, and I gave him my best wishes. After all, we’re film students, we always figure it out. This happened in May 2014.
I was back to RIT in fall. All my old crew, whom I had befriended by working on their sets had graduated and gone. I still had four pages of my script to film. Lessons learned, I quickly put myself back on track by working in a number of new students’ productions. I made a few more friends, and they would later come to my set and help me wrap everything up effectively and smoothly, on a two-evening shooting schedule at Raj Mahal Indian restaurant. From my perspective, this truly is one wonderful attribute of filmmaking: teamwork. However, that wasn’t everything yet. There is a short transition scene in the film, including two shots depicting Ed’s car pulling up to the restaurant, him opening the car door for Felicia, and a shot of Felicia’s high heels. Because of a sudden snowstorm, I had to postpone this final scene. What’s worse is that actress Nicole would be no longer available as she had signed a contract with a cruise ship and would embark on an acting job aboard for a long time. Without the transition scene, confusions would have been generated due to insufficient information. Once more I said, “don’t worry, we are film students.” Furthermore, our girlfriends always have a way to figure things out as well. At last my girlfriend put on her stilettos and gave her cameo performance as Felicia’s feet. I did all of Ed’s actions by myself. Even though it does not show the faces of these two characters during the whole scene in the completed film, it provides all the necessary information, functioning well as a transition scene. Being able to solve unexpected problems during the filming process was certainly fun.
**Directing**

Since there were many dialogues involved, I used mainly medium shots and close-ups. In order to prevent tedious reverse shots, I opted for different passes. For instance, a dolly was used in a few conversation scenes such as the lawyers’ scene and the scene at the Chinese restaurant. I have seen this method in several films, one of which was directed by French director Olivier Assayas, titled *Clean* (2004). In the film there is a scene featuring a father and daughter having a conversation at a picnic table. The two reverse shots both were done on a dolly, and the dolly moved back and forth to capture footage as much as it could in order to reduce the potential of synchronization issues because sometimes the actor’s head in the foreground could block a desired piece of dialogue. From my perspective, this technique nicely achieves two things in that movie. On one hand, it adds smoothness as well as some sort of tension, indicating that these two characters have something going on not only in their mouths, but also in their minds. On the other hand, it breaks the 180-degree rule without even attracting any notice or causing any viewers distraction. Nevertheless, I only used dolly shots on one side of the line, which means I didn’t break any 180-degree rule. The reason for this was that these dolly reverse shots required much more detail control in terms of props and extras in the background, or else it would become more prone to bring about mismatching problems when editing.
Almost half of all the shots were done on shoulder. That was somewhat more than I had expected. I think these shots would look much better if they had been done on a tripod. Despite the fact that I attempted to prepare as much as possible for each shooting day, I was constantly lacking time. A few times I even skipped lunch just to keep everything in pace. Time was the factor that led to my giving up tripod shots that I had intended to choose. It seems to me that the shots done on my shoulder have more out-of-focus issues than the other shaky ones that were done on tripod.

**Cinematography**

*In this night-for-night shot, without fill light, only half of Ryan's face can be seen. The shadow of Ed in the foreground and the darkness in the background together suggests Ryan is in a trapped situation where darkness is taking over.*

I opted for black and white when I filmed this project with a Canon 5D Mark II camera. Monochrome can produce different atmospheres depending on how it is used. For example, it can be pessimistic, oppressive, or obsolete. These are just some factors that suit my preference very well. I adore the vintage black and white Hollywood film quality. The camera and lenses I used did a great job simulating the real film look in terms of depth of field. Besides, I could spend more time on lighting and other things. Generally, I
used the three-point lighting method and, in some cases, I subtracted the fill light. In the Chinese restaurant scene, for instance, after setting up two basic lights behind the two main characters, I added two fill lights to light up their faces from an angle after a little tweaking. I then put up two other lights towards the wall where it would be the background of a character’s head. They also served as edge light.

The lighting kits I used in this film were Arri Softbank and Mickey Mole. Since the footage was shot in black and white, these two different kits did not bring me color issues if I was using both in one shot. I found they worked very well indoors. For day-for-day outdoor shots, some HMIs would be a better option.

In the former frame, Felicia holds a dominant position; in latter frame, when the waitress approaches Felicia’s table, Ed recognizes her and stands up. The shadow of both Ed and the waitress darkens Felicia’s face, hinting at Felicia being intimidated by the waitress.

Another effort I have put into this film was the use of shadow. Lights and shadows are important for film visuals. For example, there is a night living room scene where Ryan
and Ed are having a brief fight. After Ryan flees the house, Ed stands up with one of his hands over his bloody head wound, and then falls into a coma within a few steps. I mounted one key light on the floor at a very low angle. The shadow of his hand over his head was made specifically distinguishable on the wall. Followed by a few camera rehearsals, I captured his whole action in shadow. During editing, I cross-cut the shadow footage with his real action shot. When Ed falls, viewers can only see his shadow falling. In this way, this incident of Ed seems more helpless and worthless, as if nobody really cares about him.

Another example can be found in the middle of the lawyer’s scene when Jared tries to obtain Felicia’s trust and cooperation. The dialogue itself sounds more like Jared offering Felicia help, but the unspoken message is, “it won’t be long before I expose you as a liar and murderer.” For the purpose of using shadows to exaggerate the relationship between these two characters, I kept one character and the other’s shadow within frame in a few shots. When I did Felicia’s reverse shots, the camera angle was set fairly high, indicating her inferior situation. Meanwhile, Jared turned from a sitting gentle lawyer into a huge standing shadow right next to Felicia’s body. It seems like now in that situation, Jared transforms from an old man to a gloomy monster and is going to swallow the little woman in the chair. Shadows of blinds can be frequently seen throughout the film, and this technique has long been famously used in highly acclaimed Hollywood classics such
as Roman Polanski’s *Chinatown* (1975). The same method has established itself as one of film noir’s notable symbols, mostly suggesting a constrained environment.

Below is a demonstration with screenshots, of how I controlled mise en scène and camera, and how they work together in a scene.

*In this unbalanced composition, Jared’s gesture and his shadow suggest his overwhelming power over Felicia. However, a slightly low camera angle indicates she’s not overwhelmed yet.*

Though Jared exposes Felicia’s lies, he seems more dominant in this frame. His shadow suggests an alter ego. An eye-level camera angle was used instead of low angle, for he is captive behind shadow bars as well.

*A higher camera angle reveals Felicia’s vulnerability and helplessness. Now she feels exposed, and overwhelmed by Jared.*
An even higher camera angle witnesses Felicia and Jared’s agreement in the end. Meanwhile, they both become victims in this situation.

Sound Recording

To some extent, frequent lineup changes and falling short of crewmembers resulted in a few sound issues in terms of recording levels. Other than that, there were many hurdles. One thing I have noticed is that there are always various types of unexpected noises, such as an inaudible (only to human ear) dog bark from across the street, in our daily life. Perhaps we just do not pay attention to it or are already used to it, but the unwanted noise could be captured removing it from the background is a nightmare. Not only does the noise distract the audience when occurs during dialogue, but it also ruins the atmosphere of a silent scene that is only supposed to have room tone. Therefore, a studio set is always preferable if budget is not an issue. For students, mostly we would make calls and knock on doors while seeking locations, hoping to secure some beautiful sites at no extra cost. I often consider a house a great option for shooting as well, for it has enough rooms for all crews and equipment and also the freedom for setting light even from outside the house through the windowpane. However, due to the commonly used wooden structure,
recording sound in such a house can sometimes be tough. Especially when there is action, wooden floors and stairs tend to generate unbearable noise. Another drawback happens when the house is located in a populated area where cars flow by. The highly sensitive microphones that we used love to pick up sounds from other cars’ radios, even though there is a wall in between them. An apartment with concrete walls seems to provide better soundproofing, but this definitely has drawbacks as well. One thing is that the hard walls bounce actors’ voices back into the room creating echoes and in some cases this will confuse viewers since stereo sound conveys direction and position. Another thing is that an apartment building is usually filled with other residents. Again, microphones love to pick up not just actors’ conversations and actions, but also those of neighbors as well. In spite of today’s advanced digital editing technologies, it is still critical to ensure sound clarity during on-set production.

**Putting it all together: Post-Production**

Eventually it’s time to end this long and winding road. With a handful of materials done here and there in an extended period, I began putting the footage together. Due to massive use of cross-cutting and nonlinear editing, I had to slice many of the good takes I chose into even smaller pieces. I will discuss this more detail later in the editing section. Since there was no color correction needed, the film was primarily edited using Adobe Premiere Pro CC. The whole process from importing footage to exporting the final
version of the film took approximately 90 hours of work on the computer. In addition to the tracks done with Sound Devices 702 digital audio recorder, I recorded some sound effects and several room tones on my portable Sony D50 audio recorder. It is pocket-sized but is capable of capturing sound in 48k Hz/24 bit. After sorting out all the good takes and having obtained sound effects, I began to synchronize the videos clips with sound tracks. This turned out to be quite a tedious task. Although Premiere Pro CC provides such functions in terms of synchronization, I found it could only do two-thirds of the job well. The rest would either have uncoordinated sound tracks or combine wrong tracks. The quality of the sound clips that were recorded with the camera’s built-in microphone was too harsh to have been used in the film, because there were countless distortions. In addition to that, due to the microphone’s position, it makes a shot sound like a point-of-view shot. Despite being useless in the actual film, these sounds undoubtedly made the syncing process easier, compared with film/sound synchronization.

In this way, it practically becomes a sound/sound syncing process with the assistance of digital graphics of sound waves. I always remembered to have the marking slated hard.

**Editing**

Cross-cutting creates many more gaps in terms of time and space, so there are various things to be thought of before changing the footage. These gaps can either be a good or a bad thing. I attempted to let them function in a good way. For example, I cross-cut
between the scene where Felicia was visiting Ed and having a flirtatious conversation, and the scene where Ryan was coming back to Felicia’s house. The activities in these two scenes take place simultaneously, and a phone call was used to link them. I remember taking stage drama class when I was in college and the professor always emphasized how cellphones were awful things on stage and for actors. Actors desire to move or else they feel uncomfortable on stage, and cellphones kill these actions in most cases. Although opting to use a cellphone could be a double-edged sword, I tried to determine how to use one and add an element to it. My solution was to have all characters be prohibited to actually talk to the phone. It would instead be the driving force to drastically shift those three’s relationships. I think the result served my purpose well. All of a sudden, the character of Ed switches from a sarcastic ex-wife hater to a welcoming flirtatious man, approaching Felicia. In the other scene, at the same time, Ryan is angered by their conversation through the answering machine, a situation in which he faces a dilemma. Ironically, he could do nothing but listen with his mouth shut. This is a moment where all three characters’ relationships alter and such changes are great for building tension between them and expectations for the upcoming scene. There is no shot showing the real action of Ed walking to Felicia and sitting by on the couch, which I consider a gap in time and space. Gaps like these between cross-cut scenes help the story flow smoothly. Another reason I prefer using cross-cutting and flashbacks is that it appears to be more interesting. For there are some times when audiences would be somewhat forced to recall
some previously shown information. In addition, I decided to avoid excessive messages as much as I could. That said, all the information provided in the film was deliberately minimalized. I believed that the amount of given detail was clear enough to follow my story and it only required reconnecting all the detail as if it were putting back puzzle pieces. Unfortunately, the consequence was that after the first public screening of this film, a few viewers expressed that they had been confused at some point. This will be explained later. Even though cross-cutting consumed a considerable amount of time in my post-production, it was a lot of fun to play with.

**Post Sound Mixing and Music**

As mentioned above, background noise happened to be the biggest problem when it came to sound editing. For example, there was a take where a train could be heard passing by. In order to fix this, I tried the Noise Reduction function in Premiere Pro CC, making the actor’s voice sound like another person. Later, I paid for a plug-in that was specifically designed to reduce the undesired audio segments of speech. Nonetheless, this method failed, as it noticeably compressed the audio and the quality of the outcome was not suitable for a movie audio track. Eliminating noise really slowed down the editing process. Even though the conversation in a reverse shot would match perfectly with wonderful acting, the sound of the train was so distracting that I had to discard both takes. This could also cause continuity issues. To solve this problem, I would extend selected
dialogue audio on both ends, and then add fade in/fade out, making almost every audio
clip crossfade another. I dubbed over them with room tone as long as they shared the
same environment. Occasionally in this film, several room tones and even bird chirping
was used. At least, all the conversations appeared to be loud and clear.

In terms of music, only one song is featured in this film. I did not opt for a composer as
many other fellow students did. In all honesty, the reason is that most of those music
pieces did not fit their films well. This does not necessarily mean their music was
dreadful. It simply did not fit. In my opinion, no music is better than bad music. I have
visited and browsed many free soundtrack sites on the internet. I found one piece of
music approximately 7 minutes in length. This song has its own meaning and atmosphere.
In order to suit the mood of the scene in which I wanted to put the music, I reversed the
track. By playing the music backwards, it creates a mysterious feeling. I then added some
reverberation. At the moment when Ed begins to read the duplicated letter, I also doubled
the same track and had it played in different timing. This created a delay effect, which
suggests that there are some duplicated things happening. As a result, the music and
actions work in harmony. In a nutshell, efforts were made to perfect every audible
element in the film.
Screening and Conclusion

The complete film was screened at RIT’s auditorium in May 2015. I think the viewers’ reaction was generally favorable. I remember there were a few members of the audience who were confused, primarily referring to the revelation of Jared and Ed’s father-son relationship. I had only added minimal information regarding Jared’s parental love for Ed, which was implicitly suggested in the scene where the anonymous man (Jared) leaves a bouquet of flowers at the wedding. To some extent, I consider the reveal of this family relationship as deus ex machina, since being Ed’s father is the dominant force that pushes Jared forward when the whole case would otherwise appear irrelevant to him.

From my perspective, filmmaking is like creating a game, and there are two parties participating. The first party is the filmmakers, including directors, screenwriters, editors, sound designers, etc. Everyone contributes something and shapes the film during the production process. Let’s take directors for example. In order to create a film, a director must infuse several things in terms of aesthetics, philosophies, and other personal preferences, into his/her work. In addition to one’s love and passion for the art of film, knowledge and references are also very important. For the most part, it is as if the director was making a puzzle and then expecting the audience to get involved and solve it while being entertained. Eventually, both parties have enjoyable experiences and the economy flourishes, although this is not always the case. Moviegoers are so diversified in
terms of culture and taste. To me, the best way to do things on my road to the magic world of film is to try the best I can on everything I touch. With enough effort and polish, someday it will shine.
Address
by Xiao Li
447 Robert Quigley Dr
Scottsville, NY, 14546
(585) 747-5950
xxl2712@rit.edu

Approved for submission by:

__________________________
Skip Battaglia, Theis Chair
Prof. School of Film and Animation

__________________________
Jack Back, Committee Member

__________________________
Adrianne Carageorge, Committee Member

Date______________________
Synopsis

Felicia, 32, a housewife that suffers from domestic violence by drunkard husband Alex, 29, a bad tempered and impetuous man; unfortunately she also encounters an unsympathetic neighbor, a 35 years old single man Ned, as well. Life seems no good to her. However, when this miserable woman combines luck and method together, things thoroughly transform.

Style

I drew some inspiration from classic film noir. The lead role is a female and Femme Fatale type of character. The two other male characters are used by her. Also I will make this short film visually identical to film noir, elements like unusual lighting and contrast, and all the shots will be in black and white. Also the story will be told in a different sequence.

TREATMENT

In Alex and Jones’s house, Felicia quickly opens a couple envelopes and throws away advertising mail. One typewritten letter stops her, and she reads it carefully. Felicia checks the address on the envelope; the recipient’s name is Ned Murray. Door kicking sound.
Alex Jones tests keys and yells at the door.
Felicia quickly seals the envelope and puts it under the couch, and then opens the door. Alex wobbles in and blames the mess on the table and falls over on the couch. He almost falls asleep. Felicia fetches out the envelope. Alex snores.

Felicia carefully uses adhesive tape to remove the recipient’s name from the letter and from the envelope. She seeks and finds a typewriter, and makes a transcript. She typewrites the name Felicia Jones on the envelope, as well as the same street address as on the one she transcribes, but with different house numbers. Felicia puts an envelope into the cluster mailbox.

In Ned’s house, Ned steps in with a stack of mail and newspapers in hand, goes straight to the fridge where it’s almost empty. Felicia greets him, and there’s a bruise on her cheek. Ned freaks out. Felicia asks Ned if she can stay for a while since Alex beats her. Ned walks to the door and Felicia asks him not to tell Alex. Ned says he will go get some food. A couple of seconds later, Felicia hears Ned saying “one more time, and I will move out of this place, the worst neighbors ever!” Alex storms in and drags Felicia out of the house. Ned shuts the door and sits on couch, starts to cuts open envelopes.

Another day, Ned slides the window up and hears Alex and Felicia having a fight. Hearing “If you leave the house with half a step, you’re dead!” He trots out.

Ned starts his car and parks on a side of a driveway. When Felicia runs out of house, Ned picks her up and the two flee. Alex keeps yelling loudly inside until he walks out and realizes his wife
is gone.
Ned buys Felicia a decent dinner.
Ned parks his car by his own house. In the car, the two keeps silent for a while. When Felicia tries to say something, Ned invites her to stay in his house for her own safety. Felicia agrees.
Early morning, Ned wakes up by the smell of breakfast. Felicia cooks. And his living room looks more organized than before. A few garbage bags at the door, Ned checks them. Felicia walks Ned to the dining table and pushes him sit down.
Another day, Ned comes home with some flowers. Felicia takes off his coat and puts these flowers in a vase.
Some short montage showing their living together. (Growing intimacy)
Another day, outside of Ned’s house, Alex stops Ned and asks if he know where his wife is. Ned instructs Alex that “women always go for love. You gotta learn to love them!” Ned drives away. Alex wanders around the house and tries to monitor the inside. He keeps saying “Feli I know you’re in there.”
In the car, Ned answers his mobile phone and he U turns. Ned sends Alex away and walks in his house.
Ned seeks and finds Felicia hiding in a corner. He holds her in arms and proposes.
In law office, Ned and Felicia talk with his attorney friend Jared. Jared gives advice of divorce.
Another day, outside of Ned’s house, Alex shouts abuses on the
street how his ex-wife screws and marries his neighbor. Some people crowd around.

Inside, Felicia talks through the window how Ned is a much better husband than he is. Alex shouts louder and louder. Ned tells her stop the conversation with Alex and he calls 911. Felicia opens the door. Alex storms in, slaps Felicia in the face and shouts at Ned “put the phone down!” Ned talks into the phone. Alex hits Ned head with a vase.

In law office, Felicia weeps; Jared comforts as well as explains the rate for his commission for this eight hundred and seventy thousand dollars inheritance case. By saying “since I’m getting paid by you now,” He takes out a letter of legatee and places it right beside the other letter of legatee. Jared says “I’d like to know the true version of this story.”

Another day, the postman delivers mail behind a set of cluster mailboxes. One envelope drops off the ground; he picks it up and puts it in the wrong box.

| **BUDGET** |
|---|---|
| **Title:** | Address |
| **Director:** Xiao Li | |
| **Producer:** TBA | |
| **Running Time:** 20 min. | |
### 6:1 Shooting Ratio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Account#</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Fee</th>
<th>Subtotal</th>
<th>Acct. Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>100 Story</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story and Script</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>200 Talent</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$350.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producer</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead Actors</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting Actors</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extras</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>300 Production Personnel</strong></td>
<td>(Student Crews)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Photography</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaffer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grip</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Recordist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boom Operator</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>400 Travel and Locations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1080.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cast and Crew meals</td>
<td>8 days</td>
<td>$70.00</td>
<td>$560.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas</td>
<td>8 days</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$120.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location Fees</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petty Cash</td>
<td></td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td></td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>500 Production Equipment</strong></td>
<td>Cage</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera and Support</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td>Cage</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grip</td>
<td>Cage</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>Cage</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expendables</td>
<td>Tapes, etc</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>600 Art Direction</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>$300.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Props</td>
<td>Some</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set Dressing</td>
<td></td>
<td>$50.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makeup Supplies</td>
<td></td>
<td>$50.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>700 Sound and Music</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>$400.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Designer</td>
<td></td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Effects</td>
<td></td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composer</td>
<td></td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>800 Editing and Finishing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>$150.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editor</td>
<td>Self</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Drives etc. (Supplies)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discs and Gifts</td>
<td></td>
<td>$50.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>900 Contingency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>$372.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Film</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>$2852.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: $2852.00
Timeline

Summer 2013
★ Fine tune script
★ Storyboard

Fall Semester 2014
Week 1-6
★ Equipment Reservation
★ Casting
★ Location Scouting

Week 7-8
★ Rehearsal Actors

Week 9-14
★ Shooting

Week 15
★ Start Editing

Spring Semester 2014
Week 1-4
★ Editing and Getting Feedback

Week 5-7
★ Sound Recording
★ Music Composing

Week 8-9
★ Fine Cut and Pic Lock

Week 10-14
★ Sound Mixing
★ Color Correction
★ Credit and Design
★ Final Cut

**Week 15**
★ Screening
★ Film Festival Submission
Address (Final Draft)

By

Xiao Li

March, 2014

xx12712@rit.edu
220 John St.
Rochester, NY, 14623
FADE IN

1  EXT. FELICIA’S HOUSE OUTSIDE– EVENING

ED, 37, walks to the door and looks back with a smile.

    ED
    And thank you for seeing us off, director.

RYAN, 27, follows and shoves Ed into the door.

2  INT. FELICIA’S LIVING ROOM – CONT’D


    ED
    Ouch!

Ryan pushes Ed away and sees blood on his hand.

    FELICIA (O.S.)
    Ed, are you home?

Ryan flees.

FELICIA, 32, comes down the stairs.

    FELICIA
    What happened? (helps Ed sit up)

    ED
    Son of a bitch hit me in my head.

    FELICIA
    Who? (looks at the door, still open) Burglar? I’ll call the police.

    ED
    I’ll make the call. Grab me a towel will ya?

Felicia runs upstairs. Ed stands up, but after a few steps he falls on the floor. Felicia comes down.

    FELICIA
    Ed? (pats Ed’s face)

TITLE: "Address"

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Felicia holding the receiver, with sweaty, messy hair.

    FELICIA
    Our house was broken into, and someone attacked my husband. He lost consciousness I can’t wake him up! Please send someone here! (beat) I didn’t see, I was on the second floor. (beat) 22 John street. Thank you!

DISSOLVE TO

3 INT. JARED’S OFFICE - DAY


    JARED
    I am very sorry Mrs. Murray for the loss of your husband Mr. Murray.

    FELICIA
    Thank you. And thank you for your offer to help, it’s truly appreciated.

    JARED
    You are welcome. Mrs. Murray, I do have some good news. The suspect was taken into custody.

    FELICIA
    Who is it?

    JARED
    Well, that seems like a bad news to you.

    FELICIA
    Why? What do you mean?

    JARED
    A person you’re quite familiar with. Ryan Jones.

    FELICIA
    Ryan? No way, he disappeared for more than a month, I couldn’t even reach him. How come?

(CONTINUED)
JARED
He’ll be facing charges for
burglary, assault and battery, and
voluntary manslaughter.

FELICIA
(beat. Jaw dropped)
Oh, no.

FLASHBACK TO

INT. FELICIA’S CAR – DAWN
Felicia drives. Ryan sits in the passenger seat.

FELICIA
How much did you get out of it?

RYAN
Two grand.

FELICIA
That’s far from enough for the rest
of your school courses.

RYAN
Well, it was an old car.

FELICIA
But how will you commute everyday?
It’s still freezing outside.

RYAN
I’ll walk, don’t worry.

FELICIA
I wish I had made enough money so I
could quit my lousy job and we
could make films together, you
direct, I be your actress.

RYAN
Like Ingrid Bergman and Rossellini!

EXT. FELICIA’S HOUSE OUTSIDE– CONT’D
Car parks.
Felicia opens the door, with a stack of mails in one hand. Ryan comes in with big luggage and backpack. Felicia presses the answering machine. ("YOU HAVE 2 UNREAD MESSAGES", first one is automatic VOICE from some credit card company)

FELICIA
(checking a few envelopes)
Bill, bill, bill.

RYAN
Thanks for letting me stay. Maybe I should simply drop it.

FELICIA
Shut up. (holds him) Just make sure everything is locked when you leave, you know, cheap rent neighborhood. Don’t get shot!

RYAN
No I can’t just die. My new script is almost done. A feature length. All I need is to find a producer or investor or...something.

ED (ANSWERING MACHINE)
Remember these headphones I gave you last summer? If you still have them, I want them back, thank you.

FELICIA
Asshole! (going to pick up the phone)

RYAN
What you doing?

FELICIA
I’m gonna tell him I’m marrying someone else and don’t ever call me again.

RYAN
Just mail them back to him. I can buy you a new pair.

FELICIA
Those are really high quality monitoring headphones.

(CONTINUED)
RYAN
You know what the opposite of love is? Indifference, not hate. If you call him, he knows you still care.

FELICIA
No, I don’t. We divorced! What a jerk!

RYAN
Just ignore him.

FELICIA
Sure, I’m sorry baby.

ANOTHER DAY

7 EXT. OUTSIDE ED’S HOUSE - AFTERNOON
Felicia pulls over. And takes the ring off her ring finger.

8 INT. ED’S LIVING ROOM - CONT’D
AT THE DOOR
Door opens.

ED
Hey, movie star!

FELICIA
Hi.

ED
Oh, got my message huh? You have them?

FELICIA
How have you been lately?

ED
I have been doing very well thanks for asking. Saw my new couch over there? Cozy.

FELICIA
Am I invited?

ED
(reluctantly)
Fine...

(CONTINUED)
IN LIVING ROOM

Felicia walks in and sits in the couch. Ed takes his cellphone out of his pocket and sits on a folding chair.

ED
Oh, class must be over now. Don’t you go to pick up your school boy?

FELICIA
How did you know he sold his car?

ED
No, I didn’t.

FELICIA
He moved into my apartment now.

ED
So the film kid took over the place where I used hang out and you’re here showing that off?

FELICIA
No, I mean...(sees him playing phone) Are you seeing someone now?

EXT. FELICIA’S HOUSE DOOR – CONT’D

Phone RINGS in the living room. Ryan searches keys, with a big headphone box and plastic bag under his arms.

INT. FELICIA’S LIVING ROOM – CONT’D

FELICIA (A.M.)
You’ve reached Felicia, please leave a message. *BEEP*

Ryan’s about to pick the receiver.

FELICIA (A.M.)
Why don’t you sit in the couch? I’m not gonna eat you.

Ryan’s hand pauses.

ED (A.M.)
So you’re here to tell me you want us to get back together?

(CONTINUED)
RYAN
Ed?

FELICIA (A.M.)
Well, I was wondering how you been doing.

11 INT. ED’S LIVING ROOM - CONT’D

ED
How can you forget? We had our moments! (approaches her)

FELICIA
We did though.

ED
I bet you’re tired of that school boy stuff, aren’t you?

12 INT. FELICIA’S LIVING ROOM - CONT’D

FELICIA (A.M.)
He’s alright. Well sometimes he’s sensitive.

ED (A.M.)
He’s a KID! What’s so fun playing with a little kid, MAMA?

Headphone box drops on the floor from Ryan’s arm.

13 INT. ED’S LIVING ROOM - CONT’D

FELICIA
Let’s not talk about him. I’ve heard there was a catastrophic earthquake in east Switzerland.

ED
No worries. They’ll have enough supply of Swiss rolls.

FELICIA
I’m serious. I tried to reach my aunt who lives there.

ED
I didn’t know you had a Swiss tante.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

FELICIA
What about you? I remember you have some relatives residing in Liechtenstein. That’s right in the east of Switzerland!

ED
So what. They’re on my father’s side, and he’s an asshole. I haven’t seen him like six years.

FELICIA
Just hope everybody there is doing okay.

14 INT. FELICIA’S CAR - LATER

Felicia drives, with a cellphone over her ear.

FELICIA
Hey babe, are you home?

15 INT. FELICIA’S LIVING ROOM - CONT’D

INTERCUT CAR/LIVING ROOM PHONE CONVERSATION

Some clothes and crushed headphones on the floor here and there. Luggage is wide open, pretty messy. Ryan holds a glass of liquor in his hand.

RYAN
Yes I am. Where are you?

FELICIA
I just got off from work, did you eat yet?

RYAN
Nah. I’m waiting, for you.

FELICIA
Almost home, can’t wait to see ya.

RYAN
Me too.

Ryan hangs up.

CUT TO

(CONTINUED)
Ryan looks out through the window. He drains the glass and then starts packing clothes on the floor into his luggage. Felicia walks in.

FELICIA
What are you doing?

RYAN
What does it look like I’m doing? What were you doing?

FELICIA
I worked overtime. (picks up the headphone box) Are these for me?

RYAN
Worked extended hours on the other side of the fence huh?

FELICIA
What are you talking about? What’s going on?

Ryan reaches the phone and presses a button.

ED (A.M.)
I’d offer a kiss goodbye, for old time’s sake! (making a huge KISSING SOUND)

FELICIA
I didn’t!

ED (A.M.)
Remember! You’re always welcome back home!

FELICIA
He faked that! I was gone!

RYAN
Oh, were you?

FLASHBACK TO

16 INT. ED’S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

ED
Farewell my darling! I love you too! (door SHUTS. to the phone) What a bitch! (hangs up)

CUT TO
FELICIA
Son of a bitch.

Ryan ZIPS his luggage.

FELICIA
I was just looking for a thing that
I left at his place!

RYAN
(finally he looks at Felicia)
Sorry babe. One more lie, I’m outta
here.

FELICIA
I was...I don’t know!

RYAN
Alright. (pulls luggage handle) Why
did you even bother asking about
his European folks sweetheart? I
didn’t even know where the fuck it
was, Liechtenstein? Now I do.
(walks to the door)

FELICIA
I’ll explain, I swear!

RYAN
(turns around)
How about now?

FELICIA
I can’t...I’m sorry. Would you give
me some time?

RYAN
(stares at her finger)
Where is the ring?

Felicia searches in her pockets.

RYAN
Never mind. (takes off his ring and
smashes it on the floor) I’m just a
pathetic piece of shit! I don’t
deserve you. So long.

FELICIA
Don’t go!

(CONTINUED)
RYAN
Don’t look for me please. I wish you two the best. (door shuts)

Felicia weeps.

DISSOLVE TO

18 INT. JARED’S OFFICE - DAY

Felicia weeps. Jared pushes a tissue box towards her. She takes out a piece.

JARED
I’m sorry Mrs. Murray. Did you try and get him back?

FELICIA
His phone number is out of service. And he quit school.

JARED
Do you think it’s worth it?

FELICIA
Huh?

JARED
He might be a sensitive young man. But I can tell you really cares for him Mrs. Murray.

FELICIA
Felicia, please.

JARED
Felicia. You chose Ed over Ryan, to marry? Twice. I don’t understand.

FELICIA
Sometimes you just can’t explain everything. Liz Taylor married Richard Burton twice.

JARED
Sometimes. (beat) As the mention of Europe, I have two letters here, both of which are from Europe.

FELICIA
What letters?

Jared spreads out two envelopes on the desk.

(CONTINUED)
FELICIA
(looks closer)
For me and my husband. Where did you get them?

JARED
I know people who help me collect evidence. And this one’s to you.

Felicia opens the letter and reads. Jared approaches the window and open the blinds.

JARED
Typewritten, very serious.

FELICIA
Can I read the other one, on behalf of my husband?

JARED
Not necessary, duplicate content, only different recipient. While the other one is authentic, however, the one in your hand is proved a falsification.

Jared walks to the desk and unfolds the other envelope.

FELICIA
You’re saying that is an inheritance letter too? From whom? Ed is dead.

JARED
Then YOU became the sole inheritor as it mentions here (reads letter) Mr. Edward G. Murray and his spouse and children.

FELICIA
What do I have to do?

JARED
Tell me the truth. (sits on the desk) How can a lawyer help anyone who won’t tell him the truth?

FELICIA
I did.

JARED
These letters, Felicia. See, I’m getting paid by you. Quite (MORE)
CONTINUED:

JARED (cont’d)
considerable fee here even after
taxes. I certainly am on your side.
Besides, Ryan is going jail,
possibly more than a decade. We
must do something. (reaches out his
hand)

FELICIA
Will you help him too?

JARED
I’ll do my best.

Felicia shakes hands with him.

FLASHBACK TO

THESE TWO SCENES BELOW WILL BE CROSSCUT.

19 INT. FELICIA’S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON 19

Felicia sits in couch, and cuts a stacks of envelopes with a
knife. She throws away a few and stops on one. The letter
reads: from recently deceased Sir. Ernst Murray in
Liechtenstein...you and your spouse and children are
eligible to inherit...

Felicia reads the envelope, and the recipient’s name is
Edward G. Murray.

Felicia blows dust off a box and opens it. She typewrites:
Dear Ms/Mrs. Felicia Reinhardt...from recently deceased
grand uncle Ernst Reinhardt...you and your spouse and
children are eligible to inherit...500.000 euros...please
contact my firm as soon as possible.

20 INT. ED’S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 20

Ed sits in couch, and throws away some envelopes and stops
on one. (letter reads exactly the same as Felicia types)

Ed checks the envelope and recipient’s name is Felicia
Reinhardt. He stands up.

ED
(regretful)
Holy shit.

ANOTHER DAY
Car parks. Ed in suit and tie, gets out of the vehicle and opens passenger door. Felicia gets off.

The two seated. Candles on table.

ED
I’m glad you came, thank you.

LING, 23, waitress.

LING
Hi Johnny! Long time no see!

ED
(surprised)
Oh, hi! (stands up and stretch suit) I didn’t know you worked here! This is Felicia. Felicia, this is um...

LING
I’m Ling. Nice to meet you.

FELICIA
Me too.

LING
(teasing)
Have a seat, Johnny. (pushed Ed down) Nv Peng You? ("girlfriend?")

ED
Chan Nyu You. ("ex.")

LING
Ni Zen Me Mei You Qing Wo Chi Guo Fan Ne? ("you never took me out for dinner.")

ED
(sorta under breath)
Some other time.

LING
I’m sorry. (to Felicia) What would you like to drink?

(CONTINUED)
ED
Milk tea for two! (finger snaps, to Felicia) The taste is fantastic!

FELICIA
(very calm)
I’ll do water, no ice please.

LING
OK. (to Ed) I’ll get YOU some milk tea.

Ling leaves.

ED
How are you Felicia? and Ryan?

FELICIA
Ryan’s gone.

ED
Gone? Where to?

FELICIA
I don’t know. Right after someone calling him the other day.

ED
He dumped you?

FELICIA
He recorded that phone call and played to me.

ED
(embarrassed)
Oh, did he?

Ling brings two cups.

LING
Water...and fresh milk tea for you Johnny. Ready to order?

ED
Yeah. Two roasted duck noodles please! (to Felicia) Trust me, you’re gonna love it!

FELICIA
(very very calm)
Sesame chicken, please.

(CONTINUED)
ED
Brilliant choice! (to Ling) Then we’ll have more options. Good!

LING
Gotcha. Enjoy the drink.

Ling walks away and occasionally looks back.

ED
Try this! It’s really good!

Felicia drinks her water and doesn’t look at him.

ED
(sincerely)
Felicia, I miss my family. I wanna have my wife back, I want kids! I’m 37 now, I can’t afford to get too old to play with my children. (beat) Our children. Seriously! I never thought about that before until you came to me the other day.

Felicia puts down her cup.

ED
.seriously sincere)
I bet you had no clue why I made that stupid phone call. I wanted to get rid of him off you! But I didn’t mean to hurt YOU. I was a fool to have lost you, please don’t make me a fool again.

Felicia tries to grab the milk tea. Ed doesn’t let go, and grasps her hand.

ED
You forgive me?

FELICIA
I wanna try it.

Ed smiles. Felicia sips and spits out immediately.

ED
You didn’t like it?

Felicia pours some water into her mouth. Ed takes a sip, and spits out too. He stands up and looks around.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: 17.

FELICIA
Calm down.

ED
This is too over!

FELICIA
I’ll talk to her. (stands up and pushes Ed to sit down)

Ling comes with a tray. Felicia approaches her.

LING
Dishes are ready to serve.

Felicia stops her.

FELICIA
Listen kid, I’d suggest you take this. (a $20 bill between her fingers) And bring another cup of milk tea, no tricks. Or else I’d like to have a conversation with your boss, understood? (sniff the noodles, and grabs the sesame chicken dish) Take that back.

Felicia puts sesame chicken in the middle of the table.

ED
What did you say?

FELICIA
Try this, it’s really good.

DISSOLVE TO

23 INT. JARED’S OFFICE - DAY

Phone BUZZES

JENNY (OVER THE PHONE)
Lieutenant Eastman is on the phone.

JARED
If you’ll excuse me. (picks up the phone) Yes? How? (beat) I’m fine, thanks very much.

Jared hangs up.

(CONTINUED)
JARED
So you married Ed for money.

FELICIA
Well...but I never expected Ryan to get involved. How can we help him?
I got plenty of money, I will.

JARED
Hold on, do you mind if I finish the story?

FLASHBACK TO

INT. MOVIE THEATER – MORNING
MIKE, 30-ish, a friend of Ed’s, to marry them.
Mike and the couple on stage.

MIKE
Do you together promise you will love, cherish and respect one another, till death do you apart?

A MAN in suit quietly appears at the rear entrance of the theater in background.

FAVORING THE MAN (not showing his face)
The man stands still in dark, with a bouquet of flowers in hand.

CUT BACK TO THE STAGE

ED
I do!

FELICIA
I do

MIKE
I now pronounce you’re husband and wife! You may kiss the bride!

FAVORING THE MAN
The man leaves flowers on the side and quietly disappears.

DISSOLVE TO
Ryan wanders on the street, and occasionally COUGHS. He holds a cellphone in one hand, and a liquor bottle in the other.

INT. FELICIA’S LIVING ROOM - CONT’D

INTERCUT STREET/LIVING ROOM PHONE CONVERSATION

Phone RINGS.

FELICIA (A.M.)
You’ve reached Felicia, please leave a message. *BEEP*

Felicia carries a basket of laundry.

RYAN
*COUGH COUGH*

Felicia drops laundry and rushes to the phone.

FELICIA
Ryan?

RYAN
Hi.

FELICIA
Where are you? Are you alright?

RYAN
I’m alright...(beat)

RYAN/FELICIA
I...(simultaneously)

FELICIA
I miss you.

RYAN
I miss you too.

FELICIA
Where are you right now?

RYAN
I forgive you, would you forgive me? (looks at Felicia’s house on the other side of the road) I wanna see you.

(CONTINUED)
FELICIA
Listen baby, this is really not the right time. You gotta wait for me, give me some time, wait for me okay?

RYAN
For how long?

FELICIA
I don’t know. I’ll do the best I can, I promise. I love you Ryan, please! How can I reach you back?

ED’S CAR PULLS OVER OUTSIDE FELICIA’S HOUSE.

RYAN
Nothing to explain?

ENGINE SOUND gets louder.

FELICIA
Ryan I gotta hang up now just tell me your number! Come on!

RYAN
Never mind. (hangs up. Drains the bottle and walks across the road)

FELICIA
Ryan? Ryan! (hangs up)

Felicia picks up the laundry and goes upstairs.

27 EXT. FELICIA’S HOUSE OUTSIDE - CONT’D

Ed by the car rear door taking some shopping bags out from inside. Ryan stands behind. Ed turns around.

ED
Hey, director!

RYAN
What are you doing here?

ED
What AM I doing here? Guess I’m just preparing for my honeymoon? (sweeps his ring finger before Ryan’s face)

(CONTINUED)
RYAN
You guys married? Again?

ED
(hypocritical)
I’m sorry. I must have forgot to send you an invitation.

Ryan stares at Ed.

ED
Do you need a ride? But I gotta go. My wife’s waiting for me. (walks to the door and looks back with a smile) And thank you for seeing us off.

CUT TO

FELICIA
Who did this? (looks at the door, still open) Burglar? I’ll call the police.

ED
I’ll make the call. Grab me a towel will ya?

Felicia runs upstairs.

28 INT. BATHROOM - CONT’D
Felicia grabs a towel.

29 INT. FELICIA’S LIVING ROOM - CONT’D
Felicia runs down. Ed in a coma on the floor.

FELICIA
Ed? (pats Ed’s face)

Felicia puts her ear on Ed’s chest, and looks at the open door and stares back at Ed. She pressured the towel on Ed’s face. Ed convulses a few seconds and stops eventually.

DISSOLVE TO
30 INT. JARED’S OFFICE – DAY

FELICIA
(stands up)
What are you talking about?!

Jared presses the phone.

JARED
(jaded)
Jenny, please call Lieutenant
Eastman and tell him to come over.

JENNY (OVER THE PHONE)
Yes, Mr. Murray.

FELICIA
Mister M...?

JARED
He is my only child.

FELICIA
I’m sorry Mr. Murray. But I
didn’t...You said it was...

JARED
The autopsy reveals, that my
son, was smothered to death with a
towel.

FELICIA
(collapsed in chair)
You said you’d help me.

JARED
I did.

–THE END–
Cinema Theater Function Sheet

Date/Time: May 11th 2014
Rental Fee: $150

Name of Function: Film Shoot
Marquee Request: ____________________________
Coordinator: Xiaoli
Film: ____________________________
Format: ____________________________

Time Slot: 9 AM - 12 PM
Deposit/Date Paid: $150
Balance Due Date: 5/9/14
Public or Private: ____________________________

Phone Number: 585-766-5766
Provided or We Secure: ____________________________
Running Time: ____________________________

You will have access to the:
Lobby, Concession Area, Theater

Agenda

Set-up Crew Arrival: ____________________________
Box Office Open: ____________________________
Doors Open: ____________________________
Welcome Speech: ____________________________
Q&A: ____________________________

Guest Arrival: ____________________________
Ticket Price: ____________________________
Concessions Open: ____________________________
Show Time: ____________________________
Departure: ____________________________

Jim Lewis
585-290-9230
Call me at 8:00 AM
Text me Sat night
LOCATION AGREEMENT

THIS AGREEMENT made by and between film student Xiao Li (the Student) at Rochester Institute of Technology and Raj Mahal Restaurant (the Grantor).

1. Grantor hereby agrees to permit the Student to use the Banquet Room located at 368 Jefferson Rd, Rochester, NY 14623 (the Property) in connection with the thesis film entitled ADDRESS for rehearsing, photographing, filming and recording scenes and sounds for the thesis film. The Student may exhibit, advertise, promote and otherwise exploit the film or any portion thereof, whether or not such uses contain audio and/or visual reproduction of the Property and whether or not the Property is identified or identifiable, in any and all media whatsoever now known or later devised in the universe in perpetuity.

2. Student shall have the right to bring personnel and any equipment onto the Property and to remove same following completion of its use of the Property hereunder. Student shall have the right, but not the obligation, to photograph, film and use in the film the actual name, if any, connected with the Property or to use any other name for the Property. If the Student depicts the interior(s) of any structures located on the Property, Grantor agrees that the Student shall not be required to depict such interior(s) in any particular manner in this thesis film.

3. The permission granted hereunder shall be for the period of two evenings on weekdays. The period may be rescheduled by the Student if there are changes in the production schedule or other unforeseen delays such as due to weather conditions.

4. The Student agrees that (with Grantor’s permission) if it becomes necessary to change, alter or rearrange any equipment on the Property belonging to Grantor, the Student shall return and restore said equipment to its original place and condition, or repair it, if necessary. The Student agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Grantor from any against any and all liabilities, damages and claims of third parties arising from the Student’s use hereunder of the property (unless such liabilities, damages or claims arise from breach of Grantor’s warranty as set forth in the immediately following sentence); and from any physical damage to the Property proximately caused by the Student, or any of his personnel.

The undersigned represents that s/he is either rightful and true owner of the Property or empowered as agent or otherwise to execute this Agreement for or on behalf of owner.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have hereunto set their names and seals as of the date first above-written.

May 8th 2014

The Student:  
By: Xiao Li

The Grantor:  
By: Sheryl Gonzalez

61
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Film and Animation

Rochester Institute of Technology

2015/copyright @ Xiao Li