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Save The Cat

SAVE THE CAT!

The Last Book On Screenwriting You'll Ever Need!



BLAKE SNYDER



Synopsis

This ultimate insider's guide reveals the secrets that none dare admit, told by a show biz veteran who's proven that you can sell your script if you can save the cat!

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Customer Reviews

I'm a professional screenwriter, and here's a typical comment I get at parties: "Oh you're a writer? I have this great idea for a movie. All I need is someone to write the dialogue...I'll give you my idea and you write the dialogue and we'll split the money." These sadly misguided people are actually serious about this proposal. These people are the kind for whom "Save The Cat" is meant. In other words, people who think so little of the art of screenwriting that it's just "an idea and some dialogue" to them. Ideas are cheap and plentiful, it's the execution of the idea that matters. "Save the Cat!" offers no insight into the art of screenwriting, but it is a concise guide to how to write a crappy script. The fact is: the author sold several hack scripts and made money on them. The implied reasoning is "I made money on crappy scripts, so you can, too!" There is no disputing that crappy scripts sell and

get made all the time, but you can't build a career on them. And why would you want to? Clearly the author couldn't, either, hence this book and all the other products based on it. If you haven't looked at his credits, he wrote "Blank Check" and "Stop or My Mom Will Shoot." These movies got 4.2 and 3.4 stars on IMDB. Of course, the writer is not responsible for the final product, but from the way he talks in the book, I'm sure these screenplays were only improved in the production process. BTW, he had 3 co-writers on those movies, so we don't even know what his contribution to each of them was. If you are a good writer with actual talent and something to say, you'll benefit from Robert McKee's "Story." If your aim is much lower, then buy "Save the Cat." The concepts are simple and will propel you well on your way to hack-dom.

OK, maybe not the last book you'll ever need, but if you are a screenwriter or play one on TV, this just may be the BEST book you'll ever need, or read, on the subject of how to break into the big screen big time as a writer of tall tales. Blake Snyder is a working, selling writer himself, so that gives the reader a true inside glimpse into what it's like, what it takes, and what to expect on the long road to screenwriting stardom. Many screenwriting how-to tomes are written by guys and gals who have few or no real studio credits, so with this book you can be sure you are getting the info direct from the source of a successful member of the Hollywood elite. Snyder starts out with a bang, describing how important a good title, pitch and concept are, and giving tons of useful advice for whipping those log lines into shape, the best shape ever in fact, for as the author points out, many industry powerbrokers won't even look beyond a log line...so it better be good. Damned good. He then discusses how to make your story like everything else out there, only different, and if you can come to understand that paradox, you will be a success indeed. We also learn about the importance of creating characters that fit certain archetypes, like the hero and the villain, and how the use of Jungian archetypes can help you shape and mold real people that resonate with the audience. Also covered is the importance of knowing your genre and how to best amplify the style of that genre. Another chapter deals with the author's own system of breaking a script down to 15 beats, and how every successful movie fits this same beat system.

This extremely overrated book doesn't deserve the accolades its getting. There's nothing Snyder offers in this book that can't be found elsewhere and better. Snyder spends too much of the book stroking his own ego and bragging up his meager accomplishments -- he wrote Disney's Blank Check! -- and this self-importance imposes itself on all his advice. I really lost my patience with the book when I reached his section on genre. Rather than discuss genre as most people understand it

-- Murder/Mystery, Sci-Fi, Romantic Comedy, etc. -- Snyder creates his own schema and new categories. This encapsulates the whole problem with the book: Snyder devotes far, far too much time to reinventing the wheel, or copying better writers and imposing his own weird theories on their ideas. Vague and unhelpful examples litter the book, with Snyder making off-hand remarks about a bad script he read once in lieu of actual text examples. Trottier's *The Screenwriter's Bible: A Complete Guide to Writing, Formatting, and Selling Your Script* and *Screenplay: The Foundations of Screenwriting* contain all the information in this book, and present it in a clearer, more concise and less treachy manner. The only "original" idea in the book is found in the title -- the advice to show your protagonist "saving a cat", i.e.

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