

I Am Woman

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Logline

An aspiring actress finds herself losing her identity to the dominantly male film industry in casting for a new movie.

Characters

WOMAN - An aspiring actress trying to land a principal role in an upcoming movie. During the audition for the part, she slowly starts losing control over both her mind and body to the all-male crew of the movie, who try to make a willing and dependent puppet-like actress out of her.

PRODUCER - An established movie-mogul who is present at the audition. He plays a dominant role in the process of transforming WOMAN into whatever they want her to be. He is harsh, direct, and brutally honest, not showing any empathy towards the auditioning women.

DIRECTOR - He is directly involved in commanding WOMAN how to act on- and off screen. Objectifying her, he is the main drive in fixing her up to perform according to his desires.

Synopsis

Act 1

We encounter WOMAN, an aspiring actress, in a frame of a recording camera in her flat. Seemingly nervous and uptight about her performance, she rehearses a dialogue, glancing at loose pages scattered across her lap. As she finishes her part of the monologue, she comically mimics the part written for a seemingly male actor.

In a scarcely furnished room, PRODUCER and DIRECTOR are telling off another actress auditioning for the same role in a quite impolite matter. Watching the woman run off in tears, they flip through their documents announcing WOMAN is the next number to audition for the role.

WOMAN makes her way into the building the audition is held in. As she enters through the door she bumps into a man coming out of the building. She falls to the ground onto her knees and drops her script, as he stands above her cursing her out. Grumpily, he leaves, leaving a wet footprint on her script. Trying to shake off the interaction, she proceeds to enter the building and makes her way up to the audition premises.

Entering the premises, she encounters a secretary who overly-routinely guides her through a short admission process and then invites WOMAN to enter into the empty and gloomy waiting room. A bit concerned by the behavior of the secretary, WOMAN proceeds to wait in the waiting room, until PA calls out her number to audition.

Act 2

WOMAN enters the auditioning room and faces PRODUCER and DIRECTOR [referenced to as crew together with PA] sitting on the opposite side table. She sits down after being told so and begins her audition. PA speaks the male part of the dialogue. PRODUCER and DIRECTOR intervene constantly and eventually bring the audition to a halt. They proceed to command WOMAN on how to act and present herself, until DIRECTOR gets behind her and starts to slightly alter her position. He then tells her to get into a makeup chair nearby for a screen test.

Much to WOMAN's surprise, her makeup does not get done by a makeup artist, but by DIRECTOR himself. Following, we can see multiple scenes of how WOMAN gets transformed into the desired role - makeup, costume, posture gets fixed. Slowly but surely during those scenes, the crew takes over simple tasks for her, gradually building up to even manually moving parts of her body instead of letting her do so herself. We can see WOMAN's resistance at first, watching her lose her will over the procedures as the audition goes on.

Having finished WOMAN's look for the role, the crew moves her over in front of a camera for a screen test. We can still sense a slight resistance coming from her, but the demands of the crew take over. After one last desperate rebellion against what is happening to her, WOMAN finally completely surrenders to the crew's demands and loses any ability concerning her free will.

Act 3

The screen test starts, again with the PA acting with WOMAN of camera. WOMAN's acting is not much more compatible with the role, and while the crew still intervenes, they do so in an overly friendly and belittling manner, as if they were talking to a young child. They are much more pleased with not only her performance, but also her appearance and behavior off-screen. The crew consults for a few moments, before happily smiling at her, offering her the role. Now not more than their puppet, the crew has entirely taken over her abilities and freedom, and leads her into their office next door. Getting her to sit in a chair in the room, they touch her up once more to make her smile, and then say their goodbyes until the next day. As the crew leaves the room and turns off the lights, WOMAN remains in her chair, unmoved.

Representation (Principal Cast)

The characters remain being referenced to by their role within the script on purpose. They are not viewed as individuals, but rather represent their function in the dynamic created in between the characters.

WOMAN - She is a symbol of what women are viewed as in the film industry - a mere fantasy, the desired object by the male protagonist, something to-be-looked-at. As the female character in an otherwise male ensemble of principal characters, is the only one not being named after her profession but her gender; meaning to indicate how only her sexual appeal and gender-defined role is relevant in the eyes of the remaining characters. Her transformation from an independent person to a marionette of the film crew portrays the objectification of women in movies to fit their purpose in the respective story.

PRODUCER - As the organizing mastermind behind film production, the producer is a personification of the film industry as an organization. Under the presumption that the industry is male-dominated, all the interests in women's performance in the film are summarized in his person.

DIRECTOR - Leading by example, the director invites the audience to view women, and thus, a women in movies, as something with the only purpose of being viewed.

Referenced Authors and Motivation

The motivation of the movie roots in the 1975 essay *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* by feminist film critic Laura Mulvey. She famously brought the concept of the "male gaze" into film criticism, describing how women in classic cinema merely serve the purpose of being viewed by a male, heterosexual counterpart. This counterpart is viewing her i) with an intra-diegetic gaze as the male protagonist, ii) with an extra-diegetic gaze through the lens of the camera in form of the director, or iii) with an extra-diegetic gaze as the audience.

Our story intends to visualize the treatment of women in motion pictures and the film industry. With hyper realistic and absurd images, we want to portray how different roles within the film industry play into the use and abuse of actresses.