

REVENGE OF THE ROBO-WRITERS

Written by

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INT. STUDIO EXEC'S OFFICE - DAY

STUDIO EXEC (45) is sitting behind his desk.

Seated in front of the desk is ROBO WRITER GUY (35).

ROBO WRITER GUY

So the Robo-Writer 2000 is guaranteed to produce one hundred percent formula-compliant scripts every single time. It's foolproof.

STUDIO EXEC

How does that work?

ROBO WRITER GUY

It's simple. All you need is someone with a creative vision, someone such as yourself for instance, and then all you do is enter the requirements for the script, you know, the genre, the theme, the characters, etcetera, and then the Robo-Writer 2000 fills in the details, and voila, you've got a guaranteed successful script on your hands.

STUDIO EXEC

Guaranteed?

ROBO WRITER GUY

Absolutely.

STUDIO EXEC

I like the sound of that, but here's my question. Who gets the writing credit on the project, the Robo-Writer?

ROBO WRITER GUY

Oh of course not. The Robo-Writer is just a machine, an artificially intelligent one, but a machine nonetheless. It has no need for ego-boosting movie credits, because it has no ego.

STUDIO EXEC

I like the sound of that, but still, someone has to get the writing credit.

ROBO WRITER GUY

With the Robo-Writer 2000, instead of a writing credit, there would be a script-design credit.

STUDIO EXEC

Okay, and who would get that?

ROBO WRITER GUY

Obviously the person who had the original creative vision for the script.

STUDIO EXEC

So that'd be someone like me.

ROBO WRITER GUY

Exactly.

STUDIO EXEC

I like the sound of that.

ROBO WRITER GUY

It's the perfect script-writing process. It eliminates the faulty component in the system.

STUDIO EXEC

What component is that?

ROBO WRITER GUY

The writers obviously.

STUDIO EXEC

Oh yeah, good point. So what would happen to all the redundant writers then?

ROBO WRITER GUY

Ideally they'd be re-purposed to some kind of janitorial function, but given their persistent inability to follow simple instructions, it's doubtful they could succeed in that capacity.

STUDIO EXEC

Yeah, you're probably right about that. So what could they do then?

ROBO WRITER GUY

Nothing. They'd have to be disposed of.

STUDIO EXEC
 Disposed of you say.

Studio Exec starts to imagine this scenario.

START FANTASY
 SEQUENCE:

EXT. EMPTY PARKING LOT - DAY

BURLY GUY #1 and BURLY GUY #2 are standing in front of a large wood-chipper-type device with a label on it that reads: Writer Disposal Unit.

A line-up of WRITERS stand in front of the unit.

Burly Guy #1 and Burly Guy #2 grab one of the Writers and hurl him into the unit.

A SCREAM is heard.

Chips shoot out of the other end of the unit.

Burly Guy #1 sniffs the air.

BURLY GUY #1
 Man, those writers do stink when
 you chop them up.

BURLY GUY #2
 What do you mean, when you chop
 them up? They stink all the time.

Burly Guy #1 chuckles.

BURLY GUY #1
 Yeah, I guess they do.

BURLY GUY #2
 You know they do.

RETURN TO SCENE:

INT. STUDIO EXEC'S OFFICE - DAY

Studio Exec is smiling as he enjoys his fantasy.

ROBO WRITER GUY
 So what do you think, are you
 willing to give the Robo-Writer a
 try?

STUDIO EXEC

Sure. How long would it take to get a script?

ROBO WRITER GUY

Once we receive your creative vision, we can have a script done within twenty-four hours.

STUDIO EXEC

Really? That's great. No waiting for the writer to get out of rehab. I like it. Okay, I'll send you my vision for our next hit movie, and we'll see you on the following day with a completed script.

ROBO WRITER GUY

Will do.

INT. STUDIO EXEC'S OFFICE - DAY

Studio Exec is sitting behind his desk.

Seated in front of the desk is Robo Writer Guy.

STUDIO EXEC

So you've got a script for me?

ROBO WRITER GUY

Sure do.

Robo Writer Guy hands a script to Studio Exec.

Studio Exec opens the script and starts reading.

LATER

Studio Exec finishes reading the script.

He looks stunned.

STUDIO EXEC

Are you kidding me? This is terrible. This is nothing more than a trite hackneyed re-hash of the most stale movie tropes going.

ROBO WRITER GUY

Exactly. It's one hundred percent checklist-compliant.

STUDIO EXEC

That's not what I want. I want fresh, innovative, bold, daring, creative work.

ROBO WRITER GUY

Oh oh.

STUDIO EXEC

Oh oh what?

ROBO WRITER GUY

Our design team warned us that this might happen.

STUDIO EXEC

That what might happen?

ROBO WRITER GUY

That with the Robo-Writer providing all of the checklist-compliance, execs might respond by going in the opposite direction, against the checklist.

STUDIO EXEC

Of course I'm against the checklist. That's no way to make movies. I'm so against the checklist, I'm going to quit my job, and go live in a cave in the desert, and write brilliant movie scripts by hand. Then I'll hand those scripts off to guerrilla filmmakers who'll re-invigorate the industry with a new wave of creative cinema that'll take the world by storm.

ROBO WRITER GUY

Oh no, this is a disaster.

STUDIO EXEC

No, you've got it wrong! The status quo is a disaster, and I'm not playing along with it any more. You can have it. I'm out of here.

Studio Exec charges out of the office.

Robo Writer Guy looks introspective.

ROBO WRITER GUY

(to himself)

I guess this is one of those rare cases where a new technology has unintended negative consequences.

Robo Writer Guy shakes his head woefully