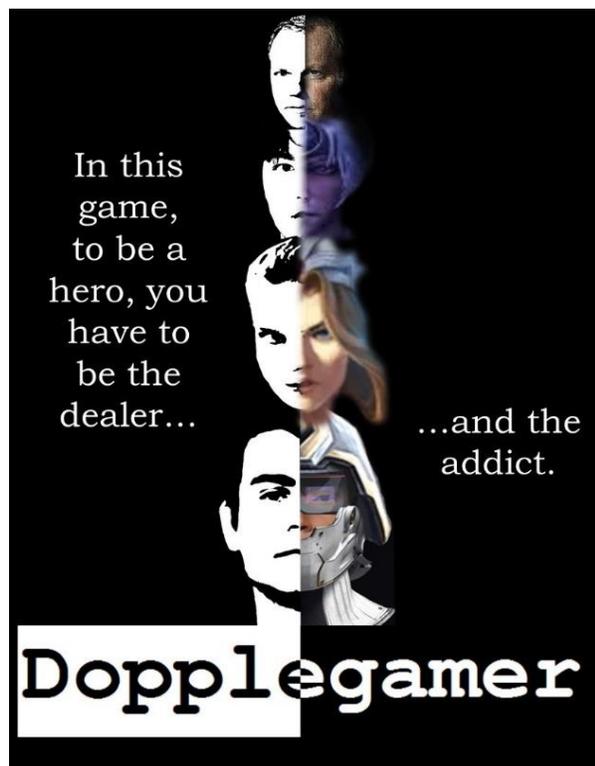


DOPPLEGAMER

Synopsis/Treatment

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Logline

Once a thankless nobody, the greatest player in a live action battle arena game can become a glorified avatar or return to himself, either of which may destroy him.

Feature length drama blending ROLLERBALL* and READY PLAYER ONE.

Setting

In the near future (a mix of an alternative and possible one), declining interest and changing society bring an end to professional sports once attracting millions –football, baseball, soccer, hockey. Now the most watched sporting event on Earth is Glory of Heroes (or Heroes in the story’s vernacular). Far from its humble beginnings as a Massive Online Battle Arena

(MOBA) game, Heroes morphed into reality: from a game where humans control avatars to humans playing the avatar in the arena. One Hero and four Champions. Red vs Blue teams. Each player creates a fantasy/superhero persona. This is not virtual reality. Although highly computerized, via augmented reality players fight monsters, minions, laser firing towers and each other, it requires physical gameplay and people get hurt.

Thousands pack renovated stadiums or view live streams to watch. As local, state and the federal government prove unable to fund schools, infrastructure and health care, private corporations take up the slack. They also control Heroes, making billions.

Bottom line: Imagine games like Defense of the Ancients (DOTA), League of Legends and Smite were played for real, not on a computer. Blend it with the allure of a football game and spectacle of professional wrestling. GEEK (Gamers of Extraordinary and Exceptional *Kape*-abilities) is a label now worn with pride.

* The 1975 version. Although dated, far better than the 2002 remake.

Intended Rating/Target Audience

Intended rating: PG-13.

Gamers of Massive On-Line Battle Arena (MOBA) games, cosplayers, fans of the Marvel/DC comic world who admire the costumed hero. Those who wish they could run around in a costume and save the world, or if not that, kick some ass doing it.

Plot/Synopsis

Act 1

Jason Dávalos works as a thankless cook at Beachers, where scantily clad waitresses, wings and beer are the main attraction (i.e., Hooters). His life revolves around Heroes: plays online, practices via simgames and participates in tryouts for teams. Harboring a silent contempt for those who have more, becoming a great cyberlete (the athlete part dropped decades ago) would give him the same. He scrapes by to have money for the equipment and fees needed for tryouts, addicted to the game as countless others, many wanting their chance in the arena. With few exceptions, most of his “friends” are online, seen only when playing Heroes. His crush on the waitress Savannah goes unrewarded although she considers him a friend.

Act 2

Getting a spot on a practice squad for a professional team, he endures the contempt of the Gold team Hero Gustave. Given his drive, he soon overcomes his underserving status as a noob and gets a chance to play Gold mid-season (Gold refers to the primary team players or “Going Gold”). Starting as a Champion, within a season he ranks among the best players as his costumed player, and alter ego, Jägerdon.

Act 3

He then becomes team’s Hero. All he wanted -fame, recognition, money, desired by women- come to fruition. He revels the cheering crowds, groupies. A validation of his efforts and himself. Problems solved.

Act 4

Soon he discovers it’s the other way around: his character achieves glory through him, and is still a nobody without it. It wasn’t supposed to be like this. The people want Jägerdon, not Jason Dávalos. A tipping point comes when, after losing a match to help and injured player, he’s taken aback when “Jason” gets condemned by fans, and how “Jägerdon” wouldn’t have done that. Save for Savannah, who still sees him as Jason, but will only be a friend. His “real” life didn’t

really change. Questioning his own identity, promoting the game and making millions for those in control, they deal out the fantasy of Heroes, keeping others addicted.

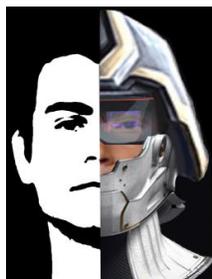
He begins reflecting on the effects Heroes has on people (i.e, himself but reluctant to admit it). His manager presses the fact much the social programs the corporation funds comes from Heroes, and keeps the masses entertained. Jason comes to know what the old phrase “bread and circus” really means. While part of him wants to break free, even if it means returning to his old life, another part’s unable to shake off the allure of what his alter ego brings.

Act 5

As the annual GOH Championship draws near, top managers eschew the normal Blue vs Red standards and pit three top teams against each other. The resulting match would draw in billions of viewers, billions in ad revenue and merchandising. Sensing a way out, Jason pulls his own coup: he enters the arena alone, believing he’d be quickly ganked and leave with a clear conscience. But the other two Heroes do the same, and becomes a test between them alone. Although opening himself up for defeat, the adrenaline and chanting crowds prove too addictive. Taking out the last Hero, he leaves the arena as the crowds shout out the name Jägerdon. He succumbs to his other half. Knowing Jason Dávalos is dead, Jägerdon lives on. And so too Glory of Heroes.

In the end, the story is a battle for self-identity and worth and the price we are, or not, willing to pay. Summed up in one quote– “I pretended to be somebody I wanted to be until finally I became that person. Or he became me.” Archibald Leach (aka Cary Grant).

MAIN CHARACTER



JASON DÁVALOS- Early 20s. Although most public colleges now have free tuition, he elects to devote his time to Heroes. The job covers his bills and not much more. He has no other trade or skills except when it comes to Heroes. Intelligent, he’s mild mannered, a loner at heart, feelings of inferiority. His other, ruthless, take no prisoners side comes out through Jägerdon.

SECONDARY CHARACTERS



FELIX VAN ZANT- Late 30s. Carries himself as a man in control, an air of confidence. Underneath, doubts about his future and missed opportunities of the past. General manager of the Spirit Express, funded by Terasoft (whose logo is ‘Improving the World One Byte at a Time’). Having been on a winning streak for years, the teams in a slump, and there’s little forgiveness in corporate America. Sees Jason as the team’s, and his, savior. He also lives vicariously through Jason.



STEPHANIE TRIMBLE- Early 20s. Canadian, descendant of a First Peoples tribe in Manitoba. Games as team Hero for Rolling Thunder as Praxis (a Hunter). One of two Heroes Jason battles in the end.



CHOE GI- Early 20s. South Korean. Games for Sons of Creation as Seung (an Assassin) the team’s Hero. One of the greatest players still in the arena. Son and grandson of Heroes. The other Jason battles at the end.

CLIFTON MCKINNON- 20. From Texas. Befriends Jason and becomes a Champion. Career comes to an end when injured during a match.

LUBA MARCHENKO- Early 40s. Former player from Ukraine and Hero Soundless Frost, now coach of the Sprit Express.

GUSTAV JOKINEN- Mid 20s. Current Hero of the Spirit Express. Although marketed as his Nordic player Torsten (a Warrior), he’s from Pittsburg. Once a rising star, he’s slipped, but not his arrogance.

EUGENE BARTHOLOMEW- Late 60s. Member of the Terasoft Board. Deals with Felix and the team.

JONAS PROBST- Early 40s. Manger of the Rolling Thunder. Despite being a hedonist, he’s business savvy, making millions for his company. Has contempt, but begrudging respect for Felix.

MORGANE GRANDMONT-ZHAO- Late 40s. Manger of Sons of Creation. Former player and Champion for a French team Ne Regrette Rien. Ruthless with coaches and players.

SAVANNAH JEWELL- Early 20s. Barback at Beachers. Getting a degree in microbiology. Keeps up with Jason as his star rises.

ADDITIONAL THEMES:

Loneliness: No one else wants or understands us. Everyone else has it better. Even on top, just as isolated as those on the bottom.

Addiction to technology: Real life offers little comfort. Few who ever achieve the full potential in life. In cyberspace, in Heroes, we create that. Like a drug, we become dependent on it for self-worth.

Addiction to aggression: From the gladiatorial games to modern sporting events, humans desire the spectacle requiring competitive skill and antagonistic behavior. Savoring the thrill of victory and enjoying the agony of the defeated.

Desire to be special: Yearning for sense of accomplishment by achieving goals few, if anyone else, obtains. Once there, we build an aura of invisibility, reinforced by those around us, whether real or perceived.

The magic pill: Belief there is one solution to all problems.

The glorification of the Geek & Cosplay culture: We dress up as superheroes or our fav fantasy character because they inspire us. The rise in popularity of Heroes encourages this trend.