

BANANAS IN SPACE

by

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INT. UGC NORMANDIE - FRANCE - DAY

A crowded theatre, booming with men and women dressed in their most elegant attire. Photographic flashes overwhelm the area.

A panel area, lit from a spotlight, rests at the front of the theatre, with a massive sign hung from behind that reads "FESTIVAL DE CANNES".

A row of chairs sit behind the panel, with the center chair occupied by WOODY ALLEN (78), lanky and a little weatherworn, but nevertheless sharp and magnanimous. Sitting around him are notable actors and actresses ALEC BALDWIN (55), JUDY DAVIS (58), and OWEN WILSON (48).

Judy is in the middle of addressing the audience.

JUDY

--So we're finishing the scene -
and it was getting hot and heavy by
this point - and by the time Woody
yelled, "Cut", Alec was still
holding onto my ass like they were
handlebars.

The audience laughs, as Alec sheepishly shrugs. Woody, appearing as though he is nodding off to sleep, otherwise smirks.

A MASTER OF CEREMONIES (24), stands up from the audience.

MC

Do we have any more questions for
Mr. Allen and the cast of "Walking
in the Midnight Majesty"?

A hand raises from the audience. A microphone is passed across to the AUDIENCE MEMBER.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

Mr. Allen, what projects do you
have lined up following this film?

Woody perks up a little bit and leans into his microphone. He gestures anxiously as he talks.

WOODY

(clears throat)
Yes, well, I've been penning the
script for the next film since we
wrapped on "Midnight Majesty". I'm
expecting to go into principal
photography very soon.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

And the project is?

WOODY

It's a multimillion dollar science fiction political thriller.

The audience and the rest of the panel laugh.

ALEC

That's pretty funny, Woody.

WOODY

That wasn't a joke.

The laughter dims, turning more nervous.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

This is a real movie?

WOODY

Absolutely. This film marks my fiftieth directorial piece and I figured, if I could spend almost fifty years making smaller projects, why not splurge on myself and make something a bit more bigger in scale.

The laughter finally stops. Owen and Judy look back and forth between each other.

OWEN

(to Woody)

You can't be serious, Woody.

WOODY

Sure, I'm serious. Think of it like "Bananas" in space, except more dramatic.

The audience begins to murmur among itself, before the MC finally stands up.

MC

Ladies, gentlemen, a think that's all the time we have for the panel. A nice round of applause for Mr. Allen and the cast.

A few claps echo through the theatre, before Alec, Judy, Owen, and Woody stand up and exit the panel.

INT. NEW YORK APARTMENT - DAY

Woody sits at his desk typing away on a 1940's Royal typewriter. Standing beside him is his sister/producer LETTY ARONSON (70), a feisty firecracker of a woman.

LETTY

This is ridiculous, Woody. Don't you care that everyone from here to San Francisco are calling you a sell-out?

WOODY

You know I don't read what they say in the papers.

LETTY

Even when they called you the Auteur of Satan during the Mia scandal?

WOODY

They said "Satan"? I thought that said "Santa". Sounds a little less anachronistic.

LETTY

Why can't you just stick to your earlier, funnier movies?

WOODY

Why does that sound familiar?

LETTY

Woody--

WOODY

Look, Letty, I'm still making this movie, no matter what anyone says. It'll be just as big a hit as Star Wars or Star Trek.

LETTY

But you haven't seen either of those!

WOODY

Wait, Star Trek had the giant dog, right?

LETTY

Whatever. I can't be involved with this, Woody. It's gonna be a disaster.

Letty turns around to leave, before Woody grabs her by the shirt sleeve.

WOODY

Letty, wait!

Letty looks at Woody, sensing the concern in his eyes.

WOODY (CONT'D)

You've been there for me during everything, between losing my kids to the custody battle to "Curse of the Jade Scorpion."

LETTY

"Jade Scorpion" was pretty bad.

WOODY

We all wanna forget about "Jade Scorpion". But you were there for me then, just like I need you here for me now.

Letty thinks this over. A moment.

LETTY

Fine, I'll do it. But for this kind of film, we have to set the budget at around \$75-80 million.

WOODY

Is that a bit much?

LETTY

Don't worry, I know how to spend it.

INT. STUDIO STAGE - DAY

Light stands, cameras, and crew members occupy the stage. The center of the stage is adorned with futuristic sci-fi gadgets and interiors, as well as a giant green screen.

The stage door cracks open and Woody, with Letty by his side, enters inside.

LETTY

My, my, my, this looks fantastic!

WOODY

What's this big blanket behind the set?

LETTY

That's the green screen, Woody.

WOODY

I don't like it. Looks gaudy.

LETTY

No, no, no, that's where they composite the rest of the set for the movie.

WOODY

How are they gonna fit the rest of the set onto that flat piece of fabric?

LETTY

Let's move on.

They press on closer to the set, where they see LIAM NEESON (61), dressed in scaly, lizard-like green latex makeup and an outfit reminiscent of Fu Manchu, reading from a script.

LETTY (CONT'D)

Liam! Nice to see you again!

Liam looks up from his script.

LIAM

(hugging Letty)

Letty, how are you? You look marvelous.

(to Woody)

And how are you, Woody?

Woody nods and quietly mutters, nervously avoiding eye contact.

LETTY

Anyway, Liam, did you have any questions for me or Woody?

LIAM

Yes, actually.

(to Woody)

I was wondering if we could discuss my character a bit.

WOODY

Of course.

(clears throat)

Um, what specifics did you want?

LIAM

Could you give me a little backstory behind this General Plumbus character?

WOODY

Yes, well, um....you're the general of the planet Aphrodisiac - let's see - and your objective is to brainwash the masses into thinking that you are a prophet to save them from complete annihilation.

LIAM

Okay, and on Scene 46, it says that at one point during the giant, volcanic eruption, my character flies.

WOODY

Correct.

LIAM

How are we going to accomplish that?

WOODY

(clears throat)
You fly.

LIAM

I know, but what's the stunt work? Wire work, green screen, matte work?

WOODY

You know, you just - um - yeah. You fly.

Liam looks at Woody, stark confused. He tries to respond, but Woody immediately directs his attention somewhere else and walks away.

Liam turns to Letty, who shrugs and attempts to offer a response as well, before she scurries back to Woody's side.

INT. STUDIO STAGE - LATER

Woody perches over in a fold out chair, sitting by monitor with Letty. He watching the screen intently.

Ten feet in front of him, a camera operator and 1st AC stand by camera, as Liam, held by wire, floats around the green screen background, pantomiming with a plastic handgun.

Liam strains as he floats, but nevertheless tries to keep face underneath the latex.

WOODY

Cut!

Liam's floating ceases, yet he continuous to hang in the air.

WOODY (CONT'D)

I think we can move on to the next scene.

This catches Letty off guard.

LETTY

Um, Woody, I don't think that's the best idea.

WOODY

Why not? We finished the master.

LETTY

I know, but this needs tighter coverage. We can't just use a wide shot for this kind of scene.

WOODY

Of course we can. Half the scenes in "Purple Rose of Cairo" were masters.

LETTY

"Purple Rose" didn't have lasers or alien dictators, though.

WOODY

It had Mia, so at least the last part of that's true.

Liam, floating a full 360 degrees by the green screen, shouts to Woody.

LIAM

Hey, Woody, can they let me down for a sec. I'm getting a tad queasy.

WOODY

Absolutely.
(yells over his shoulder)
(MORE)

WOODY (CONT'D)

Can we get someone to cut Liam
down?

Two PAs run past him and approach the back of the set.

Letty turns back to Woody. As she talks to him, Liam continues to float in rotation, occasionally jittered by the movement of his wire by the crew members.

LETTY

(to Woody)

All I'm saying is that you need to
move in closer to maybe the torso-
up or the face for some inserts?

WOODY

I still don't see why, Letty. Think
about it -

(clears throat)

His body movement works in
coordination with the green
background. It's gonna look
beautifully on screen.

LETTY

But Woody--

WOODY

Trust me, Letty - there's a reason
why I won four Oscars.

LETTY

But you don't even show up at the
Oscars!

WOODY

That's only because I have my jazz
band on Sundays.

LETTY

The Oscars take place on Monday,
Woody.

WOODY

That probably explains why I'm
always the only one at the club.

At that moment, a loud SNAP!

Liam plummets from the top of the set to the floor, as the remaining wire coils on top of his body.

INT. STUDIO STAGE - LATER

Liam, harnessed together by a neck brace, is lifted onto a stretcher by two medics, who roll him from the center of the stage to the exit.

Woody paces back and forth with Letty. Every crew member is crowded in a semi-circle, nervously looking at Woody; they await his next course of action.

LETTY

What do we do now?

Woody takes off his glasses and scratches the side of his head with the frame.

WOODY

We can reshoot it.

Letty looks at Woody, astounded, befuddled.

LETTY

What?

WOODY

Yeah, this is an easy fix.

LETTY

That's gonna take up some time, Woody.

WOODY

You're talking to the guy who shot "September" twice. I've been down this road before.

LETTY

But what about Liam?

WOODY

He'll be back on his feet soon enough.

INT. DOLBY THEATRE - LOS ANGELES - DAY

Two 50 foot plaster replica of the Oscar statuette rest on both sides of the stage. The lights are dimmed and the mood is somber.

A screen in the center of the stage depicts a still photo of Liam, with a caption that reads "IN MEMORIAM: 1952-2013". Slow, melancholic piano music accompanies the imagery.

The video fades to black, as the screen pulls back up to the ceiling and the piano music dims out to a finish.

SILENCE.

Immediately, jaunty, upbeat orchestral music blares throughout the theatre, followed by the booming sound of a BACKSTAGE ANNOUNCER.

BACKSTAGE ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, please
welcome, Frances McDormand.

FRANCES McDORMAND (56), dressed in a ravishing silver gown, enters from the back of the stage with an envelope in her hand and stands at the podium.

FRANCES

The director's job is to pour their heart, sweat, tears, and, yes, even their money into their project, resulting in a product that not entertains, but enlightens and enriches the audience for two hours. Here are the nominees for Best Director--

Just then, a stage hand in a tuxedo approaches Frances and whispers in her ear. She nods, as the stage hand disappears backstage.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

It appears that Mr. MacFarlane's opening number went on for too long, cutting our broadcast short by thirty minutes, so I'll have to cut to the chase.

She tears open the envelope.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

(reading the envelope)

And the Oscar goes to...Woody Allen
for "Plumbus Nine from Deep Space"!

Uproarious applause rings from the audience. One person, MIA FARROW (68), sits quietly with her hands in her lap.

Frances leans back into the microphone.

FRANCES (CONT'D)

The Academy congratulates Mr. Allen and accepts this award on his behalf.

Letty, applauding in the audience, shakes her head and looks at an empty seat beside her.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Woody, wrapped up in a toboggan and scarf, shivers outside the coffee house, with a clarinet case in his hands.

WOODY

If those guys are late again, I'm gonna be so pissed.

CUT TO BLACK.