

A Movie Producer Who Never Produced a Movie Freaks Out at Kurt and David

In late February of 2001, we sold a one-year option on our screenplay "Flagrant Fouls" to a small independent film company that shall remain nameless (and that no longer exists). We did several revisions of the screenplay for them, and, as the option was nearing its end, we thought that we had arrived at a screenplay that they would be eager produce. We printed a nice, clean copy of the revised screenplay (this is an important detail!) and sent it to our producer. After several weeks we had heard nothing back, so Kurt sent this email:

Checking in. You said when we spoke last in early December that you would get to the script in two weeks. Have you had a chance to read it yet? We're running out of time on the option. I believe it expires at the end of February.

Kurt

In response, we received the most amazing email that we have ever received:

Alright I think it's time someone said this to you guys - YOUR PROFESSIONALISM SUCKS! I have not read this script because it's insulting that it was sent in the condition it's in. Every other writer that sends material does so according to industry standards - and if they don't I throw them away - as does everyone else. I didn't want to have this conversation until I was well [the producer had medical problems as a result of his obesity] but I just find it beyond comprehension that after waiting for this long you send a script that is dirty and falling apart. It's as if you didn't even read R.M.'s STORY. Where's the craftsmanship? You guys just don't seem to get it. You are acting in a manner that clearly says you have not learned anything from the thousands of dollars [we have] spent nursing you through a process you claimed you knew. You are sadly mistaken if you think any other production company would have put up with this kind of immaturity. So knock it off. I am tired of the two of you doing exactly as little as you think you can get

away with. There are tens of thousands of writers out there that are dying to get the kind of attention we've given you. If you want me to read this script have the decency to send a proper copy. As far as running out of time on the option just exactly what do you think that means? Look I don't mean to sound nasty but this project has been handled poorly by you guys from day one and I'm not doing you any favors by letting you think otherwise. I still believe in the concept, and think the idea and parts of the original story have merit, but I don't want to waste time any longer. Are you guys screenwriters or not? The weakest part of this project has always been your attitudes. OK now it's all been said. I hope you get pissed and scream and call me names - then sit down and discuss the fact that what I'm telling you is true. If you don't get to that point it is useless for us to waste any more time on this. If you do email back and let me know.

Well, we didn't scream and we didn't get pissed. We were just stunned and amazed. We thought it would be a waste of time to reply to this email, given that the producer had lost his mind. Instead, we contacted his professional script consultant.

Um, how do you like the new version of the screenplay? we asked.

The new screenplay is just what we wanted, she said.

Um, what happened to [the producer]? He sort of freaked out at us.

He's having a breakdown, she said. And don't tell him I told you this, but if you want to know the truth, he's losing funding for the company, and he'll never be able to produce your screenplay.

Oh, we said. Okay. Thanks. Bye.

Soon the production company had shut down, and we heard that the producer had returned to college to finish his degree. If we never get any closer to Hollywood insanity than this, we have gotten close enough.

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