

RADIO MARY NOTES--JOURNAL

TO STUDY

- Repulsion
- Rosemary's Baby
 - specifics of behavior
 - the reality of objects
 - specifics of observation
- Persona
- Enter the Void
- Mulholland Drive
- The Shining
- Hitchcock
 - Rear Window
 - Vertigo
 - Psycho
- Bresson
- Dreyer
- Let the Right One In (re. quotidian tension)
- That Obscure Object of Desire
- Angst (1983) (influenced Noe re. Enter the Void)
- Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer
- Woody Allen: Stardust Memories, Deconstructing Harry

4.9.09 Lyes Cottage, Sussex

The screenplay I wrote years ago stressed the Reese character. It was at best a two-hander.

Revelation: make it from Mary's POV, and make it out there, far out, outré.

I groove on this for hours in a half sleep semi-conscious state and it feels like a movie, vaguely like a movie.

Reese can come into play only via Mary later in the story, not as someone that Hayward is pursuing at the beginning. Skip the Misty murder at the beginning. I consider dropping Hayward's back story, but that's fine as long as it is brought in later.

Take all the elements and use them as toys, as tools, have fun with them.

This could be the horror film I have been failing to make.

Can I get as loose in this as I have been in my photographs?

RADIO MARY SYNOPSIS

Mary is a legal secretary. She is having an affair with an attorney at the firm, Rand, that she wants to end. As she walks through the waiting room she feels an instant connection with a shy man (Reese) waiting for an appointment. She then rides the elevator with a man who touches her back (Hayward). When he does, her perceptions shift -- she can hear his thoughts, and music. It's just a simple squeeze of the shoulder, but afterwards nothing feels right. She can hear others people's thoughts, and her own, which are thunderous. She feels a burning sensation on her shoulder that travels down her back; she goes to the bathroom to check it out. She undresses to see if she has a rash on her back -- but she has undressed in the men's room. For all appearances, Mary has had a nervous breakdown and is committed to a mental institution.

In the hospital she continues to read thoughts. It seems she can read minds now. She encounters Hayward again at the hospital -- he works there as an orderly. Hayward explains to Mary that she is a latent telepath of genius. He speaks to her without moving his lips -- eventually she stops moving her lips as she speaks to him. She hears loud music in her hospital room; Hayward explains that she is broadcasting the music from her mind -- she is a living boom box (or iPod) and he nicknames her Radio Mary. Hayward is something of a Charles Manson figure.

Mary encounters Reese again at the mental hospital (he is a police detective, there to see someone else). She can now read his thoughts and realizes that he has feelings for her.

Two other mental patients are disciples of Hayward, his gang, and Hayward sneaks them and Mary out of the hospital (she is forced along). On their night outing they kill someone Hayward has a grudge against. Hayward forces Mary to participate in the murder, which involves squeezing the aura out of the victim in an act of violent psychic sexual ecstasy.

Mary uses the cunning of her telepathy to convince her doctor she is well and get released from the hospital.

Hayward visits Mary on the outside. He forces her into being an accomplice to another murder, of Rand (the attorney she was involved with). When Mary is found at the crime scene, Reese is the assigned detective. Extremely shy with women, Reese falls in love with Mary.

At some point this back story is introduced: Hayward is the nephew of a serial killer; he regards himself as Charlie Manson's son. Hayward is intent on carrying on the family tradition at a psychic-astral level. Hayward believes he can infect people with insanity by a laying on of hands (which is what he did to Mary). (Perhaps Reese has crossed paths with Hayward or Hayward's family at some point in his police career.)

Mary is hospitalized again, then released. She is used as bait to catch Hayward. The story's climax builds in a cat and mouse game between Mary - Hayward - Reese. It ends with Hayward seemingly dead, and yet he is not -- he is transformed into an ambient force of evil (a voice in the clouds), Mary seems like she is insane, and Reese is now tragically in love for a crazy woman who seems complicit in several horrendous murders.

The movie will explore Mary's consciousness, using sound and images to explore the experience of hearing voices. It will be a meditation on the nature of consciousness. With a relatively low body count it will be disturbing and scary. Mary is caught in a web of craziness and has to doubt her own sanity given what she is experiencing.

4.14.09

When is Reese introduced into plot? What if Mary sees him in lobby of law office? What if she has a conversation with him at lunch? Maybe it goes as far as Reese calling her and finding out she has been institutionalized, and then he sees her again at the Rand murder site. Seems that something more than Reese appearing for the first time after Rand is killed.

From: sallitt@panix.com
Subject: **Re: Radio Mary Synopsis**
Date: April 13, 2009 7:48:40 PM BST
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Cc: sallitt@panix.com

[She then rides the elevator with a man who touches her back \(Hayward\).](#)

Does he already seem sinister? If not, why does the audience think he touched her?

[When he does, her perceptions shift -- she can hear his](#)

thoughts, and music.

I note for future reference that Hayward seems to have great power. With a touch he alters her life forever.

She has had a nervous breakdown and is committed to a mental institution.

I presume she is in great distress from the time Hayward touches her, not knowing what is happening to her?

In the institution, she continues to read thoughts. It's as if she can read minds now.

Does she see a good side of this, or become resigned or calm? Or is she distressed continuously?

When she hears music he explains that she is broadcasting the music from her mind -- she is a living boom box (or iPod) and he nicknames her Radio Mary.

Is this Mary's special talent, or a standard feature for telepaths?

Mary encounters Reese again at the mental hospital (his a police detective here to see someone else -- she now reads his thoughts, realizes that he longs for her).

Is there a period where Mary is relieved, or intrigued, that she has power and not insanity?

2 other patients are disciples, and Hayward sneaks them and Mary out of the hospital (she is forced along).

Mary seems to be totally passive throughout, right?

They kill someone Hayward has a grudge against. Hayward forces Mary to participate in the murder, which involves squeezing the aura out of the victim, an act of sexual ecstasy.

This is a big shift. When does Mary understand that she is in the power of a murderer? Does it bother her? Does she like being a criminal better than being an insane person? What's her attitude here?

Hayward visits her again on he outside. And forces her into being an accomplice to another murder, of Rand, the attorney she was involved with.

Is Hayward omnipotent, for all intents? Can he destroy anyone at will? Is he a standard-issue master criminal, or does he have his own reasons and justifications?

He is extremely shy with women, and falls in love with Mary.

What is the function of Reese's shyness? He doesn't seem successfully integrated into the themes of the film yet.

At some point this back story is introduced: Hayward is the nephew of a serial killer who is now dead (or perhaps he regards himself as Charlie Manson's son). Hayward is intent on carrying on the family tradition at a higher level and also believes he can infect people with insanity by a laying on of hands.

Sounds as if he is a master criminal, evil for the sake of being evil.

Mary is hospitalized, then released. She is being used as bait to catch Hayward.

How can Hayward be caught? Seems to me he can suck the life out of anyone. What are the limitations of his power? Or is that the point: that he is actually evil itself, and that evil is infinitely powerful?

The movie would strongly explore Mary's consciousness

You haven't said much in this synopsis about what she's thinking and feeling.

I like that you have such a weird angle to start from. I don't much care for totally evil characters, but maybe you can find a way to situate that. Mary's 99% passivity (she does escape from the hospital, for all the good it does) may or may not be a structural problem, depending on what the movie is about. If it's really about her consciousness, then you need to include more indications of how her mind is working. At the moment, it seems not to be a film about Mary, but rather about Hayward, or rather about a world dominated helplessly by evil. Which is a way to go. Scaled down, and focused more openly on Hayward, the idea could have a Balzac feel. - Dan

From: sallitt@panix.com
Subject: Re: Radio Mary Synopsis

Date: April 14, 2009 7:47:35 PM BST
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Cc: sallitt@panix.com

Yes. It freaks her out. There is a sexually pleasurable aspect the murder which makes it even worse.

Oh, the pleasure is for her. That's interesting.

and I am proposing reconceiving the piece to be strongly from Mary's POV --

Which is daring, given that she is purely acted upon and helpless to change anything. And helplessly turned on by it. This will be an immersion in masochism that will make THE WOMAN AND THE PUPPET look pale.

I've had a fascination with Manson and even wrote a very good script about him and that is coming from this place. I think I did a good job of getting into Manson's head and making that disturbing.

But did you make him pure evil, like Hayward? Seems to me that, when you get into someone's head, you get something more complicated than evil, which is an external concept that we apply to people we can't or don't want to know. I heard a long phone conversation with Manson in some documentary, and even that was enough to humanize him instantly.

And how much is real and how much is subjective.

The subjectivity would be Mary's? Which would amplify her masochism.

in Spain

Is it nice? Where in Spain?

Balzac how? What is a Balzac feel?

Balzac loves powerful villains who are above morality. Even though they are villains, his identification with them is strong. - Dan

From: sallitt@panix.com
Subject: Re: Radio Mary Synopsis

Date: April 15, 2009 4:51:36 PM BST
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Cc: sallitt@panix.com

Maybe I'll dial back the supernatural aspect of Hayward.

It all depends on where you're going with it. **Maybe the way to go is to have him so unreal that he suggests a hidden fantasy of Mary's, if you're going toward her subjectivity. The trick will be to complicate the fantasy so that it's art and not just gratification.**

In the novel and novel derived script I believe Reese shifted it into something a little more standard and less interesting.

Yeah, he doesn't suggest as many possibilities as the other two.
- Dan

From: lizabethstanley@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Radio Mary Synopsis
Date: April 15, 2009 9:46:28 PM BST
To: gwalkow@gmail.com

Definitely like the focus on Mary and Hayward, but they do need a strong antagonist to keep the tension ratcheting up, even if described from Mary's perspective.

On Wed, Apr 15, 2009 at 1:38 PM, Gary Walkow <gwalkow@gmail.com> wrote:

Let me take another look at he synopsis and get back to you -- will do that right after I get back to London.

Thanks for your input.

No rights issue with Manson, I don't think, but it's probably better not specifying him.

Interesting how better book and script will probably be with the the cop character (Reese) reduced. Mary and Hayward are the juice of the thing.

Cheers,
Gary

On Apr 15, 2009, at 8:37 PM, Elizabeth Stanley wrote:

I remember the script and novel pretty well because both were very creepy. Do you recall my saying to you something like "I sometimes wonder how you could get into Hayward's and Mary's brains" as you did that so well.

In terms of changing Hayward to Charlie Manson's son - it's an interesting idea, but Manson may have some rights of personality and image that might complicate the making of the film or the writing of the novel. I think it's actually pretty clear that the Monkey Man is inspired by Manson and I think that's sufficient.

20.4.09

Insanity that leaps to Reese at the end.

Fill in back story that Reese had a connection to the Monkey Man late in the novel?

Reveal (in flashback?) that Reese called Mary for a date and learned that she had been institutionalized.

Genre: Psychic Vampire

4.21.09

per Frank Gruber: add back "Cereal Killer" clue-joke.

5.5.09

HOLE IN THE SKY chapter -- can be more focused on Hayward taunting re. connection to Uncle Malcolm. Also, lose the Olivia killing and just see Mary doing her killing? Make the chapter more focused?

Inner monologue throughout book -- add punctuation as needed to improve flow.

Words that turn to colors -- mentioned in the Dr. Glass chapter, maybe not clear enough in the Hole in the Sky chapter.

p.128 **STAINED FINGERS** -- need more of an introduction to bring Reese back into the plot, plus more of an explanation by Hayward that he is avenging the exploiters of Uncle Malcolm. Reese could find Cereal Killer clue at the "Tate" murder house.

Place another chapter between STAINED FINGERS and MONKEY MAN DVD CHAPTER 6?

THE MONKEY MAN" - DVD CHAPTER 6 -- zoo chapter, too sketchy, needs fleshing out

It's a DVD not a tape of Mary that Rand has made and Sheila steals? (no)

Note: after Rand's murder Mary should be found only in mint green flannel pajama top. (she is found "naked")

Use capitalized "His" and "Him" to refer to Hayward through out. Have fun with punctuation.

p.167 CLOSE AND DEAD -- first chapter that starts with Reese, in his POV

Cereal killer clue at the Rand crime scene? (that would take away from blaming Mary)

p.180 ANOMALY -- cop meeting -- never see Misty so discuss a case larger than what is seen in the story -- is that okay? (Note: Misty reference cut.)

p.200 Add back (before this point) where Reese goes out to Camarillo and interviews Danny?

p. 202 Note: Reese's visit out to the desert also cut (DRAFT 6A chapter "SOMEONE'S LAST SUPPER") -- add back? Need this re. the search for specifically Hayward.

5.6.09

General" The Monkey Man movie -- does it end at a good point structurally? And, doesn't it need a cleaner-clearer note to end on?

General: Inner monologue punctuation.

Skip ANOMALY chapter as too cop-procedural?

DRAFT 6A STUFF

p.105 SEE NO EVIL - Reese investigates Tony Taylor murder.

p.197 CEREAL KILLER: in Draft 6A, aftermath of HOLE IN THE SKY KILLINGS, chapter entitled "SOMEONE'S LAST SUPPER"

Hayward sprinkled Cheerios over Lavosh's body (should have been Jake Mitchell's!)

(this chapter just prior to Monkey Man chapter that begins "The ocotillos are blooming...")

p. 207 DEAD FILES -- Hayward visited Malcolm 9 times. Rundown of Malcolm's relatives.

p.216 BAD WATER - Reese goes to desert to interview woman relative of Malcolm.

Rebecca Hastings -- sister-in-law

William Ward Hastings -- Rebecca's son = Malcolm's nephew

(NOTE: this chapter isn't very good)

NOTE: visiting Danny in Camarillo was in the movie script, not in the novel.

5.7.09

Stay far away from anything like police procedural. Cut cop chapter "ANOMALY" (after Mary is arrested by Rand)? Yes, I think so.

Use summary for clarity ala ON CHESIL BEACH? Or keep the story as bipolar and subjective as possible. Don't let Reese drag it back to "normalcy."

NOTE: I just rewrote Hayward's entrance in Chapter 1 to something much more subjective, from Mary's POV and it WORKS GREAT and should be a model for the entire rewrite.

REWRITE LIST

--stronger end to DVD subplot? (no, ends with "William Ward" getting started)

--Rewrite HOLE IN THE SKY -

----cut Olivia having aura death sex?

----cut Hakim? YES

--Cut ANOMALY? Substitute Cereal Killer incident? Consider having chapters be more fragmentary, collages -- they are for Mary. Make it so with Reese, background details on case.

--Reese chapters don't have to be so plodding, heavy-footed

--punctuation of inner monologues

--"His" - "Him"

--Call Reese "Reese" in The Monkey Man (not if he doesn't break the original case!)

--too many Rand scenes? too much screen time for Rand? cut down Sheila?

--IDEA: Reese did not break the original case, Hayward is not after Reese, Reese just has the bad luck of falling in love with Mary at the wrong time

DRAFT 7 CHAPTER STRUCTURE

P2 IN THE GLASS TOWER

P8 LUNCH

P14 PINK AND GREEN

P16 ELEVATOR MUSIC

P22 THE MONKEY MAN 1

P26 ADMITTING

P35 THE SHRINK

P30 THE MONKEY MAN 2

P39 DIZZY LAND

P50 SUSPICIOUS MINDS (shorten the Rand alone stuff?)

P62 IN THE JACARANDA'S SHADE (Reese visits hospital)

P45 THE MONKEY MAN 3

P65 BRAIN CONDOMS (Tony Taylor)

P74 JUMPS TO MORNING

P78 A WARM MEMBRANE DESIGNED SOLELY FOR HIS PLEASURE

*******This chapter cut from script -- easily cut from novel (if length doesn't matter)**

P75 THE MONKEY MAN 4

P84 RADIO MARY

P91 FUCKING HER FACE

P100 THE HOLE IN THE FENCE

p101 THE MONKEY MAN 5 -- Malcolm drives Sherry out to desert

P109 HOLE IN THE SKY

p124 BETWEEN BLINKS (Dr. Glass)

[**√CUT** p128 Stained Fingers (prison interview) Cut? Or make part of The Monkey Man?]

[**√CUT** p130 The Monkey Man "6" (zoo chapter)]

P128 OUT OUT OUT

p132 THE MONKEY MAN 6 (move this chapter later? no, already a big gap between prior MM chapter -- if anything spread 1 & 2 more and ripple down the expansion of the interstitial.)

P140 THE FACE IN THE CLOUDS This dial could be spoken out loud, in quotes, rather than italicized.

P145 THE MARY TAPE

p150 LAVA LAMP (Mary's apt)

P154 MERCURY

P159 THE DEAD WEIGHT AFTER

[**√CUT** p167 CLOSE AND DEAD (Reese's apt - woken)]

p168 TUNED TO A DEAD CHANNEL (Reese's POV drive to Rand's,
Rand's POV into crime scene)

[**√CUT** p180 ANOMALY (meeting in cop's office) (what info needs to
be saved from this chapter? any?)]

p174 THE CLOSEST THING TO DROWNING (Reese visits Mary in
hospital. They look at photos of other Camarillo patients.)
**Some further explanation needed why they don't think Mary is the
killer?**

p198 BAGPIPE SKY

P184 ROMANTIC PARANOIA -- add back the stuff I cut about Reese
having facts about Uncle Malcolm, going out to Camarillo to
interview Danny etc? How far along is Reese's investigation,
connecting Hayward to Uncle Malcolm?
More Monkey Man-Malcolm-William Ward Hastings explanation at end
of chapter after Mary is dead?

READERS

--Elizabeth Stanley
--Alain
--Jay A
--Michael K
--FG
--Jon Fink
--Stephen G

5.19.09

FUTURE CUTS:

P78 A WARM MEMBRANE DESIGNED SOLELY FOR HIS PLEASURE

*****This chapter cut from script -- easily cut from novel (if
length doesn't matter)

FUCKING HER FACE (Rand watches tape, Sheila comes and steals it)

THE MARY TAPE (Rand steals the tape back from Sheila)

SCREENPLAY IDEAS

Note: add Rand masturbating at work into screenplay?

p.88 approx -- Face in the Clouds -- start to constantly debate what Hayward dial should be VO -- reduce VO or does VO make is subjective? What point does the device get tiresome?

When Reese is alone with Mary in Rand's bedroom, don't need to hear his thoughts? Just her reaction to it?

Are there "rules" for subjectivity?

Need to hold back on Reese's VO, thoughts, subjectivity until the last chapter/climax? It gets subjective as he gets crazy. Does her touch infect him? YES. (great new idea!)

Romantic paranoia: Reese imagines being in bed with Mary (not put in script).

VO the key decision:

Seems that Hayward would speak out loud with Mary once in a relationship, unless to announce his presence or to punctuate an otherwise "exterior" conversation.

Voice over before stabbing him is cut (seems counter-intuitive to have her yammering about keeping her thoughts secret).

This script makes me think about Bresson -- an idea of heightened, uncompromised style.

7.1.09

DRAFT 6 SCRIPT CHANGES (re. novel)

X--Mary dumps Rand (too aggressive and movieish an opening)

X--Cut Rand from Admissions scene (maybe)

√--Cut Olivia

--Danny & Michelle work at hospital (orderly candy striper)

√--Simplify (and keep simplifying) the Jake murder. Possibly eliminate or greatly reduce the gang presence in the scene?

√--Rand murder scene: eliminate "first girlfriend stuff", cut Reese's fumbling, lost quality. Drippy schoolboy stuff gone.

--Reese isn't crazy or weak or lovestruck until Mary touches him and infects him. Do more to sell the concept of this late "mental AIDS" infection? YES. Clarify point of infection --

maybe their fingers don't touch at Rand's house and the first contact is the kiss in Reese's car in the alley.

--"Hershey Kiss" scene CUT -- add back???

POSSIBLE IDEAS FOR DRAFT 6 SCRIPT:

X--Mary hides in closet, Michelle opens door in candy stripes, says 'if you want to get out of her shouldn't you act normal?

--clear moment when Mary infects Reese, Hayward comments on the power

√--Hayward stabs Mary in the back after he is supposedly dead -- his knife is in her back.

√--eliminate Michelle and Danny? Make it a story about Hayward and Mary. Is he a projection of her craziness?

--resistance to sneaking out?

√--Reduce the Jake scene so it is less of a massacre -- just Jake and his girlfriend. (when does Hayward slip away and kill Jake?) It would be Jake dead in the kitchen? Does reducing it make it less of a set piece?

--Mary projects music in the "Tony" murder scene? Add this?

7.11.09

ELIZABETH STANLEY NOTES

(√) Elevator - feel very measured, make bigger

Explanation of "telepathy"? Substitute for "V.O."?

√ EXPLAIN: Mary's inner thoughts & hearing the thoughts of others

Mary's thoughts felt talky -- VO stuff needs to be dramatized first

√ "mental pandemic" rather than "AIDS"

√ tights (not "pantyhose")

(√) Shorten Dr. Glass scene.

(√) "Suspicious Minds" -- too long?

√ First scene: Mary is over Rand but she can't say no.

√ Reese -- she makes an actual date to have lunch with him at the first meeting.

√ "Malcolm Ward"

√ Tony Taylor "See No Evil: The Monkey Man" or call book "The Monkey Man"

Throughout: Show then VO (if necessary)

p.71 (TUNED TO A DEAD CHANNEL) Some acknowledgement of earlier murders. On radio? In car? TV new report in apt? She's chilled it was real.

ES re. general-underlying:

Mary doesn't fight Hayward in the same way that she doesn't fight Rand.

As Mary gets sucked into strange world she gets into it. She likes the power it gives her, but because she is moral she is disturbed. Middle ground: transformation from victim to not a victim. **What empowers Mary and allows her to shed victimhood is her ability to do terrible things.**

ES didn't see Mary as a victim. Bring out in rewrite: Mary is gaining power and self-confidence, morally troubled -- do this in VO.

KILIAN NOTES

Opposite of FIGHT CLUB: everything you present as being in her head is real.

re. JACOB'S LADDER -- dealing with two separate realities.

Play throughout with: clues it's real, clues it's not real.

"Monkey Man" movie is a dream Mary has had? (should the DVD not be real?)

9.2.09

Notes from Dan Sallitt (he's read the first half):

The film is about with people getting in touch with their desire to kill people.

VO too lopsided toward darkness -- could be mixed, show both sides of people, be more Joycean.

DS didn't like that Hayward and Malcolm got all the power & jokes.

Hayward gets interesting when he makes a connection with Mary.
Scary when almost intimate.

Hayward would be more interesting if he looked more normal.

Audience should find it persuasive if Mary does.

Problem with Mary's character at the beginning.

Hayward most interesting when he makes connection with Mary.

9.10.09

DAN (phone):

Peeping Tom -- RM could be disturbing in similar vein/way

Asking audience to get comfortable with impulses in themselves.

The sex can't be PG (unlike Crashing)

Jake & Rand killings are the central events in the script.

The set-up stuff is weak.

Rand-Tom stuff weak.

VO stuff - weak because too one-dimensional, needs to be more _____ presentation of bad in us.

BMB - problem attempting to harmonize things that aren't harmonizing. Structurally weak, surface good. Too autobiographical with super-imposed structure.

RM - structural level sounder, weirder.

Start RM with Mary getting touched on shoulder?

Rand shouldn't be irritating - she's kind of into it and he's not that nice - she kind of rigs relationship.

Cut Reese - model for passivity at end.

End - Mary goes deeper into submission.

Didn't like love story.

Tom pulls trigger - kills Hayward - Mary's slavery and complicity are already established.

Less going on with Mary and Tom - he's just a nice alternative.

Effective that Mary dreams through horror - but needs to be thought out.

Hayward is inducing dreamlike state - it's like a dream for her. She's in dreamlike state where horror isn't one of her reactions.

STEPHEN G:

He thinks that RM is more commercial, that there is a surrealism that I would excel at presenting.

BMB will have to perfectly executed, RM a little less demanding that way.

9.6.09

From: sallitt@panix.com
Subject: Re: Mary pt2
Date: September 6, 2009 2:29:47 AM BST
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Cc: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

[At the moment I'm not wildly enthusiastic about making either film but that could change.](#)

I can't say yet whether you like the same things about RADIO MARY I like, but maybe it's just the movie you should try now: it's so horrifying, and so outside your usual zone, that it could be a major development. (Or a failure - but that's the chance one takes.). - Dan

9.7.09

DAN:

The one character whose unpleasant qualities might seem useful to me is Rand, in that Mary being under his thumb is an everyday, real-world form of passivity that might set off the more dramatic and fictionalized passivity in the Hayward relationship. I'd still rewrite Rand from the ground up, though, if I were doing it. - Dan

9.11.09

From: sallitt@panix.com
Subject: **Re: Rm/laziness**
Date: September 10, 2009 3:27:58 PM BST
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Cc: sallitt@post.harvard.edu
Reply-To: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

Gary - I'm not 100% sure about starting the movie with the touch - it was just one approach. The fact that Mary is not too much of a character made me think: why not just cut to the chase? I was thinking maybe: Mary goes to work under credits; the touch; then as much of the early exposition as you want. But the current beginning might work for me if Mary were scaled down, if you made the Rand and Reese interactions more glancing and ordinary.

The fact that Reese is intrinsically unimportant doesn't mean that he has to enter the script late. **I favor him being in early, just with less of a lightning-strikes feeling to his Mary scenes.** If you just hint that he likes Mary, then his feeling for her can be an interesting surprise if you show it at the end (preferably right at the end, during the shootout). It's okay to have a minor character suddenly get promoted if you get the balance right, and if you remember that Reese really has no depth, and that there's no need to work with him too much.

As I said before, I really like the idea of Mary being hung up on Rand, and not really thinking much about Reese until after Rand's death (and then only in passing).

My treatment is attached. - Dan

From: sallitt@panix.com
Subject: **Re: RM Opening / Tom scenes**
Date: September 10, 2009 11:08:47 PM BST
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Cc: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

Are you also advocating keeping the 2 scenes where Tom goes to visit Mary in the asylum? (The 2nd scene, when he takes her out for tacos might not be in the draft you read).

Not particularly. I wish their interaction would look like business until the end. Or, at minimum, have him ask her out and not get very far. But people don't ask out institutionalized people, And she seems really crazy in the current draft. At the moment, I'd drop those scenes.

Regarding the opening, are you suggesting as one possibility that Mary get touched, then perhaps have rewritten interactions with Rand and Tom before she goes bonkers in the bathroom?

Yeah, that's the idea.

It seems that you are also suggesting that there can be some Tom and Rand stuff before the touch, with both these items being rewritten.

That's an option, an alternative. - Dan

9.14.09

From: sallitt@panix.com
Subject: **Re: RM Opening (tight) 91109 attached**
Date: September 14, 2009 1:48:13 PM BST
To: gwalkow@gmail.com

I don't know if you need something besides Reese Why don't you try keeping him in there as much as possible in a professional capacity? I'd omit verbal expression of interest in Mary, and be cautious about what thoughts he broadcasts. It might work to have him become a victim at the end without us knowing him that well.

I'd assume that Rand thinks he doesn't want commitment as much as Mary does, and is oblivious about being frequently emotionally withholding. Only fairly aware people acknowledge

that they are using others for sex - it's easy to justify it to ourselves. - Dan

On Sep 12, 2009, at 4:20 AM, Dan Sallitt wrote:

I can't see why Mary should be excited by Tom's passivity - it's rare that a woman feels that way, and Mary certainly isn't the type: **she is enraptured by being owned by a serial killer. (I know part of her doesn't like it, but the movie's deep resonance is that the strongest part of her does. Hayward is either an aspect of Mary/us, or else he's nothing.)** At most, Mary would be fond of Tom and think she **should** like a guy like that.

You can probably keep some of the current Tom structure and just rejigger it. As he's not that important, you probably shouldn't keep him around constantly.

I'd like Rand to take off his "I'm evil" T-shirt. I think he should be the kind of guy who knows instinctively how to be just interested enough in a woman to keep her hooked, though he's essentially distant. - Dan

On Sep 11, 2009, at 4:10 PM, Dan Sallitt wrote:

Think about what Mary sees in Tom. He's nice, of course. **But he's not forceful and conquering like the man who really excites her, Hayward.** Any attraction she might have to Tom will be in marked contrast, even in opposition, to her drama and her script function. You can do various things with Mary/Tom, but you should keep this in mind. - Dan

RAND VO

Naked. With me. Once upon a time. Dr. Ritter owes me. Advice on over-medication? Co-pay liability? Ask Reg. Poor thing. She's in no state to be told any of this.

9.15.09

After Rand's murder -- is Mary a suspect? Is she bait? is she being protected?

(Almost) Cut Reese line: "You're a suspect in Rand Foley's murder."

9.16.09

From: sallitt@panix.com
Subject: Re: Reese
Date: September 16, 2009 1:09:25 AM BST
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Cc: sallitt@post.harvard.edu
Reply-To: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

Yeah, I'm visualizing a Mary-Reese relationship without that kiss, or without Mary being all that interested in Reese - her horror of/pull toward Hayward would seem to dwarf Reese. Does she have to see him as a savior? Don't know if you got my notes yet, but I totally didn't get that line that goes, "The two of us are strong enough to beat him."

Seems to me the audience will intuit Reese's interest, and that will be enough to give his role in the climax some interest. - Dan

9.17.09

Would Mary have a key to Rand's house?
Would Hayward have her use it?

9.18.09

DAN'S DRAFT 8 NOTES:

Dan's margin comment, p.50: "Suddenly the film is interesting, and not in the way I expected. **The sadism of watching people's fear is amped so high that I would think the movie would be controversial.** But now there's the counterpoint in that Mary/Hayward's experience is positive, and in an interesting way."

Margin comment p.56 "And Mary has never been surprised that the world is so hateful? **I guess that fits her odd state of mind - her detachment is important to the tone you're creating.**"

9.20.09

DAN:

I don't think you've painted yourself into a corner with the virus - **the disorientation can be harmonized with the peeling away of repression and the liberation of sex/violence.**

9.22.09

Tony Taylor: make his death sexual? Crushing rather than knife, blood?

Frightened, Tony jerks his arm free and stands. Amused, Hayward lets him.

Tony walks then runs down the stairs.
Hayward leisurely follows.

POST RAND HOSPITAL FRAGMENT

TOM

We'll protect you.
She just keeps looking.

TOM

Don't worry. You're not going anywhere that's not safe.

MARY

Safe is gone. Hardly worth the bother.
He lets her hold his hand.

MARY

He made it all happen.

MARY

What everyone is thinking about all the time. Wanting. If they could.

TOM

You've lost me.

9.26.09

From: sallitt@panix.com
Subject: Re: RM Coffee Room
Date: September 26, 2009 3:57:55 AM BST
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Cc: sallitt@post.harvard.edu
Reply-To: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

Scene isn't bad. Maybe could be a little more pointed? And/or shorter? I like Rand dwelling on the concept of harassment. I would cut "What exactly happened?" (and the line after) - I don't think it's the right reaction, and the scene feels better

if he goes straight to a "harass" line.

My first thought about how to color the scene is for Rand to act vaguely irritated after Mary rejects his suggestion, and to be a little distant after. I wouldn't hit it hard - just make it a shading. Mary should be the one to ask about the dinner. If she asks Rand if he's angry with her, he would deny it, and be half sincere. Just a tiny bit of Mary's unease from this will blend well with the Hayward breakdown and create some meaningful ambiguity.

Text is better than pdf. Do me a favor, though, and don't send more than you have to - I want to forget the script a little before I read it again. - Dan

9.28.09

DAN:

story does not grow out of character...it's a matter of touch, not of character...

THE IDIOT could be a model for the first section...epilepsy after walking around St.Petersberg, similar to Mary's reaction after the touch...

10.2.09

DRAFT 10

--Show monkey scars on Hayward's hand-arm (to tie him into the Young Hayward)

--

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

--expansion of Reese encounter at opening

--Hayward makes spaghetti

--Additional hospital scene?

10.7.09

DAN:

Hayward effective when he tells Mary how she feels. When he's sharing the feeling, watching her discover the feeling.

FROM DRAFT 4:

JAKE'S

MARY (V.O.)

Pretty colors, but wrong -- I should be afraid -- I shouldn't want it -- shouldn't.

DR. GLASS II

MARY (V.O.)

I...am awake. What do I feel bad about? Last night. That wasn't me. No. I need to get out of here, out of here, out of here...

10.12.09

FROM DRAFT 10:

RAND

Remember my old roommate Brad?

MARY

Never met him.

RAND

Oh. Anyway, he specializes in harassment. You could make some dough.

Hayward leaves. He is gone for a long time.

CUT TO:

Hayward returns with a tall cold drink in each hand. He leans forward to put them on the glass table.

MARY

Wait!

Hayward flashes intense irritation. Mary gets coasters out of a retro coaster trolley and places them on the glass table.

HAYWARD

(smiles)

Thoughtful.

He puts the drinks on the coasters, snuggles Mary against him, and hoists the remote control.

HAYWARD

I really really really like...

(V.O.)

...being inside you.

HAYWARD

It's sexy, what you don't remember.

HAYWARD

Do you remember the first time we made love?

MARY

Did we?

HAYWARD

(smiles)

We've certainly been together. You know how people say "been together" as a softy sappy way of saying we done fucked?

Mary nods quietly.

HAYWARD

That ain't the half of it. Been together? We are together.

MARY

I didn't volunteer. I hate that I like it.

TOM

Like what?

MARY

I'm trapped.

MARY

(thinks)

Well...I liked it. Even when I didn't.

Everyone politely ignores everyone else. A CELL PHONE RINGS.

The Man next to Mary answers.

MAN

I can't talk right now.

(looks around, quieter)

I said I can't talk right now.

(whisper-hisses)

I! Can't! Talk! Right! Now!

The elevator doors open and the Man stalks off the elevator.

Mary relaxes.

The elevator doors close.

Mary stands alone, on the wrong floor.

She presses the "up" button and waits.

DING. The doors slide open. Apprehensive, Mary looks inside.

MARY'S POV: the elevator cab in empty.
Mary takes a tentative step on board, then skittishly steps back off.
The elevator doors start to close -- Mary hurries back on.
INT. ELEVATOR CAB - DAY
Mary gives herself a "you're being foolish" look and presses the button. The elevator starts to climb.
The elevator stops.
The doors open.
A MAN with a baseball cap appears, looking down, the brim hiding his face.
Fearful, Mary steps back.
The Man steps aboard, raises his head. It's the Messenger, reading his delivery list. He smiles at Mary.
Mary manages to smile back.
DING. The elevator doors open. Mary hurries off.
She glances back -- the Messenger is following her. She walks faster.
INT. TRAUM, PITTMAN LOBBY - DAY
Mary hurries through the lobby.
INT. CORRIDOR, LAW OFFICES - DAY
Mary looks back, relieved that the Messenger hasn't followed.
MARY
(whispers to herself)
Silly girl.

10.28.09

From: poppag@mac.com

Subject: Radio Mary...

Date: October 28, 2009 2:38:05 PM GMT

To: gwalkow@gmail.com

Finally. Finally. Sorry it took me so long. I was just with my granddaughter 24/7, but read the script on the plane ride back to LA. Much to talk about. In some ways I think the original opening you gave me was better, (#8, sent in July) but after about page 20 I think the new draft is better. It is definitely creepy and terrifying, a real journey into the unconscious, actually, which is a little bit of what I think your dream that you sent me was exploring. I went back and looked at the dream again. Could you do me a favor and write back to me (as much as you can remember) what I said about the dream? I think it might help in all of this actually in that the woman on the balcony falls off (and supposedly dies) as does Mary in your script. Much to think about here because...

The script's reality gets a little mixed up and, while I know

Mary is mixed up, I don't think the audience should be. The reality of the piece should be very clear just as I believe (actually) that there is a very clear reality to the unconscious (something I've been exploring for a lot of years now.) But, setting that aside, the major reason I think the rules of your reality should be really clear is because the emotion (terror, etc) get diminished when anything can happen.

It seems to me now that Hayward can infect anyone's mind that he touches. Somehow this infection allows Mary to have enough strength to kill anyone. Or is he doing the actual killing? Not clear. Does she actually escape from the hospital or is this a dream (which somehow is real). It's never quite clear. She seems to be able to jump around. The idea of a kind of mental vampire/zombie or whatever is cool, but the rules also have to be clear.

Also, given that the writing is so good (and it is) I feel like I don't really get an arc with Mary and I hunger for it. She has real depth as a character and I'd like to feel that as she approaches her death, she's coming to terms with something.

All of this said, what interests me the most is the exploration of the unconscious which in fact is what I think you're doing: the whole spiritual aspect of the whole in the sky; **the moving towards death being strangely benign almost releasing**; at the same time the horrific actions that a human can get entangled in. Is she guilty of murder or at least implicit? Is sex causing some of this? How does the mind really work? Does it actually have some kind of capacity to read another's mind? Can the mind murder? How does the mind move through reality? Can one mind infect another?

All very interesting questions, but not really sorted out here because I think you are entering this world now, exploring it, but really just postulating and playing around. I think the final conclusion from the script is that it is a dangerous and confusing place (the mind).

This may sound like I'm infected with my own analysis (fair enough) or that I'm overdoing it, this is just a horror picture, but I think this has the potential of being an amazing horror movie, perhaps creating a kind of whole new genre -- **a kind of mental zombie set of movies** -- but I think there's some real clarification needed. For instance, Frankenstein worked because technology was moving towards playing with the human body, manipulating it. There was a deep seated fear by the mid 19th Century, into the 20th. Now there are issues (I think) that are

going to begin to be raised about the unconscious, the mind and it's power, etc. I think you are tapping into the fear of this which could be very interesting.

For the record, by the way, if I'm right and that is what you're playing with -- I do not believe there is anything to fear with the unconscious, except that it clears out the crap inside of our conscious minds if we listen to it. I think the fears that (maybe) you're exploring are just that -- fears, but that doesn't mean you can't make a cool movie around it.

Best,

SG

DAN re. GYLLENHALL EMAIL:

Perhaps best to dodge issues that depend on extent of Hayward's power, re. why doesn't he just conquer the world?

Hayward not interesting as a character but interesting as a projection of what is inside Mary.

re. character arc: some progress in Mary would be good, but not conventional.

10.30.09

GARY WALKOW WROTE:

Dan--

Here's my thinking today:

I don't know why I was promoting the concept of reality-illusion. Everything that happens in the story, except for the highly specific visions (traveling down the fluorescent light tube, etc) is real. It all happens. Maybe I should be clearer about that. Ideally the audience would consider it all real but Mary would be doubtful, because these doubts protect her a bit from the knowledge that she is getting off on doing horrible things.

Maybe it would help to make Hayward's powers more limited? He has great power over Mary because of her susceptibility? I'm not sure about this.

I want to hold back on your reading the script, but it is enormously helpful to be able to discuss these issues with you.

Do you like The Piano Teacher? I just watched it last night re. my masochism script.

Gary

On Oct 30, 2009, at 1:16 PM, Dan Sallitt wrote:

Gary - I personally don't care if you make it clear that it's all real. I don't mind some ambiguity there. **To me, the film feels as if it's about Mary's head, however real or not the events might be. If you put emphasis on things that don't have anything to do with Mary's head, or with our heads in general, the film will probably lose shape for me.**

I might want to address the issue of Hayward's powers after another read. Choices: 1) Hayward has unlimited power, the universe is ruled by evil: 2) Hayward's power is opposed by some other power (not currently in your script, but the classic Western depiction of the devil); 3) Hayward has power only over receptive people like Mary.

I like THE PIANO TEACHER for its first half or so, and then it starts to feel a little messy to me. Some strong material there. - Dan

GW REPLY:

I go with #3, but he also has the ability to kill non-receptive people.

Maybe Tom Reese is receptive and Marry notices this and it scares her or attracts her or both.

GW

That's not #3, that's #1. - Dan

11.1.09

From: lizabethstanley@gmail.com
Subject: Radio Mary Notes
Date: November 1, 2009 9:15:21 PM GMT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com

Hi there,

Just finished reading the newest draft of *Radio Mary* and think this time you've nailed it - further reducing Tom's story and focusing on Mary's makes the script/story move much more swiftly and as a result, I think it has a greater punch to it.

I do have some small notes that you might want to address and have included them at the end of this email.

If you want me to ask Natalie Press if she would like to read the script, I am happy to do so. It would be helpful to know your current plans. What is the budget? Do you have sources of financing at present? If not, where are you looking for money? Are there any producers currently attached to the project? Where do you want to shoot it?

Also wondering whether it makes sense to explore doing this as a webisode series - 16 to 20 four to five minute episodes. Not sure that this would work, but it might...

Looking forward to your thoughts on all this.

Best,
E

PS. Here are my notes:

*Do you foresee a problem with using any copyrighted song lyrics?

*It's still a bit confusing about when we hear characters in V.O. in their own voices, and when we are hearing their voices through Mary in her voice, for example on page 8. I think a note somewhere towards the beginning of the script to clarify your intentions would be very helpful.

*Are you thinking of using a different style to shoot the Monkey Man sequences???

*Page 23 - I don't think the reference to mental AIDS really

works, and I think it's actually more likely to alienate some potential financiers, so I suggest you get rid of it. I know you like it, but equating AIDS with craziness just doesn't computer.

*Page 26 - what happens on screen when Malcolm is gone a long time?

*Page 46 Typo. ...cab is empty...

*Page 48 Type ...he hears this...

*Pages 48-49 If Hayward is talking in voiceover (in Mary's head), you should italicize all those lines of dialogue. And the same is true for Mary's lines if/when she is talking in voiceover in Hayward's head.

*Pages 54-55 Is Mary and Hayward's conversation going on between them telepathically or can Rand hear them? If the former, than italicize that dialogue.

*Pages 56-57 How does Mary end up underneath Rand when she and Hayward have been straddling him, on top?

GW : I rewrote this to have Rand on top throughout. I indicated a position change in the draft you read, but in some ways it makes sense that Rand would be on top of her here. Complicated question. She gets off on being dominated and Rand gets off on dominating her sexually so it makes sense for him to be on top. But Mary feels superior to Rand at this point, BUT: the power balance in that relationship has shifted in the previous Rand-Mary scenes. What do you think?

*Page 57 - Suggest you give Tom a different last name - preferably one that doesn't start with R so he is easily distinguishable from Rand.

*Page 58 - Tom says he "knows" Mary but they only had a very brief encounter. They never spoke or exchanged names. So maybe he should say to his partner, "I recognize her...."

*Page 64 Typo. ...cognitive modeling...

11.2.09

From: sallitt@panix.com
Subject: Re: RM Fantasy / Monkey Man
Date: November 2, 2009 12:42:25 AM GMT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Reply-To: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

I have absolutely no trouble with the fantasy, or with a confusion of fantasy and the real. It's not as if this movie depends on our accepting events as being real.

I also don't care about sticking to Mary's POV. The Monkey Man scenes don't have anything to do with Mary: if you use them at all, they will seem like an authorial flourish, whether Mary watches them on TV or not. - Dan

Gary Walkow wrote:

I wonder if the 2 fantasy sequences (traveling into the fluorescent light tube and filling like a balloon when Hayward kisses her outside Tony Taylor's house) confuse things, introducing a layer of over fantasy inconsistent with the rest of the piece.

In a related vein:

The Monkey Man has been cut down to 3 scenes, and the first one is introduced when Hayward break into Tony Taylor's house and puts on the DVD to show the movie to Mary. Maybe that needs to go away -- at least the following 2 scenes that Mary is not overtly watching on TV to keep things rooted in Mary's POV. If The Monkey Man scenes are going to play, should she be clearly watching them?

Am I getting too constrictive? Or is this rigor re. her POV hlp clarify and focus the movie?

FANTASY SEQ CUT:

MARY'S POV (ANIMATED SEQUENCE): she imagines herself inside the light tube, traveling down the corridor of luminescence, getting smaller as the tube narrows, reduced finally to an electron, an electron swimming upstream, like a salmon. Mary flows against the electrical current, travels through copper wire, slides into the roar of Hoover Dam, backwards through the generator turbine until she's alone in the cold water, swimming in watery blue blankness.

MARY'S POV (ANIMATED SEQUENCE): Hayward's lips funnel a hot green breath that fills Mary like a balloon, she floats up, growing enormous until she EXPLODES.

In bed, Harry ask to hear the story of TTWD. Tell him. I tell him I made a film called NOTES FROM UNDERGROUND and he gets angry that he hasn't been told about it before.

He asks about my short films. Tell him the story of Auto-Mates and he laughs. He tried to understand the Borgesian concept of Rite of Passage.

He asks about other short films I made and I rattle off the titles Voyeur, CV, ROP, A-M, and throw in Rough Trade saying it wasn't good. Saw the names of the 5 features (leaving Love Machine out).]"So 5 shorts and 5 features. I thought you made more."

His disappointment at the smallness. And mine.

11.6.09

TOM
I'm infected

HAYWARD
Not infected. Selected. You're a natural.

11.12.09

LOGLINE:

When Mary crosses paths with Hayward, her reality turns upside down: now she can hear people's thoughts, see auras, and broadcast music from her head. A psychic psychopath, Hayward can transmit insanity by the touch of his hand. He initiates Mary into the psycho-sexual pleasures of murder. Mary struggles against the dark forces that rage in and out of her head.

It's an immorality play.

11.13.09

Add music / Radio Mary stuff to first visit to Tony's house?

1.14.10

Elizabeth Stanley's Hayward list

<u>ACTOR</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>AGENT/MANAGER</u>	<u>HAS OV</u>
Ben Chaplin	39	Independent Talent Group/UTA	Kate Buckley,
Benjamin Bratt	46	WME/Dontanville Frattaroli	Elyse Scherz,
Billy Crudup	41	CAA	Jimmy Darmody
Campbell Scott	48	Paradigm	Clifford Stev
Christian Slater	40	CAA	Tracy Brennar
Dane Cook	37	CAA/New Wave Entertainment	Tracy Brennar
David Arquette	38	UTA/Management 360	Doug Johnson,
Dermot Mulroney	46	ICM	Carol Bodie
Dylan McDermott	48	CAA/Media Talent Group	Michael Katch
Eric Stoltz	48	CAA/Landmark Artists Mgt.	?/Helen Sugla
Ethan Hawke	39	CAA/3 Arts	Peter Levine,
Goran Visnija	36	WME/Management 360	Elyse Scherz,
Guy Pearce	42	CAA/Independent Talent Group	Chris Andrews
Harry Connick Jr.	42	CAA	Josh Lieberman
Henry Czerny	50	Glick Agency/OAZ	Steve Glick/I
James Spader	49	ICM	Toni Howard
Jared Leto	38	CAA/Untitled Entertainment	Mick Sulvia/c
Josh Holloway	40	WME/Brillstein Entertainment	Gaby Morgerma
Kyle MacLachlan	50	Gersh/Management 360	Bradley Lefle
Mario Van Peebles	52	Fortitude/Untitled Entertainment	Gordon MacDor
Martin Donovan	52	Associates/Paraseghian-Planco	Tim Angle/Ge
Matthew Fox	43	WME/Management 360	Ed Limato, Pa
Neil Patrick Harr	36	Paradigm/Booh Schut Management	Chris Schmidt
Norman Reedus	41	Don Buchwald& Assoc/ROAR	Julia Buchwal
Peter Sarsgaard	38	CAA/Authentic Talent and Lit M	Tony Lipp/Jor

Ron Livingston	42	UTA/Thruline Entertainment	Kevin Volcho
Tim McGraw	42	CAA/MFO	?/Michael Flu
Tim Olyphant	41	CAA/Brillstein Entertainment	Mick Sullivan
Vincent Spano	47	Innovative/Gilbertson Kincaid	Stephen La Ma
Woody Harrelson	48	CAA	Jeremy Plage

3.20.10 Brighton

Yesterday:

Followup discussion with Ben Woolford re. doing UK budget, approaching UK financier.

Discussion with Alain yesterday re. 20K – 50K version, first substantive move on m side, in my mind toward making the film with him. The comfort zone of that despite he conflict.

Conference call with Elizabeth Stanley and David Glanzer re. casting, UK vs. US, ES reporting on meetings with Natalie's agent and manager, nudity, etc.

So the film is in play. Feel yesterday I crossed the line into momentum of getting the movie made, it's been a build to this point. Now involved: Elizabeth, Natalie, Glanzer, Ben, Alain.

DRAFT 11 RE-READ re. "CLARIFYING-ENHANCING" PASS

Emotional underlining needed throughout.

p.1 Elevator – something feels wrong. Build drama-spook-creep into scene. Fear for her.

p.5 Reese – heighten the encounter

p.11 The chill-fear of seeing Hayward again in hospital room

General: find a way to underline her panic, how it grows, how it ebbs and flows.

p.14 Monkey Man I – enhance Hayward's VO to explain? Does Hayward explain about his Uncle to Mary? "He was my Uncle..."

p.17 Hayward – Rand – make spookier. General: examine-enhance all Hayward appearances.

p.25 Intro to Monkey Man II

(Take another look at missing Monkey Man scenes? Even if scenes only occur in 2 places, those 2 scenes can perhaps be doubled in length.)

Sense of escalating panic in canyon house.

Enhance Mary's unsettled, unbalanced quality throughout.

p.42 Elevator – echo earlier elevator panic

p.43 Rand – Mary: underline tension

p.47 Mary should have startled, then panicked reaction to Hayward being in bed with her. Communicate her emotions, her reaction.

p.49 How to convey that Rand's emotions-desires are out of control.

p.51 Rand's panicked reaction to Hayward.

p.57 Mary's panic at Hayward's appearance in hospital room

Then she is unsettled, wonders-worries about her sanity when Hayward is suddenly gone.

p.58 Mary-Tom: how she struggles with demons to explain to him about Hayward.

p.65 Mary's fear, being alone. Give it a visual build.

p.69 Mary alone in apt, build fear. Alone, fear.

p.70 Then her fright at seeing Hayward again, in her apt.

p.75 or so – Tom's efforts to keep a handle on situation. How he tries to squash down inner sense of panic.

p.77 Moment of fright for Tom and Mary when he sees aura on his arm, and she sees it also. It disturbs him when Mary says that he is infected, because he senses that he is, he can feel it.

p.78 Tom deeply upset to see that Mary is wounded. Tom's reaction to her death should be powerful. Hint of the orgasmic for yet another layer of perversity?

p.79-80 Heighten sense of Tom's highly disturbed inner state at the end. Plus give disturbing sense of eternal reborn evil as closing note (of Panic Sonata!).

On Mar 20, 2010, at 2:24 PM, Dan Sallitt wrote:

When I did a TV show I was forced to do it in a week. For me it's slower than writing. My brain tires quickly. A scene or so a day. It raises fantastically complex questions for me of the nature of cinema, etc.

I sometimes wonder whether a subconscious reason for me to favor a just-the-essentials filmmaking style is to reduce the dizzying number of filmmaking possibilities, and to keep the process in a non-anxious zone. - Dan

Yes, and I wonder if there is truly any real control over meaning.

Plus for me there is a disturbing randomness to "inspiration", plus a tendency to be unable to let go of certain ideas when they have occurred to me.

Another powerful question: how much is stylistic choice a matter of received convention?

I try at times to imagine that I have never seen a film before. How then would I imagine using a camera to interpret something that I have written on a piece of paper? The correlation between initial creative impulse, how it has been worked out in script form, how that script is translated into a visual structure, and how the act of realization is dependent on choice of actor-crew-location.

At times I try to lock onto one variable. Something I can control, influence, hammer home.

At other times it all seems simple: I am trying to give someone a sense of how I perceive the world, how I look at it. When I get into that zone the choices are more direct, intuitive.

I tend to obsess over composition, and how background and

foreground elements relate, the relative tidyness or untidyness of the frame. This can be banal, pictorial, not at all profound. It's just what I look at. It is perhaps small-minded.

I constantly feel that I am not being bold enough. Or that I am too derivative. Or that my mind is not rising to the occasion.

Yes, that is the core question. Somewhat similar similar to free will VS. determinism. But you got to try. That's the game we're born to play. Sometimes I wonder if it largely comes down to a question of intention. So much of directing seems to come down the mysterious process of projecting-inflecting mood and tone. The imposition of some aspect of personality, where the means of expression are a piece of recording technology and other people who are given instructions of a sort. It's so interestingly weird, complex, both direct and indirect.

It's a microcosm for the illusion of control that helps us get through the day.

It was interesting to reread Radio Mary today, in a state of utter expansion. Near hypnotic. Maybe I should try reading the script in as many altered states as I can safely accommodate.

I collect quotations that interest me. I read that Walter Benjamin did the same. I thought today about making a movie that would be a collection of quotations, some illustrated, some now.

Also, I really want to make a short film starring Harry, but have no idea yet of what to do.

On Mar 20, 2010, at 10:45 PM, Dan Sallitt wrote:
Yes, and I wonder if there is truly any real control over meaning.

Well, either there's control over something, or you're not making anything at all.

Another powerful question: how much is stylistic choice a matter of received convention?

I try at times to imagine that I have never seen a film before.

I think it's hard to get away from the importance of convention. After all, people no longer flee the theater when a train approaches the camera. Our idea of what's realistic keeps changing, and almost has to, because we associate the real with a stripping away of convention.

At other times it all seems simple: I am trying to give someone a sense of how I perceive the world, how I look at it. When I get into that zone the choices are more direct, intuitive.

Whatever my psychological reasons are for arriving at my style, I rarely have any doubts about how I want to film a scene. My decisions are always a response to the script, and the script usually tells me what to do. I don't feel autonomous when I create visuals.

I tend to obsess over composition, and how background and foreground elements relate, the relative tidyness or untidyness of the frame. This can be banal, pictorial, not at all profound. It's just what I look at. It is perhaps small-minded.

I think I know what you mean. Sometimes you can ruin a shot by making it look too nice. — Dan

3.22.10

GW:

But I notice a tendency to make a decision how to visually approach a scene based on what I have done on earlier scenes.

Consistency aside, I see the potential negative implications of getting locked into a style too early in the process.

Maybe this conflict is part of your process. - Dan

3.26.10

Alain thinks length is "well under 70 minutes".

Alain has idea for group therapy scene, which seems good, but I will be slow and quiet about accepting it, will try and constantly monitor myself to keep clear of whatever spell I sometimes let him cast over me.

Talk with Dan, he says: start from scratch, conceptualize new movie rather than pad out what's there.

POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL SCENES:

--Group therapy

--Mary tries to sleep, hospital room scenes

--Danny & Michelle, additional disturbing hospital stuff

--Hayward & Mary sleep (fuck) in Tony's bed. Tony comes home and either finds them in bed, or they get out of bed and surprise him.

--Rand: sidebar of his increasing derangement

--Musical number

--Mary - fantasy level (does this undercut the reality-illusion level of the movie?)

Chart tension, as way of evaluating emotions-commerciality, scary-spooky-disturbing being the goal here.

TENSION CHART

--elevator: maximize disturbance to Mary's world. Add a minute of normalcy prior to this? A sex prelude with Rand, part of the home movie that he shot? Go into Mary's mind as she relives the sex that happened the night before. (Study "Performance"?)

3.27.10

Currently the script opens with Mary walking across the plaza, going into an office building, getting on an elevator, and Hayward touches her.

I was thinking of adding this: as she walks across the plaza, intercutting flashbacks of Marry having sex with Rand (who we will meet after the elevator scene), Mary alone in her apt at night, Mary getting dressed for work in the morning. Many of these would probably be quick cuts -- we'd see the previous 12 hours or so of her life).

What do you think?

Hate to say it, but my first impression is that it defeats the purpose of the intro, which is to show her from the outside in a normal setting. Unless it's much different now, Mary is not an interesting person in herself, not particularly characterized until Hayward discovers her mysterious abilities. Characterizing her would change the movie a lot - and I suppose you could think about going that route.

In which case a collage of her life might feel different. - Dan

DAN:

RM is a mental piece, not suspense

in people's heads

disturbing scary rather than suspenseful scary

"Repulsion" outside her head

Dan always thought there was a strong sense of mental world - not sure what's real and what's not, always a sense of unreality, of mental world.

Mary's backstory not interesting - beginning currently works.

GW: it's a very bad dream.

She's not in control of herself – lack of control dwells in her own psyche.

Visual idea: re. Detour, shots in and out of focus to represent her mental state.

3.28.10

It's still going to be the same characters. Do I alter my concept of character and mood? What am I reconceptualizing?

There's no one answer to that. If one goes that route, it's almost as ambitious a project as starting over.

For example, after Mary is admitted to the hospital, she sees a shrink (Dr. Glass), then Hayward appears in her room and he takes her out to visit Tony's house where she watches some of the Monkey Man DVD (Tony is not at home).

[I could explore Hayward and Mary's interaction after watching the movie, and the weirdness-drama of Mary and Hayward sneaking back into the hospital. I've also thought of having a scene between Hayward- Mary in Tony's bed.]

No harm in trying. I can't really judge the ideas at the moment – I suppose it would depend on how new or how redundant the Hayward-Mary interaction is.

I then cut from the aftermath of Rand's visit to: Mary already in Tony's house for a second visit (it's a direct cut from Rand masturbating to a videotape of Mary to Hayward and Mary back in Tony's house -- there are no intervening scenes -- events are extremely compressed in this section of the script).

[There are a number of things to explore between Mary seeing Rand and her second visit with Hayward to Tony's house:

Again, it depends on whether sacrificing the compressed effect you like is compensated by getting an interesting additional angle.

Isn't it a reasonable strategy to ask myself: what has been rushed?
what can be further explored? what additional scenes can sustain and enhance mood?

Of course. I didn't mean to rule that option out. Go for it.

I'm too obsessive-compulsive about what I write. I want to add one scene to my current script, just to provide more separation between two similar scenes. And I can't come up with anything exciting enough to justify it.

One thing you'll have to deal with, though, is that you felt fresh when you conceived the current structure, and you won't feel as fresh now, so it might be hard to judge the effect you're having with the changes. - Dan

3.30.10

I don't seem to do well when I try to analyze and amend choices that I made intuitively. For example, I've thought about Hayward fucking Mary, but my fear (and the reason I didn't do it before) is that would perhaps put him down on Rand's level.

Well, he's worse than Rand, isn't he? It would be an improvement for him to get to Rand's level.

But...what if Mary opens her eyes, she's in her hospital bed and she is in the middle of getting fucked by Hayward. And she accepts it. Actually likes it.

The possible problem is that Hayward, at least to me, represents an aspect of Mary. If he fucks her, maybe he'll start to seem more like a real person, a villain with psychology. But maybe not - it all depends. Your scenario with the hospital bed might work - it seems like a fantasy. - Dan

(But at one I recall you commenting hat Hayward was more interesting if he seemed more real than a stock-snide villain? Am I incorrectly remembering?)

He's sleight-of-hand: you are presenting him as a person, but he emerges as something else. So you have to give him a surface plausibility.

The problem with snide villainy isn't unreality: it's that it overweights the sadistic pleasure that the filmmaker and the audience are getting from what Hayward does to people.

Artistically, my highest aspiration is to grapple with the nature of cinema and how I might use it as an exploration of

consciousness and, for want of a better word, reality (Mary's reality). My ambitions are grandiose and idiosyncratic.

Nothing wrong with grandiose ambitions. - Dan

3.31.10

The patience to expand small moments.

4.2.10

ENGLISH VERSION

Lift not elevator

Mary hears Rand's thoughts then repeats them back to him to freak him out - too blatant? Too attacking for Mary's character? (in 2nd cubicle scene?)

"Dead Air" as title card

Reese there when Mary is discharged from hospital?

4.4.10

How criticism seems to forever flag a scene for me.

4.5.10

This is a new Rand scene that would come between the Tony Taylor murder and the Mansonesque massacre. Do you think it goes too far? After this would be the Rand scenes when Mary goes back to work.

Hard for me to say: I don't remember the context. In general, I've never liked the idea of Rand being such a bastard. So the first phone call seems too nasty, and also some of his other dialogue, especially the telepathic stuff. Can't you make his lust seem a little nicer, or at least neutral?

Then there's the question of why Mary is telling him so much, and whether that is a good idea. It's hard for me to tell without context. **I kind of liked the old model of Mary just drifting along her horrible path without too much ability to resist.** But maybe that's just because I'm used to it. **Remember, Mary can't do much against Hayward, so any time you invest into documenting her fighting him is going to result in frustration**

when she fails. – Dan

4.6.10

ALAIN:

At start, Mary is bored. She lets herself participate in things. She's not an innocent participant. Lack of resistance.

Opening sequence to show that her life is drab, that she is uninteresting until The Incident.

Film is about an ordinary person in extraordinary circumstances.

Complicit Passivity (that's the key concept)

4.9.10

DAN (re. Tony Dream – Cindy POV):

So I guess that reconfiguring what is arguably a "real" event (Tony's murder) adds something rather than takes away.

Hard for me to judge the context - I just thought the scene was interesting. It all depends on how much you're adding to our feeling about Mary by showing her processing her experience in these ways.

(But maybe the reconfigured Cindy killing that I think is great you won't Like!)

It's interesting. Horribly sadistic, but there might be an excuse for savoring Cindy's agony (i.e., forcing Mary through it). Again, it all depends on why you're interested in showing Mary processing, what effect that has. Maybe it'll sync up well with what was there already, or maybe it will seem to me that it's better to share only Mary's direct experiences.

One way I could see hooking these experiences in to the film I remember is if Mary's role in them is fluid, blurring her suffering and her joy in killing/fucking. I mean, that too would be an amplification of something that's already there, but it might add force.

Went to see the doc today. Acute stomach pain that the medicine he gave me is not helping. Non Vomitous Nausea. The kind of body sickness that makes me wish I was briefly dead.

How's that now? – Dan

4.29.10 (back from Italy)

re. Ryanair baggage, no computer, only a printout of RM Draft 12 and a black Moleskine and my diary sketchbook re. brain work.

Like being stranded on a desert island. Re-reading script, writing new scenes, shot list thoughts. One day re-read the script starting on p.45, then circling back, another day start on p.17. Complete a pass of the shot list, noted on right side of page, with "SL" to designate (versus script notes).

Cross the Rubicon in terms of wanting to make the film now. Excited by the prospects of it as a POV movie, some new variations on the subj – obj issues I have worked with for ears, exploration of subjectivity, etc.

RE. DRAFT 13

--CINDY'S POV (p43) sluglined as "FANTASY" – **change?**

--Cut alternating Tom / Mary fantasies on p.81-82

--Cut Tom's fantasy of Mary coming back to life on p.94

Need to see The Monkey Man as a killer? Add back scene of death-torture?

4.30.10

CONSISTENCY ISSUES RE. POWERS

1. Can hear Hayward's voice only after being touched?

2. Is Mary infectious? (Yes)

3. Has Rand been infected by Reese? Is he acting fucked up?
(Yes) p23 p51-55 p58

4. Inconsistent gestation periods for the insanity?

DAN

Avoid stuff that takes away from Mary.

There is a lot of leeway in the last scene (re. consistency) that you don't have in the middle.

Try to be intuitive about it – the rules change.

All along it's the viewer's headspace and Mary is the vehicle for that.

Coda emphasizes the mechanism too much. Especially if you don't get psychology.

Hoping that Rand got softened a little.

MY PROPOSAL re. consistency-infection

--Rand gets infected

--Mary realizes this, feels bad-ambivalent (?)

--Mary is careful not to touch Tom

--Cut coda for time being as it diminishes the psychological aspect of story.

Mary kisses Rand.
He gets fucked up.

Mary realizes this. Restrains herself from touching Tom.

INFECTIOIN

Alternate: Hayward does all the infecting, not Mary. Once Hayward is dead, then Tom becomes the Infector?

IF MARY IS THE INFECTOR:

--eliminate Mar touching Laura in Admitting

--Eliminate Hayward's Typhoid Mary dialogue?

--Mary touches both Dr. Glass and Laura in the last scenes that we see them (until the coda).

--Mary restrains herself from touching Tom.

--add some H infection to the coda?

re. Cameron – follow through on any story implication.
But...this isn't a Cameron movie.

Do commercial choices require stepping out of artistic interior of the story?

I am forever trying to reproduce the mindfuck of 2001, Seventh Seal, early days European Art Film lineage.

SCENES TO RESTORE (from Draft 13)

p1 Prosaic opening

p6 Mary's cubicle (ES)

p15 Elevator fantasy (replaces 2nd animated sequence)

p43 Cindy's POV of murder

p45 Hospital room – Mary's consciousness travels down the corridor (after Dr. Glass, sound crescendo)

p73 Camcorder fantasy of Rand (in hospital) p73

(Mary routine of going to work after Rand is dead)

p78 Tom's POV of entering Mary's apt, then Mary's POV of Tom

p95 Coda of infection

5.4.10

NEW SCENES STILL IN DRAFT 14

p7 Replacement for fluorescent light hallucination

p9 Hospital room, first night, POV

p17 Hospital room, after 1st visit to Tony's, thinks she hears Hayward speak (repetitive with hearing his voice in her apt later)

p23 Hospital room – Hayward wakes Mary to go to Tony's again

p30 Group Therapy

p32 Laurel Cyn – Mary walks, goes into Tony's, he comes back to life

p47 Mary's apt, night, after being released. She wonders if Hayward has spoken to her in her sleep. Morning, she wakes.

p87 Tom's fantasy that Mary has come back to life

NOTE: revision marks eliminated for circulation.

5.6.10

BEN:

--Anglicize version for UK circ

--highlight or bring out humor

--not convinced that dramatic ups and downs are handled quite right

--H should perhaps say "Radio Mary" later.

--Some more humor to be gleaned re. iPod, music.

--virus spreads out from Malcolm via Hayward

--Ben likes the idea that Tom arrested Malcolm (p75 --)

Mary: Have you heard of The Monkey Man.

Tom: Yeah. I arrested him. Why?

6.12.10 Santa Monica

DAN (after reading Draft 14)

Monkey Man a negative – MM characterizes Hayward, and Hayward is not a characterized character, so it is a negative to the script.

Hayward is a force of liberating sex & death.

Weak aspects of script:

1. Monkey Man
2. Hayward reverting to wisecracks
3. Rand – Mary's reaction to him is too vindictive.

Possible new development: Mary has to cope with reading thoughts. She realizes that everyone has horrible thoughts. She is turned off by Rand, then realizes that she's listening to normal stuff.

Stuff with Hayward overshadows

6.13.10

On Jun 13, 2010 11:34 AM, Gary Walkow <gwalkow@gmail.com> wrote:

I can see now how the Monkey Man throws things off, and now, for the first time, like entirely excising it. But I don't yet know how to do that. With no Monkey Man, why do they go to Tony's house? What do Mary and Hayward talk about the first visit by themselves? What do they talk about with Tony?

The visit to Jake's is a little easier, but what replaces the Monkey Man discussion that Hayward has with Jake?

From: danielsallitt@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Monkey Man
Date: June 13, 2010 8:47:49 AM PDT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Reply-To: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

Can't answer those questions – maybe it's good to think first about what replaces the revenge motivation. I suspect that what should replace it is not another motivation – **because giving Hayward psychology doesn't seem the point – but rather something seen from the outside, an odd pattern, a form of cruel play.**

Maybe Hayward likes numbers or astrology or coded messages in the classified ads, and picks victims that way, without malice.

Or maybe Hayward divides the world into "naturals" and pure victims who don't have enough psychic complexity to be interesting, people who flatline on his personal detector. – Dan

6.27.10

DRAFT 15/ NON-MONKEY MAN REWRITE

H to M – “pick a house.” She doesn't – Hayward does.

H visits people's houses – randomness, destiny.

Trip 1 – discovers Tony is a screenwriter, producer, made a film about a serial killer.

Jake episode:

Jump cuts: "we can follow that car", shopping mall: "or that person"; "or look inside that house."

re. Tony: H gets M to fantasize she is screenwriter (Dan: "too reflexive")

M: Why are we here?

6.28.10

RE. DAN'S DRAFT 14 NOTES

cut Hole in the Sky dial line in Jake episode?

--Rand post-hospital a problem area

--Would Tom stay for tea to try and get more info from Mary?

--re. Tom waiting in the car? Change.

--Hayward's repeated catch phrase "Take a moment to think about eternity" & "needgul...gleeful..."

--

6.30.10

From: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

Subject: Re: yr Draft 14 Notes

Date: June 30, 2010 12:14:25 PM PDT

To: gwalkow@gmail.com

>My idea is that Mary has changed her mind about Rand after her experience with Hayward. >Before Hayward, she was content to let Rand fuck her, use her, and after Hayward Rand >is just a pale shadow.

For one thing, I believe you've cut all evidence that Rand is merely using Mary for sex. Which I am personally glad of, as I think that's way too simple a characterization. But it makes one wonder what's biting Mary.

For another thing, Mary's bad treatment of Rand is weirdly judgmental, even if she had lost interest in him. It sort of makes the film seem anti-sex, as if the worst thing anyone could do is want sex for its own sake. And it's really weird that Mary chooses this point in her life to lash out, even if Rand were a bad guy. She's falling into Hayward's supernatural hands, she has no one to turn to and no defenses, and the only person who seems to care about her is Rand. He's her only connection to real life. Would she choose that moment to push him away?

It might be different if Mary were aware that she liked sex killing and submission. But she never embraces that position, and in the middle of the script she's still hoping it's all a dream.

As I said at one point: if you make Rand merely a childish, impulsive, unthoughtful person with some small feeling for Mary, then there's an opportunity here: Mary could overhear his wanting her for sex, be turned off at first, but eventually come to the realization that everyone sounds bad when you overhear their thoughts.

>What do you think if I switched Dr. Glass to a woman? Does that throw things off in some >way?

From a woman to a man, you mean. I'm sure you can do it, but give the character a good rethink if you do. This is a script about sex, and so the doctors' thoughts about Mary will probably be relevant. I suppose she could overhear that he's gay, which would preserve the current Dr. Glass's sexual detachment. – Dan

From: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

Subject: Re: Rand

Date: July 1, 2010 2:37:33 PM PDT

To: gwalkow@gmail.com

re. office scene, lunch invite

(Well, it gets rid of Mary's insult, which did seem gratuitous. She's still backing away from him, and it's not clear to me why. I would think there would be at least a short period where the familiar Rand would be a welcome sight, during the period

where she's not completely sure that Hayward won't just go away. At some point she might be so reconciled to her slavery that her old life holds no hope for her - but my sense is that she's still a bit hopeful here that Hayward won't reappear. Without rereading the context, it's hard for me to be sure, though.)

re. on the plaza

(That works better, I guess. I'd need to re-read to get Mary's emotional trajectory - i.e., how accepting is she of Hayward owning her, how traumatized, does it make sense that she should be fencing with Rand about dinner instead of lying on the ground curled into a fetal position, etc. You could make a case for Mary being so distracted by Hayward's appearance in the sky that she can't deal much with Rand, puts him off clumsily and/or walks away distraught.)

From: sallitt@post.harvard.edu
Subject: **Re: Rand**
Date: July 2, 2010 7:42:11 AM PDT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com

>By departure from the script I assume you mean his death.

Yeah, I was just summing up my overall reaction to Rand, not commenting in this scene in particular. Overall, Rand's final scene is good.

>Why? Because nastiness is too one-dimensional, too easy?
>So you prefer him as a user who is not nasty? It's interesting
>that you've had the same complaint about Laura and Dr. Glass.

Yeah, so maybe you're exposing a prejudice of mine. It's not so much that nastiness is one-dimensional as that it can give the viewer a smug sense of superiority. I would probably react better to the nastiness if it felt psychologically plausible...but I really think the key factor is not plausibility, but rather where you position the audience vis a vis the character. I've definitely liked some portrayals of nastiness in movies.

>If the office and lunch scenes are rewritten, doesn't the scene when Mary comes to
>Rand's house also need to be rewritten? Or does he regard it as a miracle that she

>has come over, an answered prayer, and he gets instantly hard?

I don't know the answer offhand, but I don't think it's going to be too hard to motivate Rand's hard-on, whatever Mary's prior behavior was. I think I could answer your question better after the earlier scenes were rewritten. Overall, I think you have the most leeway with the unreal scene at Rand's house.

>I kind of like the idea expressed in an earlier email that he keeps testing limits

>and she places no limit on what he can do.

Can't recall this offhand. – Dan

From: sallitt@post.harvard.edu
Subject: **Re: Tom having tea with Mary**
Date: July 2, 2010 7:54:30 AM PDT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com

>The other big note of yours is that Tom would hang out more in Mary's apt. to get info.

>Think I should expand those scenes? Then it gets to a level of awkwardness and

>discomfort and goes to wait-guard-surveil from car?

I think that comment I made was a thought about how to fix two problems with one change. Problem one: Tom is a homicide cop, and would have to be tough and savvy to do that job. Even if Mary is stirring his emotions, he should be functional at all times – for instance, if he's trying to get info out of Mary, wouldn't he accept the offer of tea and wait for this obviously talkative person to spill? Problem two: **I think Tom's feeling for Mary works a lot better as an overtone (you've already gone a long way in that direction), and his "I have to go" routine makes him seem a little too lovesick and naïve, even if it didn't interfere with his work.**

I don't necessarily think expansion or big changes are needed. I'm kind of amazed that the Tom scenes, which were a problem for me in the first draft I read, worked so well in the second draft, and so I'm inclined not to mess too much with them...but you may have an idea that works. – Dan

From: sallitt@post.harvard.edu
Subject: **Re: Rand Sandwich Shop**

Date: July 2, 2010 7:54:30 AM PDT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com

Just read this, and I didn't have a big problem anywhere. There's still the issue of why Mary puts him off so firmly at first - I could see Rand seeming less attractive with his thoughts exposed, but I don't exactly get the rhythm of her rejection/acceptance.

The chat with the sandwiches is all fine - I think I'd shorten it a bit, just because none of it is exciting, and it's beside the main point. A somewhat sparser presentation might work better. I might remove "not necessarily," would shorten Rand pressuring Mary for dinner. - Dan

7.7.10

DRIVING TO JAKE'S, MAYBE ADD FLASHBACK:

CUT TO:

INT. TONY'S HOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Tony's aura bright as a firecracker, Hayward's hand moves in a wide, sawing arc around Tony's chest.

CUT BACK TO:

7.9.10

From: lizabethstanley@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Draft 15

Date: July 9, 2010 5:43:09 AM BST

To: gwalkow@gmail.com

Hi there,

Read the new version and I didn't miss the Monkey Man scenes/backstory, so hats off to you. It reads creepier, more focused, better.

Some small stuff...page numbers are for the final draft version of the script rather than the PDF.

p. 9 - There is a Dr. Glass VO which is supposed to be a delayed response to a verbal cue. But there is not verbal cue from Mary.

p. 10 Mary's - we hear her say/think that she doesn't want to do bad things, but up til now, there has been no evidence

whatsoever that she is tempted to do bad things.

p 14 - need "?" after Hayward's "How about that"

p 17 - But I thought you liked...

p. 28 - His hand hovers over the lady's shoudler...

p. 31 - ...cueing up some...

p. 33 - I'm feeling what?

p. 56 - How do the cops end up at Rand's? Why would they know anything had happened there?

p. 79 - Seems like - for consistency's sake - Tom shouldn't start hearing other people's thoughts til Hayward actually touches him (since the idea is that the insanity which is linked to telepathy gets activated through Rand's touch)

p. 80 - Hayward - should his aura be gray? I can go with that, but is there another color that is more evocative of who he really is?

What color is Mary's aura???

That's it for now.

E

9.8.10

From: AlainSil@aol.com
Subject: Re: Mary Out-Patient
Date: September 8, 2010 4:44:03 PM BST
To: gwalkow@gmail.com

In a message dated 9/7/10 8:17:45 PM Pacific Daylight Time, gwalkow@gmail.com writes:

So, if she is an outpatient...she doesn't even spend one night at the hospital? She's taken to a doctor's office, given some pills and sent home? Or she is allowed to go home in her sister's care?

I'm pondering this concept...it's a big one for me to digest...

After she goes nuts, you see her in some sort of emergency room/area. All that requires is Mary--hospital gown on a gurney perhaps--a doctor examining her, and in the bg another doctor speaking with one of the uniformed cops who brought her in. BTW that's two lab coats and a cop uniform, all of which I have. Heck I even have a bunch of paper hospital gowns. This is the time for alternate distorted reality from her POV.

Normally all it takes is one shot of Haldol to end the severest of psychotic episodes, followed by one night of observation in a regular hospital and then released to the custody of a relative next morning. After that it's outpatient psychiatric.

9.9.10 DENVER

DRAFT 16: NO ASYLUM

--increase Laura's role?

--explanation of her outpatient treatment? how much explanation is necessary? (Ask Dan and Alain)

--show Mary taking psychotropic drugs? more outpatient stuff?

--transposed cafeteria scenes (tried first scene in Laura's kitchen, tried second scene with Hayward as a Bus Boy).

CAFETERIA SCENES (DRAFT 15)

Sc 51 p.26 – after group therapy

Sc 67 p.36 – after Cereal Killer

√--Hayward could take Mary to a coffee shop during following potential victims sequence (or that could be the start of the sequence)

--Laura subplot, with some sibling stuff? Discomfort of living in her sister's house? Albert's sexual thoughts? Catch Albert masturbating? Wandering the house at night, sleepless? (Ask Dan and Alain)

Hayward on fantasy TV at Laura's?

--Transition to moving into Laura's, moving out?

--Carefully examine the transitions with removal of cafeteria scenes.

--Dan doesn't like Tom Taylor coming back to life – cut? find a substitute?

--Ask Alain and Dan about County Hospital scenes.

re. procedure

re. is that where the cops would take her?

need to work on the Tom conversation in County Hospital.

--Would Tom could interview Laura re. killing? re. sneaking out of Laura's house to kill?

--Tom, apt scene – does he ask "Is Hayward real?" Tom's skepticism (ask Dan and Alain)

[Mary (possible reply): That's an unfair question (?).]

--Reveal of Hayward's reality at the end (park scenes) feel weak (ask Dan and Alain).

--

EMAIL FROM DAN 9.11.10

On Sep 11, 2010, at 6:09 PM, Dan Sallitt wrote:

Gary,

-

Later, instead of Dr. Glass releasing Mary from the asylum, she gives

Laura-Mary the go ahead for Mary to go back to living on her own at her apt.

I recall Mary being desperate to please Glass because she wanted out. Would that same dynamic apply here? Presumably Mary's stay at Laura's wouldn't be enforced.

I agree, that's a puzzler. She wanted to get out of hospital because she thought that H had access to her there. So that no longer pertains. I'm stumped. Need help with that.

The terms of Mary's incarceration at the asylum were never discussed.

I'm wondering if I need a bit of explanation of Mary's outpatient treatment, or if that is unnecessary.

It sounds boring to me. You don't have to do it.

I was inclined to skip it.

Wonder if I should show Mary taking psychotropic drugs?

Interesting. My first reaction is that it complicates the mind-altering effect of Hayward's suggestions, but it might be okay to introduce that ambiguity. Is it plausible that Mary would think the drugs responsible for her Hayward-life, would ask the doctor if that was a possibility?

That's interesting -- thanks for thinking of that wrinkle!

Wondering about increasing Laura's role with Mar staying in her house, if there is anything to be gained from that. Laura subplot, some sibling stuff?

Can't recall exactly where you left Laura, but if she's just edgy and unfriendly, then I don't think she should be expanded. If she has a semi-good, semi-bad relationship with her sister, then it could be interesting.

Discomfort of Mary living in her sister's house?

Probably. It would be interesting if you found a place with forbidding or unusual interior decoration.

Mary hears Albert's sexual thoughts? Mary catches Albert masturbating? Mary wandering the house at night, sleepless?

All the above are possible, but I vote for the sex stuff not being too creepy.

Could add scenes such as moving into Laura's house -- but part of the charm/verve of the piece is the leaps forward in narrative because transition scenes are skipped.

It's optional, I'd say.

I'm afraid that for most of the rest of your notes I don't have a clear enough memory of the continuity to comment.

County Hospital scenes -- is that where Tom would take her after Rand's murder?

That seems plausible.

Mary wouldn't confess sneaking out of Laura's house to kill as she said she snuck out of the hospital to kill, would she?

I don't see why not. - Dan

9.12.10

From: Dan Sallitt <sallitt@post.harvard.edu>

Date: September 12, 2010 4:12:27 PM BST

To: Gary Walkow <gwalkow@gmail.com>

Subject: Re: RM DR 16 - Non-Asylum rewrite

I recall Mary being desperate to please Glass because she wanted out. Would that same dynamic apply here? Presumably Mary's stay at Laura's wouldn't be enforced.

GW: I agree, that's a puzzler. She wanted to get out of hospital because she thought that H had access to her there. So that no longer pertains. I'm stumped. Need help with that.

DAN: This might be hard to find an exact parallel for. Mary can probably leave Laura's anytime, which she would do if she thought that Hayward was associated with the place. So she probably shouldn't assume that Hayward has special access to Laura's place. She could see Hayward's visits as a sign of her growing insanity, be afraid that Glass will institutionalize her for them. That would recreate a tension in the therapy sessions, but not the same tension. - Dan

9.13.10

POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL SCENES:

--LAURA (AND ALBERT?) DRIVING MARY BACK TO HER HOUSE, MAYBE EVEN SETTLING HER BACK IN?

Darkness you can sink into. Darkness you can wear like a jacket.

Nuances of craziness, slide into, balance re. uncertainty.

Study Repulsion.

9.14.10

From: danielsallitt@gmail.com
Subject: Re: my uncertainty (interrog. vs. hospital rm)
Date: September 14, 2010 3:56:33 PM BST
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Reply-To: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

In dealing with this section, I fear that it might make Hayward appear more imaginary to appear in her hospital room?

Is this a spurious consideration?

I think so. I've never worried about whether Hayward is real or not. He's not someone who does or can exist, so what's important about him will always be what he represents for Mary. There are no documentary considerations with demonic forces, as there are with homicide detectives.

Countering this, does Mary seem too whacked out to go right to an interrogation room rather a doctor/hospital?

Mary seems really whacked out at the murder scene. You don't necessarily have to show every step on her way to becoming less whacked out, but you should probably keep the police's decisions consistent with her demeanor, even if you skip steps.

I no longer (or at least at the moment) have any sense as to whether someone watching the film will be wondering if Hayward is real or imaginary or both at this point.

I don't think that you have to address that point. - Dan

9.17.10

EMAIL FROM DAN:

Perhaps I have been too
lazy to change the scene -- I like it

I like the tone of the dialogue too. Maybe you can keep the despair and the resignation to her fate, which are the undertones that give the dialogue force, and just smooth away the big non sequiturs that suggest insanity. Or maybe some of them can be kept, but the context altered slightly to indicate that she is aware of her environment but too troubled to keep on top of the flow of events around her. - Dan

MARY

(stares at the TV static)

Sometimes I'm awake even when I dream.

VANDERHORN

Whoa.

TOM

(gives him a scolding look)

Please explain.

MARY

It's one long flow of seeing through everything, whether I want to or not. It's not just something you can shut off like a coffee machine. I didn't want to. I really didn't.

MARY

It all happens in the gaps.

TOM

What gaps?

9.30.10

RE. REWRITING DR. GLASS.

SEQUENCE

--Breakdown

--Wakes in Laura's guest room (need to show context? how do we know she is at Laura's? There is dial but maybe a transitional scene is needed.)

--Dr. Glass 1 (Is hearing Dr. Glass's thoughts too soon? YES, eliminate. Add recommendation of group therapy to this scene. "I think it might be useful." Mary wants help, wonders if Hayward is real.)

--Hayward comes into Mary's room ("So you are real. Or, are you?")

--Visit to Tony's (Hayward seems real is that he seems to have taken Mary to a real place. Maybe she sees dirt on her feet, she went barefoot to Tony's.)

--Rand visits (currently Mary does not hear his thoughts)

--Hayward kills Tony

--Group therapy (Mary can hear Dr. Glass's thoughts, and the thoughts of others -- she needs to remark to herself about this. Make this the first instance of hearing voices.) (OR: Mary is afraid to talk about murder to Dr. Glass -- group therapy conveniently allows me to avoid this issue. But would Mary be thinking about the murder, wondering about it?)

--Laura's house, Mary eats breakfast. Hayward shows up. (This scene feels weird -- worked better when it was cafeteria, in a social context. CHANGED TO COFFEE SHOP, AFTER GROUP)

--Mary has a dream about Tony.

--Hayward takes Mary out: mall, coffee shop, to Jake's.

--Jake's: more mind-reading (intensified), more murder.

--Dr. Glass 2 (Afraid, does Mary ask for help, then realize that Dr. Glass cannot help her? Does Hayward or at least his voice put in an appearance? Is Mary afraid to find out if the murders are real? Does she not want to look too closely?)

--Night: fantasy of Mary wandering away, Hayward's voice put her back in bed.

--Laura's kitchen: discussion about Mary going back to live alone. (What about therapy? Does Laura ask about it? Is there some dial about therapy ending, or being avoided? "Are you

going to keep seeing the therapist? I think your insurance covers 8 sessions." "I don't know." "I think you should. It's free." "You get what you pay for." "You already have paid for it, in a sense." Need to get renewed sense that Mary knows she can't talk to Dr. Glass about murders and Hayward.)

--Mary back in her apt, imagines that she hears Hayward's voice.

--Mary goes back to work: Rand, lunch, Face in the Clouds.

--Hayward takes Mary out to kill Rand.

--Rand dead: Tom enters plot.

--Interstitial: videotape that Rand made.

--County Hospital: Tom.

--Laura & Albert drive Mary back to her apt.

--LAST NIGHT: Tom visits apt., Mary comes out to Tom's car, Hayward takes a bath, makes an omelette.

--Park: Hayward "dies", Mary dies, Tom is infected.

KEY: need to chart where Mary is at for each stage of the story.
Re. Repulsion?

DRAFT 16 CLEAN-UP:

√--Mary bare feet, grass stains on her feet the next morning
(after 1st visit to Tony's)

√--instead of Hayward showing up at breakfast at Laura's house,
what if Mary is at a coffee shop?

--POSSIBLE RULE: only hear Mary's thoughts when she is
communicating telepathically, rather than inner monologue?
(There are inner monologues in "The Informant!")

12.10.10

From: danielsallitt@gmail.com
Subject: Re: On to other topics
Date: December 10, 2010 8:08:42 AM PST

To: gwalkow@gmail.com

>What if Mary tries to do normal stuff as a way of trying to assert herself, to fight against the pull of Hayward. Perhaps goes to a coffee shop, a laundromat, rides a bus?

Seems okay if it's not too extensive.

>Maybe Laura encourages Mary to go out, buy a book. Maybe a self help

>book, that she thinks will help. It doesn't.

Can't say I see the point of this. What's Laura's current attitude toward the breakdown? Is she hostile, sympathetic, perceptive, oblivious? Maybe the suggestion would be okay, depending on Laura's current profile; can't see the percentage in Mary actually reading it.

>I was wondering if maybe there should be a scene of Marry fighting

>back, yelling at Hayward, showing some anger.

I don't know. Maybe. What's Hayward's reaction? My first inclination is not to fool around with Mary's profound passivity, but maybe this wouldn't interfere with the basic idea behind her.

>Also, what if she tries to use mind reading to her advantage. What if she recites thoughts directly back to the shrink to freak the shrink out? Motive would be to freak the shrink into canceling sessions, because she doesn't like them?

Is she still afraid, trying to hide things from the therapist?

If so, she might not call attention to herself.

>Maybe she buys a bottle of wine and gets drunk hoping that will stop

>the voices. It doesn't.

Seems like a small hope. I don't know about this. – Dan

1.4.11

From: gwalkow@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Rand as SMC teacher rather than lawyer

Date: January 4, 2011 9:26:57 AM GMT

To: AlainSil@aol.com

On Jan 3, 2011, at 5:11 AM, AlainSil@aol.com wrote:
In a message dated 1/2/11 1:54:03 PM Pacific Standard Time, gwalkow@gmail.com writes:

I'm thinking of changing Rand to an english teacher at a junior collegeMary would work in the dept. office...I'm doing this because we can more easily shoot at SMC rather than battle to get a law office + Century City...does that work for you? It eliminates the class status issue with Rand. Maybe it isn't a good change.

Why does Mary have to be a worker in the department office? My only concern about class status is as part of back story: is Rand taking advantage of Mary because of his superior. When not make Mary a lecturer?

"of his superior"? Do you mean because Rand is superior (lawyer vs. secretary relationship). Yes, class is part of the original concept. Mary does not seem like a lecturer or an intellectual or academic in any way. This whole change feels misguided at the moment. The impulse was only for location simplicity. I don't want her to be in a bland n.d. office situation.

Do you have any general Act 3 comments? (after Rand's murder). Anything that doesn't work for you?

Would also need a plausible reason for Tom Reese to visit the school office. This is premised on Jim getting me access to the english dept office which he might not be able or willing to do.

Given that Tom is a homicide investigator a the background check on a person of interest in a such a crime would be a reason for him to visit the office. Even simply, since all he needs to do is bump into Mary, why not make him a guest speaker at a criminology class.

AJS

Begin forwarded message:

From: AlainSil@aol.com

Date: January 5, 2011 5:46:22 PM GMT

To: gwalkow@gmail.com

Subject: Re: RM Act 3, etc

Gary,

I am not going to cite text but your comments did not address two key concerns:

1) The script is short.

There is one mechanism is already in place for extending it: the visions which Mary has when she is mentally disturbed, which is almost the entire narrative.

More below.

2) Mary's character

Mary's passivity is all right in theory and at times within the context of overwhelming mental assault. The relationship that needs refinement--stylistic or otherwise--is not Mary/Tom but Mary/Hayward. The narrative makes this movie a supernatural thriller and that means spectator engagement with Mary. Neither Repulsion nor Rosemary's Baby provide deep paradigms on the narrative level (this is neither an investigation and discovery of a dark conspiracy nor a descent into complete madness), although there are some stylistic antecedents there, particularly in the continuity between the two established by Polanski.

If Mary has a job that required interaction with outside parties that could both expand the narrative AND deepen her existential dilemma. If, for example, she were a lecturer in some academic setting then the need to return to her job and perform normally while being caught in a dissociative relationship with Hayward could create opportunities for more dramatic scenes and more visual exploration of the detailed workings of her mind.

As for finding a less cumbersome camera with which to shoot, that sounds great. You should accept the compromises involved with regards to visual compression on these cameras because it does not matter. You can use it for part of the movie or all of the movie, that does not matter either. More than any of your

scripts, Radio Mary is dependent on the performances of the three leads. All other considerations outside of script and performance combined represent a miniscule percentage of importance in terms of making a successful movie.

If other considerations make it difficult to start working on this now then don't. Wait until you are ready.

AJS

From: AlainSil@aol.com
Subject: Re: Rand as SMC teacher rather than lawyer
Date: January 4, 2011 9:13:36 PM GMT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com

In a message dated 1/4/11 1:30:57 AM Pacific Standard Time, gwalkow@gmail.com writes:

"of his superior"? Do you mean because Rand is superior (lawyer vs. secretary relationship). Yes, class is part of the original concept. Mary does not seem like a lecturer or an intellectual or academic in any way. This whole change feels misguided at the moment. The impulse was only for location simplicity. I don't want her to be in a bland n.d. office situation.

I don't think the JC environment is a good fit. Most low-end jobs are work study, although there is not reason why Mary could not have some sort of expertise that permits her to be a lecturer. For example, she has degrees in library science or education (fields that are as vanilla as possible) and teaches that.

Do you have any general Act 3 comments? (after Rand's murder). Anything that doesn't work for you?

Believe I've said this before: it is too short at 26 pages (of course, so is the entire script). Regardless of how many pages, there are just three/four scenes (plus tape play back): (1) Mary with Tom (a) at crime scene and (b) at the hospital; (2) Mary speaks to Laura; and (3) conclusion inside and outside Mary's apartment. At that the hospital scene is too long.

Where is the build-up? She gets out of the hospital in the

morning, rides in a car with Laura Albert and then is cooking pasta. **What happens to the day?**

As you know I do not care about "acts" or any external, arbitrary "structure" that does not matter to the real course of a narrative. If it's right to go from the hospital to cooking pasta, fine.

I am sure there are other movies which have just 3/4 scenes in the last third of the narrative BUT that is certainly not the norm (even for you). I just read a horror/suspense script (a psychotic figure that merely appears to have supernatural powers) that was not bad: professional female lead with haunted past goes back to family how and encounters menace from a very unexpected source. Some cliched scenes, some dialogue over the top BUT 103 pages long and 11 scenes in the "final act" or last 30 pages of a 30/45/30 structure. I make no attempt to conform to any artificial expectations but the "last act" (last 15 pages from a climactic action scene) of the 95-page long Nightcomer contain 6 scenes and a detached postscript.

A few questions: why does Mary not think about a way to resist Hayward. How about being pro-active instead of waiting for the next thing to happen to her? Otherwise, as I have said, it is difficult for an audience to remain engaged with a doormat. The dramatic norm in the last scenes of a thriller/horror format is for the person victimized, the lead character to resist. Successful or not, that figure goes on fighting for survival.

I understand that it is simpler dramatically for Mary to have a humdrum life and be relatively isolated. I don't care about the details of her job or how she got it but why is she friendless? Is there no one to whom she can turn other than her sister. Generically people under supernatural assault often seek counsel from experts. This is somewhat stereotypically but it also makes fundamental sense. For people with medical or legal problems, there are doctors or lawyers to call. Plumbing problems, car problems, you can get a how-to book and some tools and try to fix it yourself. For any of these you can call a friend and ask for advice. Mary does none of the above.

AJS

1.5.11

From: danielsallitt@gmail.com
Subject: Re: RM Act 3

Date: January 5, 2011 5:59:34 PM GMT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Reply-To: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

I am sure there are other movies which have just 3/4 scenes in the last third of the narrative BUT that is certainly not the norm (even for you). I just read a horror/suspense script

It's worth pointing out here that RM is not a suspense film. It's more of a voluptuous masochistic dream. There's no way to defeat Hayward, and the film doesn't bother pretending there is, which makes sense to me.

1.9.11

Why does she attack Hayward now? I just don't know consciously why I made that choice and there such geologic layers to how the novel and then the script evolved.

I don't think Mary needs a motivation to strike at Hayward. If you want one, her growing affection for Tom seems like it changes the terrain somewhat in that last scene. But I would accept that action wherever it happened. It's not as if Mary's total passivity is required at all times.

Hope you're doing okay. – Dan

1.10.11

From: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

>When I reread the script (again in an untrustworthy state)
Mary's stabbing
>Hayward seemed to come out of the blue.

He's evil incarnate: everyone has a good motivation to stab him. You could work on the mechanics of why now instead of before (though I feel that that makes sense already), but I don't think it will do this film any good to focus on mechanics.

>Take out cops re. to make it less of a police story, spacier,

more ambiguous at the end

Taking cops out makes it more abstract, makes Tom look like a principle rather than a person. I don't really think he is. - Dan

Maybe audiences will mind Mary's passivity, I don't know. But changing that changes the whole script, and will probably make it more conventional.

Generically people under supernatural assault often seek counsel from experts.

God, do you really want these dumb scenes, where experts think Mary is crazy because everyone knows that there's no such thing as the supernatural? I mean, they're not going to help her, so what's the point? It's not GHOSTBUSTERS.

So maybe Alain is delivering to you the interesting message that what you're making is too arty to pass as a genre film. But I don't think he gets what you're doing. - Dan

1.15.11 Sat (Clare back)

This is the first morning where RM is the first thing I work on (rather than HA). I hope my game face is finally on.

Talk to Dan, talk to Alain (phone more collegial than email). Tell Alain I am shooting the script as is, will try to save 2 days at the end of the schedule for extra material, and-or do another shoot after a first cut of the movie.

Go to sleep committed to shooting the movie...

1.16.11

...and wake up thinking about all the work I want to do on Radio Mary today...

MY EMAIL TO DAN:

Dan,

I talked to Alain. It's almost always better talking to him on the phone. In the course of the conversation I said I was going to pretty much shoot the script as is, and save 2 days at the end of the schedule to shoot additional material, TBD, re. the length issue. Or that I will do a cut of the picture and then arrange for another shoot two months after principal photography, perhaps 1 - 4 days.

I think there will be some level of pressure from him re. the genre element-suspense-etc, but the best thing is to not provoke with statements about Mary's profound voluptuous passivity or that the movie is a study in passivity. Really, I invited the rewrite advice from him in the emails that I showed you.

It was Alain's idea to take the film out of the asylum and that is what has made it workable as a 20K movie.

I feel yesterday that I crossed over the line into making the movie, and our conversation was extremely helpful to that. I really feel that I am making the movie now -- it's what I think about when I wake up. I'm already mildly freaked about getting ready for the first day of shooting mid-April.

Re. expanding the movie, without diluting it...

What about expanding Rand? I found a note of yours from a while back re. Marry trying Rand as an alternative to Hayward (not so rejecting of him at work). But the issue is that what I have now seems to work and I am now constantly in danger of unbalancing something that is balanced.

I also thought I could add a scene of Mary having dinner with Laura and Albert and hearing their thoughts. There is not enough of what Mary's life would be like living with her sister -- lack of privacy, eating her sister's food, enduring some of her sister's advice & judgements, etc.

Alain raised a question which might be useful...does Mary have a friend? Perhaps someone she was close to but is less so now? If I could add a character in an unforced way that might be useful. I have no specifics in mind at the moment.

One valid point I though Alain had is what does Mary do in the time between getting out of the hospital and boiling pasta at night. Seems there could be a lot of tension re, her fear of

Hayward re-appealing, her general uncertainty. Maybe she does something prosaic (rides a bus, does her laundry). Is she aware enough to notice that a cop (Vanderhorn) is following her? It would be funny if she realized she was being followed by hearing Vanderhorn's thoughts. There are some obvious things I haven't done -- Mary walking down a a street and hearing thoughts in passing. It might be funny is she hears the streak of thoughts (with doppler effect) of someone in a car driving by. Or she drives her car somewhere and hears the thoughts of the other driver's while she is caught in traffic.

Gary

From: sallitt@post.harvard.edu
Subject: Re: RM Expansion (& in production!)
Date: January 16, 2011 2:51:14 PM GMT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com

What about expanding Rand? I found a note of yours from a while back re. Marry trying Rand as an alternative to Hayward (not so rejecting of him at work). But the issue is that what I have now seems to work and I am now constantly in danger of unbalancing something that is balanced.

What you mostly have to worry about is adding stuff that doesn't give us any new or good emotional vibes. I remember thinking that Mary might naturally cling to anything about normal life as she was struggling to grasp her fate. I don't mind it the way it is; I can imagine it being good or even better with Mary having a little more of this compensating feeling (no doubt followed by disappointment with Rand), but there's a question of whether too much of it would help or hurt.

I also thought I could add a scene of Mary having dinner with Laura and Albert and hearing their thoughts. There is not enough of what Mary's life would be like living with her sister -- lack of privacy, eating her sister's food, enduring some of her sister's advice & judgments, etc.

Personally, I'd like this better as an opportunity to show the sister's decent side, while also showing that she's incapable of helping. A little bit might work, and it might also make the sister role more appealing for actresses.

Alain raised a question which might be useful...does Mary have a friend? Perhaps someone she was close to but is less so now? If I could add a character in an unforced way that might be useful. I have no specifics in mind at the moment.

It's true, and it's also dangerous. I'm not sure that Mary's solitude, even though it's a little abstract, isn't good for the script. The big question: can a friend add anything good to the script that a sister isn't already providing? I'm inclined to advise against this.

One valid point I though Alain had is what does Mary do in the time between getting out of the hospital and boiling pasta at night. Seems there could be a lot of tension re, her fear of Hayward re-appearing, her general uncertainty. Maybe she does something prosaic (rides a bus, does her laundry).

It's okay to drop characters for a while, especially when following them doesn't help the script. Mere tension may or may not help. I'd go carefully here, unless you get an idea for a new emotional angle.

Is she aware enough to notice that a cop (Vanderhorn) is following her? It would be funny if she realized she was being followed by hearing Vanderhorn's thoughts.

Yeah, this could be funny, especially if Mary doesn't have too big a reaction, given how fucked she is anyway.

There are some obvious things I haven't done -- Mary walking down a a street and hearing thoughts in passing. It might be funny is she hears the streak of thoughts (with doppler effect) of someone in a car driving by.

That could be funny. Again, watch out for just having fun with Mary - I'd think scenes like this should be short and not too emotionally big. - Dan

For Mary is it worse if it is real or if it is not? "Please don't let this be real, let me be crazy." Or is being crazy worse?

Not supernatural - hypernatural.

JON FINK

Wanted to believe that virus is real & Tom is infected.
Last third, start building in that direction.
Audience starts being more certain (like Rosemary's Baby)

as in Rosemary's Baby "this is really happening (Dan Sallitt
that remark is in the context of a dream so it doesn't apply)

First Third – Buddhist sense – is it real?
Last Third – "Let it be real."

There should be no question that it's real at the end.

Not supernatural – hypernatural.

Give noir weight to Tom's POV – he's the channel to what's going
on. Tom is figuring it out as the audience is figuring it out.

Twist – not only is Hayward real but the metaphysical stuff is
real too.

Opening elevator – Hayward hears babbling noise then he just
hears Mary.

I'm saying there is a parallel perception of the world.

Buddhism lite – your POV is outside the world. Hayward is both
a killer and a bearer of virus/
(GW: pick of victims is like a virus.)
Outside normal reality (same thing as craziness).

FROM NOVEL DRAFT 5, pt.1

I live inside skin that I do not like.

That I will learn to jump out of.

*Behind walls, to the pulse of blue TV light, I hear a sad
thought.*

That travels.

And I travel silently, like eyes without a face, to look through the window.

In the flickering blue light is the meat of my vision.

(Elevator scene happens the 2nd day!)
Elevator music,
Hayward touches her while others are on the elevator – touch happens from inside the crowd.
Mary comments to the other passengers about the music being too loud.

Vision of being electron in light fixture etc.
(Dr. Glass is a man!)

Hallucinatory vision of Hayward leading to Mary in the hills at night.

Mind Science cult [use for Albert & Laura? Mary can hear incantation of precept words] [Tim = Tony]

Mary thought that Dr. Glass was a man, but now Mary is disturbed that she has remembered wrong.

...the gathering darkness is pregnant with tornados, the closing sky threatens epic violence, things are spinning again – the room, the world – and Dr. Glass, doesn't Dr. Glass see that she is sitting under the whorl?

Hayward presses a cold finger to Mary's lips.

I can hear your thoughts before you hear them. I'm tuned that much closer to the point of origin. Think of it like there's an ear in your brain, where you hear yourself think.

Well, a voice has to emit the thoughts first and I can hear that voice. So, yes, I can hear your own thoughts before you hear them.

You can hear me all the time, Mary thinks toward Hayward, but I can only hear you when you talk to me, if you call this talking.

That's because you're a baby. And tonight you take baby steps and become a toddler.

"But where are we?" Mary wants to know, out loud.

"I said you could have our money," Jerry repeats.

And who said that I wanted your money? Did I say that I wanted your money?

And Laura likes being alone with Albert. She is two months pregnant but she is afraid to tell Mary because this might upset her sister, make her feel jealous and diminished.

[from PT 2:]

But I'm the big sister, the one that Laura should be looking up to, I should be doing things for Laura.

Laura notices Mary smiling and is pained that her big sister is still lost in some strange dream world - and so Mary steps out of her little smile and stares directly at Laura's concerned face and boldly says, "I know that you worry about me,

Laura, and considering what I've done and been through, you should worry about me. I worry about me. But I'm paying attention, I can see that you're pained. But don't worry because I'm paying attention to you, I know how you feel, know better than I ever have before, isn't that what empathy is all about? I was never empathetic before. I was selfish. I know that now. You'll see that I'm actually a better person.

Someone hums a song in the dark. Not a lullaby.

The blackness devolves to gray.

"Sweet dreams?" Hayward asks, his voice in the air.

Mary is afraid.

Then resigned.

If Hayward is inevitable, then what does it hurt to be defiant and true? "Why do you ask?"

"In the interest of conversation."

"Conversation is redundant if you hear everything that I think."

"No. It's interesting to hear what you choose to say."

"I don't think anything is going to bring her back," Laura says.

"If she can take care of herself and hold down a job, that's more than a lot of people, supposedly normal people, are capable of." (Albert)

"Your sister was talking about...." He doesn't want to say

it, afraid that the word might make the thing real. More real than the bagpipes that come from nowhere. "...a virus."

"She never talked to me about a virus," Laura replies in a brittle voice. "Do you still hear that music?" she whispers.

"Yes. She talked to me about that once. In passing, while she was making tea. She thought her schizophrenia might be a virus, like the flu. Infectious. That's right, she wanted to know if we had any Chamomile tea, one night after you'd gone to sleep. She wondered if it was...."

"Contagious." Laura finishes his thought. No, that was too crazy of an idea to entertain, not that she can think much about anything, not with this ugly music filling her head. "Are we infected?"

"With what, Laura?"

"With whatever. Like Mary."

"No. I mean, I hope not." Albert searches for street signs, and not seeing any, suspects vandals.

Take a moment to think about the consequences, Reese.

1.23.11

MARY HEARING VOICES

--graph

--as a useful power

--as a scary burden

--as something to have fun with (re. audience)

POSSIBLE NEW SCENES

√--scene with Laura before Rand visits (does Laura invite Mary to go shopping with her? do they go shopping or to farmers market?)

--awkwardness interacting with Laura after Mary comes home from killing Tony? p.29

--awkwardness interacting with Laura after Mary comes home from killing Jake-Cindy? p.41

--expand concept of "Radio Mary" (music)

--Dr. Glass III (at least as an experiment)

√--p.22 eating apple crumble with Albert-Laura

--curlicue that follows Albert-Laura

--(Mary overhears Tom talking to Laura at County Hospital)

LAURA – CHARACTERISTICS

--nurturing

--conflicted (unnecessary?)

--worried about weight

--mildly food obsessed

ALBERT

--anxious

--insecure

--overly-sollicitous

--submissive to Laura

--parsimonious, worried about money

Dr. Glass = Questions

mas·och·ism n

1. sexual gratification achieved by humiliation and the acceptance of physical and verbal abuse
2. the psychological disorder in which somebody needs to be emotionally or physically abused in order to be sexually satisfied
3. the active seeking out of sexual partners who will dominate, humiliate, and physically and verbally abuse
4. the tendency to invite and enjoy misery of any kind, especially in order to be pitied by others or perhaps admired

for forbearance

NARRATIVE

--intentional lack of connection

--compression

--Google search as one narrative paradigm

--do connective scenes weaken the script? (ala new farmers market scene)

VISUALS

--feet

--truncated framing, ala hospital scene in I Am Love.

--Caravaggio, crowded frame

1.25.11

Callers shooting script = 82p.

How mood & texture tell story – and how that gets lost, given short shrift, on a micro-budget.

Bresson as a lesson? Non-verbal, conceptual, idiosyncratic.

TO STUDY

--Bresson

--Let the Right One In (re. quotidian tension)

--Repulsion

--Rosemary's Baby

 specifics of behavior

 the reality of objects

 specifics of observation

--Enter the Void

--That Obscure Object of Desire

--Dreyer

--David Fincher – Fight Club, Zodiac, Social Network

1.26.11

In the screenplay, indicate Mary's reaction to hearing voices.

Laura as Tot (re. food)

Further integration of Albert/Laura into plot?

How many scenes are modular? (scramble-able)

1.27.11

COVERAGE

Shoot scenes with VO and without.

Danger of too much hearing voices?

Is "hearing voices" evidence of insanity for Mary?

Graph scenes of "hearing voices."

1.27.10

SCRIPT:

Dimension of Albert and Laura as context (to replace asylum).

Glancing.

Mary in her shell. Panic reaches in and it reaches out.

Mary reacts, and she goes along. Mental architecture of being able to tell herself that the terror and the pleasure is forced upon her.

Confusion of inside and outside, on all levels.

√Mary should be surprised to find herself outside (such as sitting and waiting for Rand).

The pleasure of being roughly pushed toward forbidden pleasure.

Rosemary's Baby: how the prosaic converts to tension.

Mary: repeats behavior (such as checking apt for Hayward).
Repetition for fear VS. as "evidence" of obsessive-compulsive behavior.

LIST OF POSSIBLE ADDITIONAL SCENES:

--Farmer's Market: Mary, Laura, Hayward

--Laura tells Mary an erotic story, or Mary tells Laura an erotic story (ala Persona).

SCRIPT WORK

--p.32 Too many Hayward disappearances?

√--p.33? Footsteps in the hallway approach, then don't come inside (ala Repulsion)

--2 coffee shop scenes repetitive?

√--p.49 Mary returns to her apt – milk tension. Use incident of footsteps from p.32?

--p.56 Face in the Clouds...scarier if Hayward doesn't appear?

√ p.56 Add office scene?

How do I describe to myself when a creative decision feels right?

It's a question of having perfect pitch for the movie. Of knowing what fits into the song and what doesn't.

Sometimes it's good to work to the rhythm of music.

2.1.11

PREP

--script (read in a single sitting at least once a week)

--general visual goals

--refine location list

--refine cast list

--watch films

2.2.11

DOUBLED SCENES

(consider the build in doubled elements)

--2 Dr. Glass scenes

--2 Coffee Shop scenes

--Albert & Laura drive Mary home twice

--Mary falls to sleep, wakes in guest bedroom (multiple times)

--Mary falls o sleep, wakes in her apt.

--2 elevator scenes

--2 visits to Tony's house

--Hayward's face in the clouds (Century City + End)

--2 footsteps in the hallway shadow in crack under the door
(p.32 & p.48)

Try to ruthlessly identify false beats in the script (cheesy Hayward scares). (such as Mary thinking she hears Hayward say "Hi.")

p.32 Footsteps approach – save this for another spot?

NEW SCENES (already written, Draft 17)

p.15 Laura-Mary in kitchen (invite to farmer's market)

p.21 Eating apple crumble (Albert & Laura's thoughts)

p.28 Albert, breakfast, newspaper

p.30 Coffee shop voices (prior to Hayward's appearance)

p.34 Coffee shop voices (with Hayward)

p.41 Albert, breakfast

p.47 Nervous about being back at her apt. (after Albert & Laura drive her back) Day + Night

p.48 Drives to work, hears voices (of other drivers)

p.55 After Face in the Clouds, fearful at work

p.73 Nervous about going back into apt (after Albert & Laura drive her back, Mary overhears them talking in car)

p.74 Mary hears Vanderhorn following her

p.75 Mary hears & comes out to Tom (rather than Tom coming up to apt)

p.77 Mary's apt – expanded conversation with Tom

Do these new scenes even out / deaden the script? Make it less weird?

MARY HEARS VOICES

p.3 Elevator (Hayward)

p.6 Bathroom (Mary VO)

p.7 Waiting Room (hears Laura, Albert, Rand)

p.12 Guest Bedroom (Hayward)

p.15 Guest Bedroom Night (Mary asks *Hayward?*)

p.20 Rand's Car (Mary VO)

p.21 Apple Crumble (hears Albert, Laura)

p.25 Tony's killing (Hayward) (not Tony)

p.29 Group Therapy (Dr. Glass, patients)

p.30 Coffee Shop (Customers, Hayward)

p.32 Night Following Sequence (Mary - Hayward VO dial) (3 scenes)

p.34 Coffee Shop (Customers)

p.34 Jake's (Mary, Hayward) (not Jake – Cindy)

p.43 Dr. Glass II (Dr. Glass, Mary)

p.46 Dream (at Laura's): Hayward's voice (Hayward)

p.47 Out Out Out (Laura, Mary)

p.48 Fantasy (Mary's): "hears" Hayward (Hayward) (**weak?**)

p.48 Driving to Work (Voices of Other Drivers)

p.52 Sandwich Shop (Rand)

p.54 Face in the Clouds (Hayward, Mary)

p.55 Rand's Death (Rand, Mary, Hayward) (seems appropriate escalation)

p.74 Vanderhorn follows Mary (Vanderhorn)

p.75 Mary hears Tom – Vanderhorn outside (Tom, Vanderhorn)

p.82 Tom's Car (Mary VO yells *Tom!*)

p.85 Finale (Hayward, Mary, Tom)

TOTAL: 24 scenes

MARY'S SUBJECTIVE (CRAZY) MOMENTS

p.5 Bathroom (undresses)

(+) p.7 Waiting room (Mary's consciousness travels down hallway)

(-) p.32 Dream: Mary imagines that Tony rises from dead. [note: revised to take place in Laura's living room.]

(_+) p.32 Mary hears **footsteps approach** her room.

(+) p.46 Mary imagines wandering like a ghost out of the guest bedroom.

(+) p.48 Mary's apt – thinks she hears Hayward say "Hi."
(**FOOTSTEPS APPROACH HERE, ALSO on p.32 – scarier with Mary alone**)

HAYWARD SCENES

p.2 Elevator

p.12 Hayward visits guest bedroom.
p.13-14 Hayward takes Mary to Tony's house.
p.16 Hayward watches Mary drive off with Rand.
p.23 Hayward appears in guest bedroom, leads her outside.
p.24-27 Kill Tony.
p.31 Coffee shop 1, Radio Mary.
p.32 Bedroom, "Following Sequence".
p.33 Coffee Shop 2.
p.34-41 Kill Jake & Cindy.
p.54 Face in the Clouds.
p.56 Hayward at Mary's apt.
p.57-62 Kill Rand.
p.67 Hayward in hospital room.
p.80-82 Hayward in Mary's apt. (bath, eggs, stab).
p.84-91 Final scene.

2.3.11

Try play on words: "Wayward" / "Hayward"

Elements to work with:

Dreams

Fantasies (?)

Heightened awareness of objects/environment

Scary sounds

Visual exaggerations

Audio-visual suspicion/evidence of Hayward

Imagine Hayward scenes

Hayward goes clothes shopping

Hayward makes an impulse purchase

Hayward sits at a stranger's table in a food court,
eats from stranger's plate.

Hayward parks with Mary (ala teen make-out scene)

Hayward brings Mary flowers (talisman left behind)
Hayward reads an unusual book (Accounting For Dummies)
Hayward goes to the bathroom
Hayward uses telepathy to win at poker
Hayward takes Mary to a poker parlor
Hayward takes Mary to Las Vegas
Hayward sneaks into a luxury hotel suite with Mary
Hayward guesses what Mary wants to order at a
restaurant.
Hayward tells Mary all her likes and dislikes,
demonstrates he knows the contents of her brain.
**Hayward tells victims all he knows about them
(freaks them out). (too one dimensional?)**
Hayward tells Tom secrets he knows about him.
**Hayward guess the next word someone will say,
completes sentences for people.**

Possible additional Act 3 scenes:

With Vanderhorn, in his car.

With Tom in his car (as a tension builder?). Tom smokes a
cigarette?

Laura brings dinner over, or tries to get Mary to go out to
dinner, or takes Mary out to dinner.

A next door neighbor?

Mary walks to the corner market for eggs, is curious whether
Vanderhorn or Tom will follow her (they talk on the radio to
decide who will follow).

Tom leaves and Mary is upset that he isn't there, perhaps asks
Vanderhorn to call him back?

Mary tries to do normal stuff:

--laundromat

--rides a bus

--walking down a street at night

Mary drinks to turn off voices – that doesn't work.

Mary uses hearing thoughts to her own advantage?

Movies are tragic because they always unfold in the same way. You can desperately want them to unfold differently and they won't.

Cut off ends of scenes to leave things hanging.

Locations

7th Street (Jeff Jackson's friend)
John Jennings
John Powell
Ronn Davis "park"
Jim Krusoe
Ron Marryott - chiropractor
Bill Turner
Ron Judkins
Henry Czerny
Peter Ellis

2.4.11

Weird sophisticated oblique.

She doesn't know but it seems like madness. She likes the sexual aspect but that is hard to come to terms with.

NEW SCENES

Mood

Inherency

***mood

***dramatic tension

***Mary's internal state

***tension between internal & external

It's about what isn't in the frame.

It's about what is excluded from the narrative.

PHOTOS & RM

--joy vs. suffering

--bars (in frame)

--carnal spirituality

--transcendent quality in the ordinary

"I know what I'm looking for when it's in front of my eyes."

What gives Tom Reese dimension?

How would I draw RM? (auras, death scenes, elevator)

IMPROVS

Interviews with characters, where they speak their thoughts directly to the camera.

As with Citizen Kane, shoot tests prior to "principal photography" and possibly get usable material.

2.5.11

Can I calculate how people react? Ala the miscalculation re. Beat? Or the middle-aged fantasy angle on Crashing? Therefore heartening to read Bergman on Bergman, how the process can be nothing other than the sweep of intuition.

In the zone where there is not enough time to get ready. The happy anxiety.

In the zone where so many things apply...such as coming across the Steve Reich quotes at Grads (there with Harry for hot chocolate).

Or the aptness of Ian McDonald writing about mood and tone being the key to the Beatles. Berkman has said the same thing, that the major choices in a movie are milieu and mood.

MOOD:

a loopy specificity

intensity –

anticipation of dread

anticipation of forbidden pleasure

a resolute displaced horniness

a blankness to be filled by the world

making all the bad things someone else's thought (fault)

"I am blank until you awaken me
and I do not want to be woken
or so I tell myself"

Try to find a model in a Bergman heroine?

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

Read the script in different ways

-- print out

-- on computer

Make script longer (95 pages)

Decide if the new scenes work

Key: approach to how reality is depicted.

The hyper-reality of details.

Wikipedia: telepathy primarily a form of schizophrenia.

How to maximize cleverness (including thematic cleverness) of hearing voices.

NEW SCENES

Expand: instances of visual mind-wandering...Mary's POV wanders away from her body...for example, wanders over to somebody else at the coffee shop and observes/sits with someone else).

--her consciousness wanders into Laura & Albert's bedroom.

--her consciousness wanders...incessantly! (do this as a motif-riff)

From: danielsallitt@gmail.com

Subject: Re: RM

Date: February 6, 2011 6:32:48 PM GMT

To: gwalkow@gmail.com

I honestly don't know that I have a sense of Mary and where she is at at any given moment. She seems like the vessel through which I float through the movie. Am I indecisive and unclear or is the whole thing just a mystery?

I don't think the exact development of her psychology is crucial, but you need to be attentive to the progression, as much for formal reasons as psychological ones.

I constantly wonder whether about Hayward and how he functions.

I don't think he exists in a psychological sense. I'd think of him always in relation to what Mary's going through.

What is the advantage of conservatism re. the script? Not over-fussing ideas? Because there is a danger of overturning the initial intuitive feelings in the process of refinement? Because boredom brings on bad ideas?

I suppose because you have time to sort things out during the writing process. But different approaches work for different people. - Dan

2.6.11

What is the most erotic moment in the movie?

PRODUCTION

- Have a plan for each scene
- Have an overall approach to coverage
- Don't overfuss.
- Use what's at hand.

How much do choices matter? Choices that enhance, choices that break mood.

Maybe the concept of "wandering POV" is enough to carry the film (if used relentlessly, and if it fits.)

2.7.11

(Repulsion watched, notes made, moved down to later in document)

REWRITE WORK (TODAY)

√--p.23: why is Mary willing to go along with Hayward to Tony's (2nd visit)? Why isn't she reluctant? (She shouldn't take hold of his hand, he should grab hers)

√--p.32 Dream of Tony takes place in Laura's house

MARY'S PROGRESSION (AN INTUITIVE SUMMARY)

p.2 Elevator (Hayward #1): Mary is touched, spirals out of control

p.10 Dr. Glass – Mary discusses her uncertainty about what happened on the elevator.

Possible new scene: Mary at Laura's house, getting her wits back

p.12 Hayward (#2) – Guest Bedroom, Tony I: she is disturbed that he recurs, and has reality. (does she resist?)

p.17 – Getting into Rand's car (Hayward #3) – unsettling (would she tell Rand that she saw the strange man again?)

p.24 Hayward (#4), Tony II – Mary offers some resistance, is terrified.

p.31 Coffee shop I, Hayward (#5)

p.32 (Hayward #6) – Following, Jake & Cindy. Mary is terrified, thrilled by the terror, confused by the evil pleasure.

p.54 Face in the Clouds (Hayward #7) – demonstration of Hayward's omniscience, the terror of that, and masochistic pleasure of his utter domination.

p.57 Mary's apt, post-coital (Hayward #8) – the sexual pleasure that she can pretend is forced upon her, the comfort of believing that it is not her choice.

p.57 Rand – the comfort of Hayward putting her through the motions, how she lets Rand dominate her (knowing on some level that Rand will soon die), and then the elevated orgasm of Hayward dominating (killing!) Rand.

p.67 Hospital room (Hayward #9) – Mary's passive acceptance of Hayward. **(This Hayward appearance feels unnecessary. If cut have the pure threat of Hayward appearing prior to his appearance in Mary's bath tub.) OR: she is passive, it is "dream sex" (as she describes it to Tom), she doesn't get off on it. That Hayward wants to have sex with Mary shifts the balance of power away from him (on whatever level he exists on)?**

p.81 Mary's apt – Hayward in the bath. Mary turns against Hayward, stabs him.

TODAY'S ANALYSIS: Mary undergoes a change, horrified by her participation in Rand's death, which leads her to tab Hayward.

CREW
DP
Soundman
Tech utility + card unloader
Make-up / wardrobe
Script
Art Dept
Producer/craft service
AD

permeable reality,
acknowledgement and avoidance

I was written off a long time ago.

2.8.11

REWRITE WORK (TODAY)

Increase prosaic moments – with built in tension of "what will happen next?" The ordinary is okay after deaths.

p.47 Expand scene of Laura driving Mary back to her apt.?

She is in the pull of something intoxicating and forbidden. She can be free because she can't break all the rules. Hayward allows her to do that, because he makes her. "If he makes me then it isn't my fault." "He has infinite power over me. I am powerless to resist. It's horrible."

Can she have a moment (after Rand) when she admits to herself that she likes it? Can she recognize her part in the horror and want to stop."

M: I liked last night.

H: I know you did.

M: The whole thing.

H: I know.

M: Of course you do. It was horrible that I liked it.

H: I know.

M: It can't happen again.
H just smiles.

Feel the surge that I am trying to make a commercial film, that I am trying to make an audience feel something powerful. The alternate path of history not taken when I had that existential moment filming *The Continuous Victim* and didn't know why I was shooting a shot of Dick Bernstein's shoes going up the stairs and so backed off of that kind of filmmaking.

Audio title cards? (Mary's voice)

One clear task a day, strive for one idea.

Today's goal: absorb structure. (I do scene outlines and see if they match up with the script. I work to memorize the structure of the script, to enable myself to ably sit at the top of the pyramid. I'm weak on the particulars of the misshaped pyramid I've built.)

Pop quiz myself on structure.

Structure of first section has been altered in the last couple of weeks by the addition of apple crumble scene, 2 Albert Breakfast scenes. What if these scenes do not survive?

re. chamber music "Beethoven makes dramatic deviations of tempo within phrases and within movements." (Wikipedia)

"Surrealist works feature the element of surprise, unexpected juxtapositions and non sequitur." (Wikipedia)

Expansion is always at war with compression.

Repetition at war with surprise?

Repetition = rhymes, rhythm. Tension of repetition vs. boredom, lack of surprise. Is structure a guess that can be revised?

2.9.11

Determined to test myself on a daily basis regarding structure (can I accurately outline the first half of the film)? Is it indicative of a problem of fluidity or emotional progression that I can't easily do this? I remember driving from Mexico City to Patzcuaro multiple times and playing the storyboard for Beat in my head during the drive in the cambio. I was a grumpy adventurer.

No new scenes are occurring to me. The 2 hours of RM work today feel like a burden. Anxious (does "mild panic" overstate it?) – it is good to keep the film in my head or is it counter-productive, wearying to do that relentlessly?

Turn to other tasks? Strategic decisions, mobilizing emails, learning FCP, research (movies etc)?

POSSIBLE DAILY TASKS

- outline structure
- review notes
- work on visuals for a specific scene
- do my 2 RM hours before anything else

OPTIONS (for shooting)

- improvise dialogue (do a pure improv version)
- characters address camera directly
- shift location (for example, shift location of Out Out Out from Laura's kitchen to car outside Mary's apt.)
- shoot every scene as a pure POV.
- how can the prosaic be enhanced-used in any situation?
- self-narration (both insightful and blind) from Mary.**
- bus riding scene
- farmer's market scene

Does Mary self-narrate? (that would seem to deflate tension & mystery & audience projection)

Trick is to remain mindful of options during shooting and take the time and trouble to create the alternate material.

WEAK SCENES

- p.15 Laura, kitchen, invite to farmer's market

I'm making a very small movie but for me the stakes are, or seem, high. Why?

- making a film is a rare event.
- if it is successful I will get income from it and it might lead to other work.
- I don't have that many chances left to make films.
- my sense of self is bound up in a notion of myself as a maker of good-original-etc films.
- I am trying to make great art (and be unpretentious about it).
- I am ambitious and unfulfilled and making the movie goes to the heart of both (ambition, lack of fulfillment).

WHAT ACTUALLY PREPARES ME TO MAKE THE MOVIE?

- Knowledge of Mary's progression
- Understanding Hayward in relation to Mary
- Knowing what scenes are weak
- Knowing what scenes are strong
- having a shooting plan (either shot lists or clear understanding of the general guidelines-goals).
- seeing other relevant films in relation to my own.
- physical strength
- mental acuity

How do I best make the audience want to know what happens next?

2.10.11

What is basis of choice for Hayward VO? Communicating secretly around victims? Basis for all VO?

Chart SFX.

REWRITE (with DUANE INPUT, etc)

√--cut Laura invites M to farmer's market

--cut an Albert breakfast scene

--cut a coffee shop scene?

--clarify Albert & Laura talking in the car

--Rewrite Dr. Glass ala Mary mind-reading: why she doesn't ask Dr. Glass for help?

--(Does Mary try to ask Laura for help?)

--Rewrite Tom-Mary (M: "He can hear.")

--examine: that every scene advances the narrative or tension

--Mary's distress at hearing Albert & Laura squabble in her head.

CASTING

Hayward the same age as Mary?

2.12.11

From: danielsallitt@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Mary's Progression

Date: February 12, 2011 5:07:56 AM GMT

To: gwalkow@gmail.com

p.12 Hayward (#2) – Guest Bedroom, Tony I (visits empty house): she is disturbed that he recurs, and has reality. (does she resist?)

----I say no. It feels a bit like a dream to Mary and the viewer, and in the dream that the movie is, Mary's passivity comes out.----

p.17 – Getting into Rand's car (Hayward #3) – unsettling (would she tell Rand that she saw the strange man again?)--

--Would she be aware that she would sound crazy?----

p.24 Hayward (#4), Tony II (Tony killed) – Mary offers some resistance, is terrified.

----A little useless resistance seems right at this fatal juncture.----

p.67 Hospital room (Hayward #9) – Mary's passive acceptance of Hayward. (This Hayward appearance feels unnecessary. If cut have the pure threat of Hayward appearing prior to his appearance in Mary's bath tub.) OR: she is passive, it is "dream sex" (as she describes it to Tom), she doesn't get off on it. That Hayward wants to have sex with Mary shifts the balance of power away from him (on whatever level he exists on)?

----Can't address whether this is necessary. You might not need it.----

p.81 Mary's apt – Hayward in the bath. Mary turns against Hayward, stabs him.

TODAY'S ANALYSIS: Mary undergoes a change, horrified by her participation in Rand's death, which leads her to tab Hayward.

----I think she can stab him or do other weird things here without undergoing a change. She's in extremis - her personality is probably coming apart in pieces. A slave being capable of aggression doesn't make her less of a slave. - Dan

The movie is a dream.

Dan: "and in the dream the movie is Mary's passivity comes out."

2.13.11

The movie is a dram you are invited to participate in.

Based on Duane's feedback, and how Duane articulated my own doubts that the Albert & Laura stuff is padding, have cut a couple of the new Albert - Laura scenes, and the script has sunk back below the 90p. waterline to 88.

The obsession with length.

Same intransigence re. length that I faced with Callers. Have probably written and thrown away 20 additional pages in the last year. It almost always feels like padding.

EXPANSION POSSIBILITIES

--Laura re-appears in Act 3 to try and get Mary to come home with her

--Expand Vanderhorn following (to include a bus ride?)

Dream-passivity...is that against the grain of "commerciality"?

Does the "heroic" matter if there is the drive to see what happens next to Mary. Or when does irritation-vexation set in? When will people veer from the story?

If I'm not true to the weirdness then I fear that I have nothing.

Repulsion is a study in madness.

Rosemary fights against the Satanists, mostly in a state of "paranoia", and ultimately succumbs (as a mother).

In The Shining, mother and child make their escape and the haunted bad guy (Jack) dies. Happy ending.

Psycho, the bad guy is caught (but the sister remains dead).

Mulholland Drive takes a genius turn when the dream logic fits the mind pattern of a failed actress, then it all makes sense as a death dream projection, the story sizzles and refines into a

higher focus.

What is cathartic? Is catharsis necessary? What about the experience of the forbidden, just as Mary succumbs to it.

She is a character who has the opportunity to succumb and does. Life is a matter of what comes along and what one responds to.

ca·thar·sis n

1. an experience or feeling of spiritual release and purification brought about by an intense emotional experience
(yes, Mary darkly experiences this)

2. according to Aristotle, a purifying of the emotions that is brought about in the audience of a tragic drama through the evocation of intense fear and pity
(yes, these are evoked)

3. the process of bringing to the surface repressed emotions, complexes, and feelings in an effort to identify and relieve them, or the result of this process
(repressed things are certainly brought to the surface, but then what happens to them?)

4. cleansing or purging of the bowels

Lessons from the Beatles: filling every corner.

From: danielsallitt@gmail.com

Subject: Re: RM

Date: February 13, 2011 5:45:03 PM GMT

To: gwalkow@gmail.com

I've reworked Act 3 and it feels cleaner: Mary sits in her apartment. Telepathically she hears Tom talking to Vanderhorn outside and she goes downstairs and talks to Tom. Tom comes up, the conversation is expanded, and he agrees to stick around for a while. This feels cleaner than Tom coming up to her apt, having a very truncated conversation, then Mary coming downstairs and asking him back up, then he comes back up and talks some more.

I'm not sure. It might be fine. I kind of liked Mary running down after Tom.

Rather than do shot lists for the entire film, I am thinking about a general approach -- characteristic camera moves, etc. I am curious to see if I can bring my street photography aesthetic to filmmaking. You don't preplan street photographs -- you bring your sensibility to a situation.

I don't think there's a right or wrong about these things. I guess you won't know until you try it.

One concept that is embedded in the script (and I think I can more of) is this: the idea that Mary's POV wanders out of the room (even when she doesn't) and then the POV snaps back to her immediate awareness as her mind refocuses. You probably don't recall, but I did this in the hospital sequence after her breakdown, when the camera travels out into the hallway, then her sister's querying voice draws Mary back to attention in the waiting room.

I don't recall. You often make your visual ideas work in ways that I don't anticipate, so I withhold judgment on this idea. -- Dan

2.14.11

From: danielsallitt@gmail.com
Subject: Re: RM
Date: February 14, 2011 11:49:51 PM GMT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Reply-To: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

It seems that ego (or is it confidence?) relates to duration -- how willing you are to make someone sit through a chunk of time. Kubrick was fearless with

it. Tarantino indulgently so.

I like Tarantino so much more than I like Kubrick... **But yeah, everything about film style is a matter of ego and confidence. Otherwise the craftspeople take over, and you get well-made but inexpressive films.**

Am I painting myself into a corner having the ambition to effect people?

I really don't know your ambitions for this film. I guess I know Alain's. Who knows, maybe more people will like your film instead of fewer if you do weird things with it. - Dan

2.16.11

JAY A DRAFT 17 NOTES

√ Dr. Glass I: You could expand the therapy session. What did you feel when you took off your clothes? When you saw yourself naked? What are you thinking right now?... The nature of a therapy session gives you the freedom to go in any (possibly extreme) direction you choose.

Rand comes to visit: Begs the question: Does she flinch because she thinks he's about to touch her shoulder? Or is her shoulder okay now? Would it help you to add a thread about her shoulder?

I'm unclear on what Rand and Laura think is happening to Mary.

√ Mary kisses Rand, hops out of car: You led me to believe they've been fucking. Is that what you're going for? Because if they have been, I think Rand would be at least as angry at her leaving as he is turned on.

Apple crumble: We've seen (and heard) scenes like this before. It could use a twist -- which would also add pages -- and I wish I could think of one.

√ Before entering Jake's ("You can hear me all the time but I can only hear you when you talk to me."): I'd like to hear a conversation like this earlier; it would involve me more with

Mary emotionally. [Now it's on p.14 and repeats a bit on p.34]
CHECK BALANCE BETWEEN P.14 AND P.34.

While enjoying killing Cindy: Can you dramatize earlier the temptation she feels with her power? Let us see the attraction; as it is, I still don't understand her and it's getting in my way.

Cereal killer scene: Stronger reaction?

Out out out: Not clear what she intended to accomplish by living with her sister. Maybe add earlier beats to dramatize couple's specific concerns about Mary.

If the film is a dream, how do I establish that (as an expectation) at the beginning?

The serenity of a dream.

The disturbance of a dream.

Does tweaking toward reasonableness (in part) undermine the dream quality or does it keep someone engaged with the dream (by not getting annoyed and turning off)?

2.17.11

In a state of mild panic, 2+ weeks until I go to LA, less than 2 months until principal photography begins.

Script feels intractable. I only feel capable of changing it within narrow parameters, and I fear that as is it does not work in the way that I want it to.

The morning starts dealing with thumbnails for Breakdown Services and Alain's deal memo, and the echoes and potential contentiousness of that. This violates my dictum of creative work and nothing else until the 2 hour quota is met. Need to obey my own dictum to keep mail turned off until the creative work is done with my fresh morning brain.

BLUE VELVET (3.12.11)

--Frank Booth pops out of frame -- then cut to car driving
USE THIS!

MULHOLLAND DRIVE (2.15.11+)

--floaty/shaky POV shot of bed, goes all the way into pillow-darkness, with heavy breathing on soundtrack

--floaty shots in coffee shop

--empty POV shot (after monster appears in alley)

--"I thought when I woke up...I thought sleep would do it," Rita said, as Betty confronts her in Aunt's bedroom.

--"It'll be just like the movies. We'll walk around and pretend like we're someone else." (46:00)

--a subplot (Adam the director etc) that takes a long time to relate to the main action.

--POV slowly, bumpily approached door of apt.

--Rita and Betty revisit the coffee shop where the guy saw the monster in the alley. And use the phone that was in his POV shot earlier.

--empty POV shot of corral after Cowboy has gone.

(What is the point of interest in a POV shot...or is there a randomness to it as the character looks at that part of the world for the first time?)

--Rita & Betty flee from Diane Selwyn's apt – multiple super-imposed dissolves as they run into CU (similar riff in NFU) (find a place to use in RM?)

--POV shots: approaching apt., approaching music hall (POV belatedly starts moving). Conveys sense of ambient consciousness watching the action.

--Betty mysteriously disappears when Rita is about to put blue key in blue box (dream logic)

--Diane Selwyn walks with coffee in gray bathrobe (mid-riff shot following behind) – camera moves past her to POV revealing Rita naked on couch – then cut to cheesy naked Betty/Diane hopping sexily on top of topless Rita (shift to dream mode within shot,

then amplified by cut).

--in bungalow, POV are out of focus, then lurch into focus (Diane is crying). (true subjectivity of POV)

--Diane crying while she jerks off/has an orgasm (Mary cries while having sex? [doesn't feel right])

--gothic music, tremolo guitar

A.O. Scott of *The New York Times* writes that while some might consider the plot an "offense against narrative order ... the film is an intoxicating liberation from sense, with moments of feeling all the more powerful for seeming to emerge from the murky night world of the unconscious."

PERSONA (2.17.11+)

Flash cut credit sequence

Quick, decisive camera moves

Very slow fade to silhouette

Narration used only once, at 20:45

Liv's only dialogue is O.S. (re. Hayward???)

O.S. dial – hold singles for ages

Long dream sequence near end (with multiple unexplained elements)

Film opens and closes with dream images – some reprise story, others don't

Poetic images – poetic montage – non-literal

Opening and closing, and formal mannerisms throughout, give a strong sense of authorial presence

PSYCHO (3.1.11)

--Marion imagines other characters talking as she drives, paranoia of getting caught (after used car lot)

--Imagining voices intercut with POV shots, progression into

night and rain storm. Marion smiles about oilman getting swindled.

--Camera move from CU dead eye – to newspaper – to window view of house (Oh God Mother blood!) – Norman exits house, running.

REPULSION (2.7.11+) (notes from multiple viewings)
Slow push into photo

Camera move past Deneuve into CU

Mirror – man in reflection as mirror door opens.

In bed: hears footsteps in the hall and gets scared.

Walking along street, in a daze.

Often scenes start with objects: bath plug, rabbit on plate, reflection in marble then pullback as Deneuve walks past, etc.

Footsteps, long look at light under door, slow build, until imaginary rapist enters room.

Uncovers bed, Man (Hayward!) lying in it!

Cut to day – pullback from window with Deneuve on floor, sprawled.

Pan across objects – end on photo of little girl Deneuve – go into eye in photo.

Open movie with eye, close with eye.

Deneuve in bed – pan to reveal a man is in bed with her, attacks her.

Deneuve sees shadow in hall, then man pushes his way in and rapes her.

Sister sees Deneuve's hand come out from under bed – shocking image (hand on the floor).

Hand poking out of wall – 2X.

ROSEMARY'S BABY (2.10.11+)

--start on object – bring Mary into frame – then go off onto
action/object: POV – Rosemary – POV
(SUBJ –OBJ – SUBJ)

--POV – Rosemary – POV

--Pan off Mary to "POV"

--narrative density (many short scenes)

--precision of camera moves

--Wide shot, Rosemary at window, she moves into close shot as
she gets in bed, tilt down to dinenr tray ("POV"), she picks up
pill and camera pans back up to her face (OBJ). (OBJ-POV-OBJ).

--great details (and expansive screen time) when Rosemary does
something, like get out of bed and clean out linen closet (with
almost getting caught) to get into the Castavet's apt.

--Mary walks into CU with knife (OBJ), hears key – pan to POV,
door – Mary runs through frame, camera pans to show her running
away (OBJ).

--CU Mary hides in closet (OBJ) – pan to bassinet rocking (POV)
– knife comes into frame to stop rocking, tilt up to show
Casavettes leaving then Mary walks through frame (OBJ).

POSSIBLE SCRIPT WORK

A Persona-esque montage? To indicate madness.

Do Mary's muted emotional responses work? What is her
psychology? Does she think that she is mad?

Mary's progression – I don't have a handle on it.

MARY'S PROGRESSION

She's panicked, trying to control the panic – she doesn't know
what is going on.

Hayward shows up at Laura's: Mary is frightened, but accepts it
as a dream. A dream is her way of distancing from it. Dan: "It

feels a bit like a dream to Mary and the viewer, and in the dream that the movie is, Mary's passivity comes out."

Tony 1: She has an attraction to Hayward that she has trouble admitting to herself.

Tony 2: She asks again if it is a dream and then seems to accept it as a dream, that turns horrible. She is horrified by Tony's death.

Coffee shop: Hayward's 3rd appearance.

If I fight against the film's essential nature then I will fail.

I will provoke failure by trying now to turn the story into something else.

Can I just tell myself that the film is a dream that Mary doesn't much fight against it and leave it at that?

The key is to envelop the viewer in a voluptuous dream, to swallow the viewer in a mood, pulled by the tide of dire dream events. If things feel wrong they should feel wrong as if in a bad dream.

Why all the pressure I put on myself? Because each film feels like a last chance? Economic desperation? The reality is it is not do or die, the film is highly unlikely to change my marginal economic circumstance, no one is paying attention to it, it is neither a career starter nor a career ender.

The pressure comes from my self-worth being tied to whether or not I make good art, and because I also feel a desperate need to get some economic return from the movie (either from the movie itself or from work that it might bring).

2.18.11

(from Revolution in the Head, circa p.289)

The state between sleep and waking.

Quality of awareness

Gambling with sanity (re. LSD)

Creative randomness

How the early-mid Beatles filled every corner of a song with interest.

The best thing I can do is to think abstractly, wildly, globally, poetically and then try to apply that. (But to try and think wildly without feeling the obligation of hoping that it will "apply.") Much better than sifting and sifting through the script.

Does the poetry get applied between the lines?

As long as I can get into that poetic state each day I have done something solid to prepare.

The "street photographer mode" is bringing a refined but open artistic intelligence to the world. It is moving through the world with a receptive sensibility. I'll know what I want when I see it, rather than asking for it.

Apply the Beatles rules of intelligently introducing an element of randomness, of being intuitive and seizing upon what comes one's way.

My primary obligation is to motivate the crew and to create a mood with the actors on the set and to capture some of that mood on film (er, in pixels).

Re. evaluating Beatles songs – hard to separate my response as it existed as a part of a moment in my life. That is the same issue with evaluating a performance, or a take – seeing that moment both as something in the moment and trying to see it as it will exist in the context of the finished work of art.

Aching beauty in the context of the terrible. **The terrible shimmering immanence of existence.** The intransigence and relative immortality of objects.

"The atoms that comprise me will continue after me on their merry way in whatever combination, merely lacking consciousness – or do they? Are molecules happy, loving, cruel?"

it slides weirdly
my body betrays me
is that me inside my body?

pull me and I will have to follow

make me go down the path
and I will secretly gladly not want to
thank you (I won't say) for making me
I want to not want to

if you make me do it
then I will, motionless, revolt
revolt in the head
is not
revolution in the head

it is not me if you pull my body along

The Story of O directly applies!!!...because Mary consents to let someone else take charge of her. As in a dream. It is profoundly erotic because it is out of her control. It is more erotic to Mary because she has consented to let her body be used with impunity (as Hayward uses her body). It is abstract S-M. "I will get you off by making you experience the total rush of murder, the rush of feeling a life flee the body."

Are you ready to go to a dark place?

Claptrap spiritualism that surrounds the apocalyptic orgasm. The orgasm of death. "Experience the orgasm of death without dying."

Inability to discriminate = insanity?

How can intuitive intelligence maximally be applied to the situation?

Mary: What's happening to me?
Hay: The mysteries of love.

2.19.11

THE HAUNTING:

--VO - inner thoughts (similar to Psycho)

--Moving POV shots

--High angles

--POV pan to establish space

--Mirrors

--Something terrifying that you hear but never see directly

The driving scenes should be random rather than designed (is that just today's laziness?)?

2.21.11

JON FINK re. RM script: Great pleasure. In a way, it was encouraging to me, too, I mean, to see "eccentric" work fearlessly done.

Possible Structure/Rewrite: Move down Jake & Cindy (swap Days 4 & 5)

2.22.11

Have recently created both Story Days document and Visual Effects document. Gives me a stronger internal sense of organization.

I test myself daily on structure and it still remains a struggle. Have not absorbed, do not feel an ineluctable narrative flow. A flaw in me or in the material?

Confidence and (perhaps) clarity are at the core.

A sense of certainty. Of going to it.

There needs to be a warmth-sympathy to Mary that helps someone go along with her story? (How warm or sympathetic was Deneuve in Repulsion?)

Perhaps it is like a car wreck that you just can't turn away from. What keeps one from turning away from the horrific? What makes the horrific a desirable experience?

Multiple perspectives = mystery

Mary's POV

Godlike POV = Hayward

2.23.11

The absolute key: ALWAYS DO WHAT I LIKE, AT ALL TIMES.

SCRIPT: DOES THIS DOUBLE UP?

p.14 "Can you hear me all the time?"

p.34 "You can hear me all the time."

Mary's apt – the radio alarm clock has a life of its own?

2.24.11

Yesterday, a complete artistic failure. I take the kids to the Phocus strobe photography shoot at The Shop. The others in our group shoot the kids, but I do nothing to alter the lights, or try to take a portrait of Harry with a black background. I could have done his weekly shoot with better lighting than my dim china globe! Why in the hell didn't I? I felt myself flagging. The collapse of my artistic sensibility went so far as to turn down another student's offer to plug my camera into the strobe. The 2 other students did far more extensive and interesting pictures of the kids than I did. I felt tired and deficient during the session but the full weight of my lapse-failure hit me later. And this was supposed to revamp my experience of being on the set.

The lesson I take from it is this: a wake-up call. To get into the practice of more selfishly asserting myself. But I still feel bad about it.

I dread emails from Alain. Perhaps I am overly sensitive to his curmudgeonly nature. Or perhaps he is overly the curmudgeon.

2.25.11

Hayward's questions are like a therapist, like Dr. Glass.

Send the numbered script to Alain. Feel my mind and self shifting to Shot List mode...and I feel I am taking a more global, less shot by shot anal approach to the Shot List this time. And that feels good.

STORY DAYS (revised 2.22.11)
(8 Days, FRIDAY TO FRIDAY)

1 Friday

Mary wakes
Elevator
Bathroom - undresses
Waiting Room
Laura's guest bedroom

2 Saturday

Dr. Glass I
Hayward appears in Mary's room
Tony I - Tony not home

3 Sunday

Rand takes Mary for ride
Apple Crumble
Tony II - Tony killed

4 Monday

Mary wakes, grass-stained feet
Group therapy
Coffee Shop - Hayward appears
Dream of Tony, wakes
Following potential targets (street, shopping mall)
Coffee Shop, night, Hayward
Jake & Cindy Killed

5 Tuesday

Albert breakfast
Dr. Glass II
Sleep - Mary's consciousness wanders outside

6 Wednesday

Laura kitchen - Mary wants to go home
Laura drives Mary home
Mary back at apt., alone, spooky

7 Thursday

Mary hears voices driving to work
Back at work - Rand
Sandwich Shop -- Rand
Plaza - Hayward's Face in the Clouds

8 Friday

Hayward in Mary's apt.

Rand's House (post midnight): Rand killed, Tom appears
Dream: Video of Mary-Rand
County hospital – Hayward, then Tom
Albert & Laura drive Mary home
Mary hears Vanderhorn following her
Mary's apt – Tom visits
Street – Mary asks Tom to stay
Mary's apt – Tom & Mary talk more, Mary alone
Alley – Mary visits Tom
Mary's apt – Hayward, park stabs
Park (or parking lot): finale

IDEA: have title cards for the days "Monday, Tuesday, &c"

2.26.11

Ramshackle quality to the visuals? That is my defeatist impulse to my lack of resources. But it seems critical to demonstrate a measure of control. Pick the axis along which that control will take place.

2.27.11

What is it like if I turn up the decibel level? I should consider as a starting point that I am not capable of egregious style? Or is that arrogant. It certainly sounds so to me after I type it up.

Stoned: existential complexity and decline/ (like Mary, that's the self-justification.)

I will never be ready.

I am always ready.

I have to reread all my notes.

No I can successfully make the film even if I don't reread my notes.

At all times be exciting and unexpected.

3.3. 11

Mark the calendar: 43 days until the shoot. I feel pressured and behind. I have, predictably, inevitably, doubts about the success of the entire enterprise.

3.4.11

ITALY DRAFT:

Hayward in Hospital Cafeteria AFTER Jake's death!

EMAIL TO DAN:

Dan--

I think I'm going to attempt a much more baroque, aggressive visual style with RM than previous work.

I'm planning to shoot POV shots for everything, not that the film will be constructed only of these POV shots, but that it is will (almost) always be a cutting option.

Am I capable of going too far? Perhaps. I get the heeby jeebies when I think about Love Machine, my biggest failure -- I resorted to shooting extreme close-ups. But everything went wrong with that film so perhaps it is misleading to focus on one specific aspect of my directorial failure (the visual).

I also sometimes think, "what would Dan think about this?" I know I need to let go of that, but it happens.

I think I have a natural sense of subtlety and restraint and that will probably temper whatever I do. I know that the key is to at all times do what I like, to use the power of the continuity of my personality.

It's exciting and scary -- I really feel that I am leaping off the cliff with this one. As such, it would be a mistake, a lost opportunity, to not completely go for it.

I really don't have a preformed sense of how Mary will behave as she wanders through the movie. Am I naive or lazy to trust that I will have a sense of what feels right when I get on the set?
This movie is so damned weird.

Gary

"The world moves past as a movie and the movie is a dream that Mary is part of."

Infinity reduced to a small brief space.

A dream, Mary is inside her body.

Absence of faces other than Mary's (and Hayward's)?

From: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

Subject: Re: RM Style

Date: March 4, 2011 4:38:29 PM GMT

To: gwalkow@gmail.com

Am I capable of going too far? Perhaps. I get the heeby jeebies when I think about Love Machine, my biggest failure -- I resorted to shooting extreme close-ups. But everything went wrong with that film so perhaps it is misleading to focus on one specific aspect of my directorial failure (the visual).

Yeah, I think you worry too much about that experience. Who knows if the movie was even as bad as you think it is.

I really don't have a preformed sense of how Mary will behave as she wanders through the movie. Am I naive or lazy to trust that I will have a sense of what feels right when I get on the set?

Eh, that should take care of itself. Remember the story about Bogdanovitch acting for Welles, having to run across a roof, and asking for his motivation? "I'll tell you when you get here," said Welles. **Mary is reacting, experiencing - she's just taking it in.** What's going on with casting her?

I cast my lead actress last night, and am pleased about it. I also have a good likelihood of getting a house for a main location. - Dan

3.5.11

DAN RE. SARAH JONES:

God, people put a lot of crap on their reels. She seems like a good actress. Doesn't look like my idea of Mary, exactly - **I picture someone with no defenses, open eyes, a direct expression.** But she might be fine. - Dan

DAN RE. MARY IN SKY AT END:

From: danielsallitt@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Mary reacts, another ending...
Date: March 5, 2011 8:14:23 PM GMT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Reply-To: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

the rest probably means more to me than anyone watching (or buying) the movie.

Who knows, maybe that's also the most commercial attitude to take.

and until that moment I had been happy with the Hayward ending. but I think it might be a viable idea -- **it feels like more of a story progression to see Mary up in the clouds, as she has just "died."**

You have to think about the feeling you want first. Hayward in the clouds is a world where evil is the unchallenged champion - it's a little creepy. Mary in the clouds can be creepy too if she's gone over to Hayward's side, or campy if she says "Wow," or possibly something with a bit of romance or redemption. I personally don't care if the ending makes plot sense.

(GW: = shoot Mary in clouds as alternate ending)

You chose a contagion ending, where Tom is going down Mary's horrific path. Hayward in the sky keeps the film on this nightmare path. How Mary in the sky reacts to or fits in with this is a big issue. - Dan

3.7.11

First casting session, exciting to hear script dread, depressing not to hear anyone great, castable.

3.10.11

New vision of coverage: jump cuts and discontinuities mean nothing. Google Search model of coverage – fractured, cubistic,

cobbled around a defined point in space and time.

When shooting...rather than perfecting and repeating a shot, trying a variety of things, collecting a variety of raw materials.

3.20.11

DAN:

When you see people lose touch with reality, they don't come across like actors, projecting all their emotions. They're always coping with some universe, real or imagined. – Dan

GW: How much can you really guide an actor anyway? Can you fuck them up more than help them?

DAN: It's really easy to fuck them up, because they're trying to please you. So if you're not careful, they'll take what you tell them, do it in a big way, and jettison everything else. – Dan

Need to get comfortable with making the eternal specific, and doing it fast (committing approx 7 pages of script to final form each shooting day).

I'm making a fictional documentary.

KEY ELEMENTS / DECISIONS

--choice of Mary

--attitude toward shoot

--underlying visual plan

--integrating ethos of my still photography

--most wisely using the 15 days

--rehearsing before shooting

--5D decision

--preparing VS. over-preparing

--not shooting too many takes

--committing to a POV and sticking to that commitment

--not throwing out important things, or getting pressured out of them.

3.22.11

DAN RE. SARAH / EMILY (3.16)

Sarah seems more like a Mary than I realized from her reel - having less makeup helps a lot. I think she can do it. But, to my taste, she's acting way too much in this audition - I personally think Mary is much simpler. I hope it's just audition uncertainty, and that she hasn't developed a taste for overacting. - Dan

Emily, on the other hand, has way too much makeup and hair, but her judgment about the performance is much better. I wish I could see her without all the glamorpuss stuff, to be sure that she felt more like a Mary. But, for my money, this is a better, simpler, truer reading than Sarah's. - Dan

DAN re. SARAH (3.17):

I feel as if Sarah is in danger of getting too actorish. If I were casting her, I'd really want to lean on her to start keeping some emotions inside, to put up some normal boundaries between her feeling and the world. But we know she has talent.

DAN re. EMILY:

Suddenly she's overacting. Did she get the idea that she had to try harder? - Dan

GW, 3/18:

But it could be me. Maybe my direction is backfiring.

I've been giving bad direction during auditions too. You have to be so careful with what you say at auditions, because the actor is bound to take any advice and overreact to it.
- Dan

GW: Can I make a great film with Sarah or Emily? (Or Camille if she stops indicating anything -- is she a serious candidate?)

My money is still on Emily, but now I'm uncertain about what's going on. If no one told her anything negative about her first reading, then maybe she has a less appealing side as an actor – DAN

3.23.11

DAN re. EMILY: Do you have an opinion on the new actresses? I'm obviously in the Emily camp, but your feelings are what count, and you seem unusually shy about having an opinion here. Judging from your early reactions, you seemed unsatisfied with Emily and much more satisfied with Sarah. Your deepest feelings are going to feed into the performances anyway, so you might as well start getting in touch with them now. – Dan

3.25.11

GARY: Yep, I think we have diverging opinions. I thought your advice on Callers was great, so this pains me. Maybe I'll make a film that you don't like, and that will be very painful and disappointing on a certain level. But I've got to try and follow my own intuition. Bonnie seems really authentic to me, and touching. I can see building a film around her. Shayne offers a lot also. If I haven't clicked with Emily after her coming in to read 3 times then something is missing and I have to own up to that. I'm sort of torn not using Sarah because she offers something, a certain charisma that the others lack (for me). I don't know. I'll make the best decision I can, and try to make the best film. I'd like the experience to be a more joyous than agonizing.

I tell myself whoever I cast I will make an interesting film that will have some level of coherence and interest. It certainly will be an adventure and it won't be run of the mill...

DAN: I think you're right to be thinking this way. **You have to rely on your preferences, because that's all you ever have on the set.** And there are patterns that are emerging. Who knows, maybe I'll see what you're getting at when the whole thing is in place. You should return to Sarah with a fresh eye – you had some excitement about her. – Dan

3.27.11

>What is the opposite of illustrating?

Being, I guess. Being a documentable entity.

>What actress has the most empathy?

>

>Which actress has the most "star" potential, ie, will help get the film seen? Unanswerable, perhaps, but worth asking.

If I were you, I've have stopped asking me about actors. – Dan

GW: But everything is so essential in the script (non-flab) that Albert sort of stands out as fill. But does it change the social dynamic for Laura to be living alone? The fact that Laura lives with Albert implies a level of social integration that Mary lacks, and makes Laura different from Mary.

DAN: Yeah, I'd keep Albert for that reason. But if you need to get rid of him because of budget or time, I'm sure the film will survive. – Dan

3.28.11

I seem more accepting of locations as is this time out – it occurred to me that this might be a consequence of all the street photography, of finding something as-is and using that, of embracing that as an aesthetic for stills. Which means (gladly) that the still photography is effecting the film-making, is coming into play.

3.29.11 (callbacks)

DAN: Emily with Dr. Glass starts out kind of crazy, then settles down into something more real. She's still acting as if someone told her she has to do more – which I believe you did tell her once. So her instinct is to do something I would like, but she's trying hard to do something you would like, and she's disappointing both of us. I still think she's best, but she seems uneasy now. – Dan

3.30.11

DAN: If she's gotten mixed signals, then trying to pull her back is just another mixed signal. If it were me, I'd admit my error to her so she knows she wasn't at fault, and tell her that her natural, intelligent, sane demeanor is going to work just fine,

that Mary should seem like a sane person who is going through the strangest things. - Dan

DAN re. Liam: He's a little too crazy for me. I know you were thinking Manson, so maybe you want the whole wild-eyed mythology. I'd rather have someone less overt. - Dan

4.6.11 (4 days until shoot)

A moment going into SMPL in the evening when I am utterly bored with films, watching or making, wondering why the heck I am doing it again. The acute emptiness of all.

Today's first morning task - to skim through Notes-Journal, and see how any question of big change I am past the point of (fatalism). No...be open to change, to increments of chaos...

4.13.11

From: emsterp@gmail.com
Subject: Re: re. Cindy
Date: April 13, 2011 5:12:58 PM PDT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com

Can you email me their addresses? I'd like to meet with them privately first, where we can work it out. Then we can present our results to you.

Also, I never got an nudity statement from you, which we really should have ironed out before we started shooting, so I wanted to clarify my position on the matter:

Though I don't mind being partially naked as we're filming so it feels realistic to the actors involved, I don't think it's necessary for any real nudity to show on film to maintain the integrity of the scenes. I'm just not comfortable with it, and I think it will read as gratuitous. We can angle the camera so that the nudity is implied. I've spoken to Larry and it is my understanding that he feels the same way.

Best,

Emily

On Wed, Apr 13, 2011 at 8:36 AM, Gary Walkow <gwalkow@gmail.com> wrote:

Good work yesterday and some big steps forward.

To me the most challenging scenes to make work, and which are crucial to the movie, are the sex deaths of Cindy and Rand.

I'd really like to get you and Liam and Camille (the actress, playing Cindy) together, to rehearse CINDY'S DEATH. She's a truly excellent young actress.

We shoot this crucial scene a week from Friday.

Do you want to try and get together tonight or tomorrow night if I can arrange it with Liam and Camille? This will not be a long rehearsal.

Thanks,
G

4.16.11 Saturday

Showdown at Emily on LaPeer at the 3 PM call. AS asks if I want to shoot tomorrow and I say no. He asks me several times.

At hour into the shoot I ask if we can shoot tomorrow to finish the house and AS throws a fit, you can't change your mind, you can't do that to the crew, I asked you 7 times if you wanted to shoot tomorrow and you said no.

Later, Alain says (insistently, brooking no argument) that we will shoot until dawn and finish the house.

I really act like an AD today, do the slate, call the roll, something that AS has not done on the shoot. At 3 AM I am utterly exhausted. It is stupid to continue. I close my eyes as IO wait for a set up.

Then I go to the bathroom to wash my face. When I come out, AS tells me that he has called a wrap, that it is the whiniest crew he has ever worked with, and that we are shooting tomorrow at 8 PM. I am inwardly furious that he has reversed himself and made a call for tomorrow and wrapped without at all consulting me. "You were asleep on the set."

Th fallout the next day, after I decide to fire Emily, is that he thinks Emily and others should be paid because they were

given a call for Sunday. This pisses me off more.

From: danielsallitt@gmail.com
Subject: Re: ambivalent
Date: April 16, 2011 4:39:21 AM PDT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Reply-To: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

By stopping am I sabotaging something for emotional reasons of my own?

Maybe you would be. **By continuing you're definitely making yourself comfortable, because helplessness is low-anxiety for you. Only time will tell how good or bad the results will be.**

This is a Clare-like situation that all my advice will have zero effect upon, so I'd like to stand clear of it. - Dan

Note: how this applies to Mary ("hopelessness is low-anxiety for you")

4.17.11

From: danielsallitt@gmail.com
Subject: Re: RM
Date: April 17, 2011 6:12:22 PM PDT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com
Reply-To: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

I did it!

For better or worse, I'm glad. Going to try to recast quickly, or to take a while and regroup? Is Alain behind you? - Dan

4.17.11 Sunday
Shoot until 3 AM Saturday (=Sunday morning).

Call M and am candid about the problems with Emily.

Walk to the park and back, then call Alain and tell him I want to terminate Emily.

Feel good about the decision.

Pickup Alain and we go to Mary's house to wrap the equipment. Joe meets us there.

4.18.11 Monday

In pajamas (or what for me pass as pajamas) doing all shitting down production stuff – calls, emails, Emily's termination letter, etc.

4.18.11

Alain drafts a termination letter, to be signed by me.

Existential Films, Inc.

3400 Airport Avenue · SUITE 17 · Santa Monica, CA 90405

April 18, 2011 BY E-MAIL

Dear Emily,

After serious consideration and extensive review of the footage shot to date, I have come to the unfortunate conclusion that your performance is not what I had hoped. This is mostly because of a fundamental failure to capture what I view as the nature of the character. While I certainly bear some responsibility for not communicating what I wanted with absolutely clarity, you have unquestionably backed off from what I took to be a full commitment to the atmosphere of desperation, disorientation, and dark emotion that I had to create in order to have any chance at a successful result. Consequently I have suspended production and am writing this to notify you officially that your services are no longer required. I am sorry that things did not work out. As you may surmise, I am now facing the loss of a significant portion of the very limited funds that I had available to make the movie. Nonetheless, I thank you for your efforts and hope that your future collaborative endeavors will all end on a better note.

I will copy your representative on this notice.

With kind regards,

Gary Walkow

Cc: B. Bokich (by e-mail)

A. Silver (by e-mail)

Alain cautions and pontificates that I must not waste Frank's time with this, that Frank must quickly look at the letter and that's it.

Conference call. Frank thinks this way overwritten. "Are you nuts? To get into a pissing contest over this? It's about the nudity."

Which is exactly what I said to Emily on the street Saturday, and which Alain has constantly tried to downplay.

At Frank's explicit instruction he redrafts the letter:

Existential Films, Inc.

3400 Airport Avenue · SUITE 17 · Santa Monica, CA 90405

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I will copy your representative on this notice.

With kind regards,

Gary Walkow

Cc: B. Bokich (by e-mail)

A. Silver (by e-mail)

From: frankjgruber@labridge.com

Subject: Re: How's this?

Date: April 18, 2011 7:49:47 PM BST

To: AlainSil@aol.com

Cc: gwalkow@gmail.com

It's still the same problem. Why blame her for the quality of her performance? What do you get from this? Do you want her to respond with letter saying you're not a good director? Gary, do you ever want to hire an actor again? What's the point! Call me if you guys want to talk about this, but there is a reason for

pay or play clauses and you guys are not using it. Frank.

Later, at Frank's house for dinner, Frank says, "When I said it was nuts, I thought you had written the letter, not Alain – I've known you so long I'm fine calling you nuts, but I didn't mean to call Alain nuts."

At seder at Frank's tell the story of RM stopping. I say it feels like I've had 10K worth of therapy. Frank's priceless retort, "And it cost ten thousand dollars."

From he point I decide to fire Emily I feel good about the decision. I feel empowered.

4.20.11 Tuesday

At BK-DK Seder BK says that she sees a look on my face she hasn't seen ever before – she says it is like Dot – an intensity of figuring out what to do. It is the first time she has seen that Dot look on me.

I decide not to work with Alain again. It has been fairly miserable. I want no more of his abuse, weird power trip.

I want to make the film in London, non-SAG.

Feeling of empowerment continues.

Emily's self-serving email, arrived in blue (she had shown it to others for advice).

From: emsterp@gmail.com
Subject: Thoughts
Date: April 19, 2011 12:49:50 PM PDT
To: gwalkow@gmail.com

Dear Gary,

I was disappointed to receive your letter yesterday, and felt confused by what I read. I never actually received a contract in the first place, and definitely didn't refuse to sign one. I

wish you would have taken the time to call me so that we could discuss if we had reached such an impasse artistically that it was worth scrapping the entire project over it. This isn't just about us - there were are a lot of other people involved here, many of whom were working for free or next to nothing, and such a decision seems particularly unfair to them.

From the beginning, I really wanted Radio Mary to be successful, a sum even greater than its parts. I liked everyone involved, and felt that the film had a lot of potential. I even tried to raise some money in the beginning! I know I asked a lot of questions but that was coming from an earnest place, because I wanted to make sure I understood your vision. I'm sorry if I offended you in this pursuit. It's hurtful to me that you would fire me without giving me adequate notice that you were considering doing so, and without ever really explaining what I was doing wrong (unless this is really just about the nudity as you stated in the letter, which is hard for me to believe.) The last day of shooting you told me I was doing a good job, that you liked what I was bringing to the scenes, just as you had all of the other days, so I'm sure you can understand how upsetting and confusing this has been for me, as an actress and otherwise.

I've received a lot of supportive calls and letters from the actors and crew, and all of us seem to be on the same page in feeling that it would be in everyone's best interest to pull ourselves together and finish the film so that something good comes out of this. There's a substantial amount of money on the line here, and even more time, and it seems like a real shame to not end up with a result we're all proud of. And it's not too late, because I don't think anyone has booked a new job yet, and my hair is still brown:) I don't know how you're feeling but I just want you to know that I'd be willing to let this episode become water under the bridge, as would most everyone else, I believe, if it meant we could pick up the pieces and finish this film with the integrity it deserves.

All the best,

Emily Paul

Sent from my iPhone

4.21.11

And continues.

Work on the Heir Apparent script, and buy a Zoom at Samy's for the Houston SCAA US Barista Championship shoot.

5.15.11 Cambridge

Natalie agrees to do Radio Mary, but when I ask her about her visa papers she says "I have lost them...read between the lines...I have lost them..." and she gets seriously annoyed when I ask her again. Her paranoia about discussing it on the phone leaves me sleepless, worries about her craziness, and fearing the viability of working with her.

And doesn't leave much energy to seek out another actress.

5.17.11

EMAIL TO DAN:

On May 17, 2011, at 1:29 AM, Dan Sallitt wrote:

Natalie has agreed to play Mary, but she insists on doing it with an American accent. Her American accent sounds crude to me and I think she is doing it as a career move, to try and get American roles -- though she says she considers the role American and wants to change accents to "fully inhabit" the role.

Also, she was paranoid to talk about getting a visa over the phone -- which is something I am doing with a lawyer and is completely above board. She has already acting paranoid in my opinion re. Emily Mortimer and others sabotaging her career.

Emily Blunt, you mean?

Yes, I meant Blunt.

Sounds as if you're thinking of shooting in LA, right?

Sorry I forgot to mention that. Turns out shooting in the UK is much more expensive even as a micro-budget, so I need to make the film in LA.

Could you tell her you'd like to do a test with her American accent, then look it over? Or is she hanging by a thread and likely to be chased away by any resistance?

A test is a great idea. I think she might be hanging by a thread but if she is, then better to cut it now than in

production. Natalie is crazy. I guess she's professional because she seems to finish various projects but every movie she does has a story of horror about how she was misused, under-appreciated, undermined, and various actors were scheming against her.

I felt relief Sunday night when Natalie said yes, then later when we had a longer conversation and she got snippy and paranoiac I started feeling bad. Sleepless. I need to pay attention to the dread I am feeling.

I certainly do not feel confident to start asking acquaintances for money to finance the shoot. I've already got a monkey on my back having spent half of the money that my sister and brother in law's brother gave me to make the movie.

A test is a great idea. I find her accent to be coarse.

If I don't sign her I don't currently feel the energy to hunt down another Mary, not after the painful and ultimately unsatisfying search last time. Sometimes the pain of filmmaking just seems too much.

Yeah, there are some losses that are really discouraging. I thought Shane Lynch was the most interesting of your other Marys, but you didn't like her callback, I recall.

No, I didn't like Shane's callback, but I might have a different attitude if I watched it now. It will be a relief to cast without having Alain in the room. I'd rather just make my own mistakes.

I honestly don't know what I want to do. I think I've stuck with filmmaking for 38 years out of misplaced tenacity. Once I had picked something (as a college sophomore) then I was determined to succeed at it.

I sort of cringe at getting back on the RM treadmill.

There is this urgency to making films with what is left of my active lifespan. But it would be very depressing to engage in yet a second false start.

There's an amazing indie actress in NYC, Kate Lyn Sheil, who has a small role in my movie. She's starred in some indie features,

including one by Swanberg. I think she could be a good Mary, if she liked the role. - Dan

I'll see if I can track down footage. Is she in your new movie? Did you shoot a screen test? If I buy the Swanberg movie will it show me enough?

5.19.11

From: gwalkow@gmail.com
Subject: Natalie
Date: May 19, 2011 1:54:59 PM BST
To: sallitt@post.harvard.edu

I just got a phone call from Natalie. She said that she is getting hate mail and threatening letters and that she is going to stop acting, that she is walking away after 15 years...she said that we were being listened to on the phone even as she spoke so she didn't want to discuss it further and hung up...

So I guess that settles that and I am again looking for Mary...

You've been in the room with Kate. I've just seen the audition tape (Silver Bullets is not available). I know this is a subjective opinion (but you know the material well) -- do you think she can carry the movie and hold the viewer's interest for the entire film?

7.14.11

Inspired, chastened by again re-reading The New Yorker article on Jim Cameron...even with return to LA 7 weeks away, I should resume working on RM if I am serious about it...

In a haze of kid noise (Harry singing to Beatles over the headphones, piano practice) and emotional distaste/distraction (Clare back from Liverpool) I try to reread RM script for first time since returning to UK. A haze.

I don't feel like making the film. Fret over finding all the actors again. Is there enough time (to pull it all back together)?

8.4.11

INTUITIVE CONCERNS

--That I will get sucked into Alain dysfunction again.

--That I will shoot the film in too conventional a manner. Will "prep" push me toward conventionality in coverage (rather than a street photograph approach)?

--How to shoot the opening scene to gain sympathy for Kate?

--Am I considering the script too locked? Am I not open enough to change? (There is nothing stopping me from changing the script.)

--That I should start prepping again, in a somewhat serious way. Work should continue on DDI out of economic necessity, but not PKD.

--That I do not have a feel for the film, and that talking to Dan will not give that to me, it has to come from within.

8.7.11

Reread RM Draft 18. It's a struggle. Break for a twilight bike ride and a gin and tonic in the middle. The finish feels strong and that's good – very good.

Watched Super 8 yesterday and the thing I liked the best is the Super 8 film in the end credits – the roughness of it inspired me to make RM as rough. Maybe that is the approach to take with a little movie in this enhanced digital age. To not be slick. To not make it look "like a million dollars." To not have matching shots. To not prove my smoothness or professionalism.

It needs to be about the emotional jolt. Weirdness, strangeness, sex.

"Do you want to go on a strange journey?"

What is the boundary of your body? What is the boundary of your mind?

8.17.11

TODAY'S SUMMARY OF NEW RM SCENES

--Rand masturbating at work

--Interviews with characters, they speak their thoughts

--Mary's self-narration (improv)

I'm making a fragmented POV documentary

A collage

Wandering POV

Re-read "RM Notes-Journal" last night, very late, and today, and feel jump started back into it...can't help but think how many films Swanberg has made in the 2+ years that I have been working on this, and it feels crazy and wrong to delay the shoot as scared as I am about money, booking tickets, Joe's availability to play Rand.

8.18.11

DR. GLASS

Gail Levin

Jim Krusoe

Minona Walli

Nicole Arbusto

Minona Walli

TONY TAYLOR

Bob Byington

Stephen Gyllenhaal

Leo Marks (in disguise)

Simon Heslev

Randy _____ (bowler in Crashing)

Jeff Dowd

Barry Clark

Chris D.

RAND

TOM REESE

ACTOR SOURCES

David Glanzer

Kate Sheil

Joe Swanberg

Craig's List

Imagine a rough style, where nothing matches, nothing smoothly cuts together, things are mismatched, the eye jumps uncomfortably.

9.5.11

DAN SALLITT re. CASTING TOM REESE:

How young do you think Tom can be?

I don't know - depends on what you want from that part of the film. I think of homicide detectives as an elite within the force - I imagine cops generally spend years working up to that position. Know anyone who know a lot about police?

As written, the part feels young. Hence the casting difficulty.

9.18.11 (ON THE FLIGHT TO NYC)

Feel uncertain as how to shoot the film. Feel that I felt more certain with TTWD, NFU, Beat, Crashing...not Callers.

Confidence...Clare's comment that Campbell was muttering I didn't know where to put the camera, that the shoot ended with him not liking me. Some truth to that, but not her truth.

Any lesson? To utterly hide any uncertainty (Emily's reaction when I said I didn't know how to shoot the aura sex scene, until I saw it).

9.24.11

DAN RE. LAURA/ALBERT:

(GW: I'm thinking of eliminating the Albert character from the script. The scenes where it was just Albert with mary I would give to Laura -- that would beef up that role. Laura and Albert have a somewhat naggy relationship. Even if I was to make the relationship interesting I don;t know what I am gaining by it.)

It all depends on what context you want to give Mary in those scenes. Before, you were clearly trying to convey that Laura has a more conventional life - perhaps Mary felt uncomfortable in it even before, and it's certainly odd to her now that she's become a supernatural being's pawn. If you stick to that idea, then I would say Albert at least sends the married=conventional signal - and you might need it even more if Sophia is Laura, because she doesn't convey conventionality to me.

But you've already traveled on a different road by making the couple gay, and I'm not sure how that version of the film was interacting with Mary's story.

If you have no new ideas for Laura/Albert, and you're going to cast Sophia, I say keep Albert, as a man, and try to enmesh the couple in some everyday life stuff that competes for their attention with Mary. Then maybe you can get away with Sophia being a fairly sympathetic but distracted-by-life presence. - Dan

(GW: Laura is the first draft novel was someone who Mary did not feel close to and felt somewhat competitive with and jugged by Laura. Albert was a bit of a cad.)

Well, one thing that seems clear is that Rand, Laura/Albert and doctors/psychiatrists were originally designed to create a conventional world that seemed unattractive to Mary, in contrast with the allure of sex/killing/slavery. - Dan

10.7.11

Took the day off today after the relief of casting Eric Gorlow as Hayward yesterday.

Then panicked at 2 AM, I finally read the script again for the first time since leaving England (rather than engage with more book-movie entertainment)(and when did I read it there)? And have an honest surge of all that I need to do.

To be honest: I currently lack a sense of visual precision.

Lately I haven't been seeing any still images (not a good sign).

I am panicked about: lack of art dept, props, firing DeFazio (and getting a replacement).

Concept: packets of time (inspired by Joe Swanberg).

Eric Gorlow said Hayward is "effortlessly himself." Great phrase.

10.10.11

DAN RE. RAND:

Neither do I. I guess it enhances the complexity to make both his death and Mary's reaction to it so equivocal (if that is the right word).

There's not just one way to do it. I don't mind a character being unsympathetic, especially if there's a plan; I don't like it when movies imply that a death can be fun because it's a bad guy, but there are lots and lots of way to handle that situation besides making everyone goody-goody. With Rand, I think it's fine for him to be mostly after the sex, not too good at pretending it's a meaningful relationship. But people like this aren't always easy to spot, nor are they always a total loss. I'm fine with Mary saying those harsh things about him, and I think that works better if he's not an obvious bad guy. And I think sympathy will naturally flow toward him at the moment of his death, and that won't be bad.

There's a dynamic in every version of your script that you probably have to hang onto, whether Rand/Laura/Glass are sympathetic or not. The dynamic is that nothing in Mary's normal life is working for her, not boyfriend or family or work. Which means that masochism and bloodlust feel like a step forward for the audience: they are at the same time Mary's horrible nightmare and also her discovery of a rich and deep emotional life. Do you agree?