

Grave of the Fireflies

Grave of the Fireflies is a movie about a boy and his sister trying to adjust the life towards the end of World War II in Japan. The main protagonist is Seita, whose primary concern is his little sister Setsuko. Early in the movie, their mother dies during as a result of an air raid and finding food and shelter become the main conflict from that point on. The theme of the film is how times of war give people living during them a sense of self-realization about what is best for them and the ones they care about. The film is a rather dark war drama with characters who are constantly trying to make the best of their horrifying situations.

Seita and Setsuko are relatable in a sense. Obviously, relating to being homeless in Japan during World War II is unlikely. But many big brothers and sisters, even parents can relate to the way that Seita looks after Setsuko and how his main concern is keeping her safe. This allows the audience to identify with Seita. What I can take away from *Grave of the Fireflies* that could benefit my script is the living conditions of Seita and Setsuko. A post-air raid Japan seems like it could be similar to a post-economic apocalypse setting. The relationship between Seita and Setsuko is also something that could benefit my film. Their sibling relationship is very human and relatable which is something audiences definitely look for in a film.

One obvious difference between this film and my vision of my film is that my vision is not animated. But the living conditions of Seita and Setsuko are very similar to the living conditions of my vision of the protagonist in my screenplay. The war setting is also a bit different whereas I envision my film being set in the middle of a war and *Grave of the Fireflies* takes place towards the end of a war. *Grave of the Fireflies* works because the characters are relatable and they find themselves in real life situations that the audience can understand.

The Road

In this film, a father and his son are trying to survive in a post-apocalyptic world. Their goal is to make it to the coast without being killed by gangs or cannibals. The father faces inner conflicts of his own such as his illness, in the film he admits that he knows he is dying in a voiceover. Another conflict he faces is being a good guy or a bad guy, as his son would put it. In the beginning of the film you can see that he is clearly good and does everything for the right reasons but as the film progresses his interactions with other people make it questionable if he really still is good. The film is a drama with a very dark feel, which is shown through the setting along with the story.

The theme of the film is how the horrors of a devastating situation can affect people internally. Another part of the theme is the bond between a father and son. Viggo Mortensen's character goes through many self-conflicting situations such as whether or not he is going to kill his son when and if the gang finds them and whether or not to listen to his son when they encounter other travelers. The characters are relatable based on their relationship. A strong bond between a father and a son is a common relationship that audiences can connect with. Their literal situation is not relatable since it is a post-apocalyptic world and thankfully we do not have to face the same horrors they do. But trying to get through a difficult situation as a father and a son or any other parent-offspring combination is a relatable situation for audiences. Staying strong so children don't see the adults pain is a real life situation. The setting and living conditions of characters in *The Road* is something I would like to incorporate into my film but not to the full extent. I also envision my protagonist having some of the same characteristics of the protagonist in *The Road*, as well as having a character similar to the boy.

The Book of Eli

The protagonist of this film is Eli, a man living in a post-apocalyptic America trying to deliver the last existing bible somewhere on the west coast. The main conflict that drove that narrative came from the antagonist, Carnegie's, desire to get the bible from Eli. After Solara, a girl living in Carnegie's bar with her mother, decides to join Eli on his journey Carnegie and his gang became concerned with capturing both Solara and the book. This film is an action/adventure drama with a serious tone. The theme of *The Book of Eli* recognizes the effects and consequences of greed, selfishness, and dependability on religion. Personally I do not believe the characters are relatable because most of their emotions and actions are based on a religious undertone and in my opinion religion has become less a part of society as it once was. I do believe, however, the fact that the characters are not relatable does not interfere with the well-written story, which is what makes this film work.

There are bits in pieces of this film that I believe can benefit my film such as many of the characteristics Eli possesses. I believe in order to portray my protagonist the way I envision him, he needs to have the wit and abilities Eli has. I also want my film to take place years after a war occurred just like the setting of *The Book of Eli*. The wasteland setting is also very interesting but in my film I don't envision my setting to be as ominous because the story is based on rebellion and coming together as a society, therefore I think brighter scenery would be necessary. I also envision my antagonist being different from this film's antagonist. The antagonist in this film uses his henchmen to get what he wants and I believe that shows a lack of power. Although I want my antagonist to have a following, I also want him to be more powerful and take matters into his own hands.

Empire of the Sun

Empire of the Sun is about a young boy named Jim, formerly known as Jamie to his family, who is separated from his parents in Japan during World War II. Jim, an English boy, encounters Basie, an American man, who somewhat looks after Jim. The main conflict that drives the narrative becomes Jim trying to survive as well as make the best of his living situation in a Japanese internment camp. The tone in the beginning of the film is ominous and full of drama as well as the action that comes with war, but as the movie progresses the tone becomes lighter when the setting is the internment camp that Jim has lived in for three years. Jim is a relatable character because he exemplifies the ignorance and optimism of a child. Throughout the movie he is always talking about life when the war is over while the adults around him are not so certain that the war will end. I think audiences would be able to relate to the mindset of a child without the experiences of an adult mind which leads many of us to be pessimistic in times of adversity. This film works because of the reality of it and how people feel for Jim because he is a real character.

One difference between my vision of my film and *Empire of the Sun* is that my film's characters and events are entirely fictional while the events and characters in *Empire of the Sun* are based on a true story. The idea of having an internment camp is appealing though, and I think having one, or at least something like it, to my film which is set in America could add some depth to the story. The relationship between Basie and Jim carries some similarities in my vision of my film. In the beginning, Basie only takes in Jim because he has to, which is something I envision my protagonist doing with another young supporting character. Though I do not see many other similarities between *Empire of the Sun* and my vision of my film.

War Horse

The protagonist of this film is a horse named Joey who was given to Albert by his father at the beginning of the film. Through training and much time spent together the horse and the boy form a bond. After Joey, is sold to cavalry during World War I, Albert enlists to serve taking him on a hopeful and emotional journey. His journey eventually takes him to the front lines and he begins to wonder if he will ever see his beloved horse again. Joey spends time as part of the German and British armies for many years until him and Albert are reunited. The film is a war drama that is more of a character piece that focuses on Albert and his journey. At times the tone is triumphant but there are times when the tone is on the other side of the spectrum. Themes in this film consist of survival, courage, and of course, friendship. Combining those three, the theme can be said to be surviving during the war and having the courage and bravery to preserve a friendship. In my opinion, the characters in *War Horse* are unrelatable because they are typical cliché characters in a World War sob story. In a story such as this one, audiences would expect to be able to relate to the characters but I had a hard time making any connections. I could not find any character in the story who was unique and I also did not find the writing of the film appealing. Therefore, this film does not work.

The similarities of this film, the vision of my film, and all the other films I have watched, are the horrors of war. Albert was given a reason to join the war after his horse was taken from him which is similar to my protagonist's situation in my film. I do find some things in this film that I think could benefit my film such as Albert's passion that comes from his bond with his horse. This is the first film I watched, however, that I did not think the setting would fit my vision of my film.

War of the Worlds

War of the Worlds is about a man and his two children trying to survive a vicious takeover of Earth by aliens. The protagonist is Ray Ferrier, a dockworker and lackluster father. The conflict revolves around the family being on the run to Boston while trying to avoid the attacks of the aliens. The film is a science fiction thriller which is a change of pace from the previous films which had been dramas. The tone is somewhat desperate and doubtful as it seemed less and less likely for humans to survive as the film progressed. Many themes are exemplified throughout the film but the theme that stood out the most to me is the theme of exile. Once the aliens invaded Earth, the humans were forced to adapt to a new life and also leave their homes which are examples of both metaphorical and literal exile. Unfortunately, I did not find the characters relatable. I can understand their feelings towards their situation considering an alien invasion but some characters made decisions and found themselves in situations that I think most audiences would find questionable. I don't think this film quite works because the conflict is not necessarily solved by a believable solution. It seems like the ending was forced which takes away from other high points of the film.

The alien invasion gave the film a somewhat post-apocalyptic feel. The wreckage resulting from the attacks could be something that can benefit the setting of my film. The setting of my film won't be as heavily populated as *War of the Worlds*, though. I definitely do not see my film having any science fiction influences in it which is a major difference between my vision of my film and this particular film. Most of the film takes place at night whereas I envision my film taking place during the daytime, though at times rainy and ominous. I also don't think I'll implement Ray's qualities into the protagonist of my film.

The Rover

This film is about a man, Eric, living in post-economic apocalyptic Australia with only one possession left, his car. When his car is stolen by a gang, he attempts to follow them but is knocked out by the gang when he confronts them. Traveling in the gang's beat up truck they left behind, he eventually encounters a member's brother who travel together to try to find the gang. *The Rover* is an adventure/drama with the tone containing a bit of mystery, as well as friendship. Both Eric and Rey, the brother, unravel their own stories as they spend more time together on their journey. The theme of the film shows how two unlikely companions can form a bond by sharing a similar goal. Eric wanted his car back and Rey wanted revenge on his brother for leaving him to die. Although I never found myself in situations such as the situations portrayed in this film, I still was able to relate to the characters. I feel like audiences sympathized with Rey and wanted him to prevail in his journey. Rey seemed like a harmless, mentally disabled man who was fighting his own demons and battles for the first time without his brother. These characteristics allowed audiences to root for him.

The setting of *The Rover* is based on a fictional Australia ten years after an economic apocalypse which is something I think would benefit my film rather than having a post-apocalyptic world caused by some sort of global apocalypse caused by natural disasters. In *The Rover*, however, it seems as if fuel and bullets are easy to find, I envision my film having a community with less resources and less homes. In order to show that, my film would have to take place more than ten years after the collapse. The loner attitude of Eric is something I expect to implement into my protagonist. A difference between Eric and my protagonist would be my protagonist's sympathy for the community he lives in and his willingness to help those in need.

The Patriot

The protagonist of *The Patriot* is Benjamin Martin, a farmer and a French-Indian war hero. In the midst of the Revolutionary War, he wants to just be a father and a farmer and to stay away from the war. When British Colonel William Tavington burns down Benjamin's plantation and murders his son, Benjamin becomes torn between protecting himself and his family and staying true to himself by staying out of the war, and getting revenge on those who hurt his family. The main themes of this film are anger and revenge. Benjamin is depicted as somewhat an angry, troubled man from the beginning of the film and once Tavington burns his plantation and murders his son, his motives are driven by revenge. In my opinion, the characters are depicted in such a way that makes them relatable. Bonds between a father and his children usually is a relatable characteristic if it is present in a film. Gabriel and Thomas Martin are also relatable characters based on their enthusiasm and drive to fight for their freedom despite their father's disapproval.

The idea of revenge and how it can motivate a man to defend his country is a theme I want to incorporate into my film. Also the indecisiveness of Benjamin Martin about whether he should be part of the war or not is similar to the inner conflict I want my protagonist to have, therefore the way it was portrayed in *The Patriot* is something that could benefit the way I present my protagonist. The setting is different from my vision of my film, though. I envision my film having somewhat of a wasteland setting exemplifying the harsh living conditions of the characters. At times, the setting of *The Patriot* is peaceful. I also think the action and guerilla warfare portrayed by Benjamin's militia is something that could benefit my film and help shape the action sequences in my film.

Braveheart

The protagonist of *Braveheart* is a Scottish commoner named William Wallace. The conflict in this film arises from Wallace's urge to get revenge on the English after they murdered his secret wife because she assaulted an Englishman who tried to rape her. After this incident, Wallace decided to start a rebellion and overthrow England and relieve his land of English rule. The film is a war drama which is complemented by action and the tone of the film is very serious except for when Wallace is making his witty remarks. There are not necessarily any major characters other than William Wallace which puts pressure on the audience to have to relate to only one character whereas in other films there can be relatable supporting characters. With that being said, William Wallace is a relatable character because of his relationship with Murron and how he was driven to start a rebellion because of what the English did to her. The ideas of passion and love are often appealing to audiences.

The character of William Wallace seems to be very similar to my vision of my protagonist in my film. I think there will be a good amount of influence from him in my protagonist and have many of the same characteristics such as his wit, his leadership, and his passion. *Braveheart* takes place in the thirteenth century so I imagine my film having a very different setting with a lot less horses. The way Wallace rounded up supporters is something I want to portray my protagonist doing in my film as well. The living conditions of people in thirteenth century Scotland seems like it could be similar to a futuristic post-apocalyptic America. Habitants from each era have to rely on things such as hunting or scavenging for food and their homes are not very big or elegant. Scotland is much greener and more vast than I expect my setting to be as well.

Red Dawn

This film is about a group of teenagers who flee to the mountains after their high school is invaded by Soviet forces. The antagonists of this film are the group of teens that make up the Wolverines, a group performing guerilla warfare to overthrow the invasion. Most of the story focuses on three characters, Jed, Matt, and Robert. At first their plan was to just hide out in the mountains but Robert finds out that his father was killed which results in him killing a Soviet officer. After Robert's actions, the team knows that they are wanted by the invaders now which creates the main conflict in the film, adjusting to new living conditions and fighting a war against the Soviets and Cubans. *Red Dawn* is a serious film with not many light-hearted moments, which is understandable due to the propagandist nature of the film. The theme is the facing a decision of whether or not to fight for family and freedom. The characters in the film are relatable, especially Robert because of how he responds to his father's death. In my opinion, it is a typical reaction for a teenager to just want revenge immediately rather than thinking about the consequences.

Many reviews and critics call the film a form of propaganda for the Cold War which I think could be a similar reaction by audiences to my film. *Red Dawn* is probably one of the more political films I have watched and although I do not want my film to be about politics, the story has a political foundation. A difference between *Red Dawn* and my film is that I want to portray my protagonist's struggle deciding whether or not he wants to rebel whereas in *Red Dawn*, the characters seemed to have made their decision rather quickly. I like how the premise of the film is that it portrays a fictional situation as an outcome to a real life situation and I think how that shapes the story can really benefit my film.

Mad Max 2

The protagonist of *Mad Max 2* is Mad Max, also known as The Road Warrior. He lives in a post apocalyptic Australia with very minimal civilization and necessities. One of the most sought after goods in this fictional setting is gasoline. When Max discovers a small gated off community very rich in gasoline, which takes his car from him. Max offers to transport their gasoline for them in exchange for his car back. During his time at this gasoline refinery, he discovers that the community is being terrorized by evil barbarian motorcyclists who plan to take all the gasoline from the refinery themselves. This film is very easily defined as an action film which is a change of pace from the other films I have watched. Since the film is simply just an action film, it is hard to be able to relate to the characters. Despite the fact that the characters are unrelatable, the film is very well put together and does exactly what it sets out to do which is to be an action film.

Mad Max is a character that probably has inspired other characters in the past and there are qualities he possesses that could influence the protagonist in my film. Some qualities include his confidence as well as his ability to escape near death situations. Mad Max has a sort of lone cowboy attitude meaning he does not make connections with anyone he meets, he is completely goal-oriented and does only what he has to to achieve his goals. This is something I'd like to implement into my protagonist except my protagonist will have a bit of a soft side. I think the idea of having small surviving communities throughout the country could be beneficial to my story. I do imagine a difference in settings. Although I expect to describe my setting as a wasteland I do not imagine it being in the desert like *Mad Max 2*.

V for Vendetta

This film is about a man who is considered a terrorist to a tyrannical futuristic British government. He goes by the name of V and his most brutal attacks come on November 5th also known as Guy Fawkes' Day which is fitting because V wears a Guy Fawkes mask and his most violent crimes involve explosions which resembles Fawkes' Gunpowder Plot which was meant to cause chaos in the United Kingdom. The film also focuses on Evey, a woman whose parents were killed by the government because of their political activist riots and plots. Her brother was also killed in a government scheme which is what led to her parents becoming activists and eventually led to her opposition towards the government. The conflict of the film is V's plot to overthrow the government as well as Evey's struggles hiding her identity and not revealing the whereabouts of V. The character of V is difficult to relate to because he is a masked vigilante who hates the government but he does not have a backstory for the majority of the film. Evey on the other hand had lost her family because of the tyrannical government and began seeking revenge once she met V and was influenced by his feelings toward the government. The film is an action/drama with a dark tone. Most of the film takes place at night or in the dark which exemplifies this particular tone.

Though the entire country does not come together to rebel against the government towards the end of the film, the influential abilities of V are something that could benefit my film. The setting of *V for Vendetta* is futuristic but still seems to be economically sound despite all the arrests the government makes. What I think is similar between this film and my vision of my film is the way the government treats the people but I envision the economic status of the civilians in my film to be much different.

