**ELECTRIC ENTERTAINMENT SCRIPT REPORT**

**Title:** BEING SILVER

**Writer:** Liz Lachman

**Draft Date:** N/A

**Format:** Feature

**Pages:** 110

**Genre:** Comedy, Drama, Romance

**Location:** Burbank,Michigan

**Circa:** Present, 1995, late 1980s

**Budget:** N/A

**Director:** N/A

**Producer:** N/A

**Cast:** N/A

**Submitted To:** Marc Roskin

**Submitted By:** N/A

**Contact Company:** N/A

**Date In:** N/A

**Submitted As:** Script

**Reader:** Oscar Gervet

**Coverage Date:** 05/11/2020

**Recommendation:**

**Writer: Recommend**

**Project: Recommend**

**Logline** When the authoritarian patriarch of a Jewish family is dying at the hospital, his childish lesbian daughter joins her dysfunctional family to mourn together. But the technicalities of the father's death revive the relatives' conflictual relationships.

**Comment Summary** THE MEYEROWITZ STORIES meets THE DESCENDANTS in this dramedy showing the intricacies of a dysfunctional Jewish family as each copes with the patriarch’s upcoming death. The tragicomic tone and dialogues serve this bitter-sweet story. The classic childhood flashbacks throughout resonate with the more contained present and further build the complex characters. BEING SILVER’s premise, story, and structure are not original, and a few scenes can feel generic. Still, the writer knows her subject, and the excellent overall execution connects with the reader emotionally.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Excellent** | **Good** | **Fair** | **Poor** |
| **Premise** |  | **X** |  |  |
| **Story** |  | **X** |  |  |
| **Structure** |  | **X** |  |  |
| **Characters** | **X** |  |  |  |
| **Dialogue** | **X** |  |  |  |

**SUMMARY:**

Home movie scenes feature the Jewish SILVER FAMILY in the late 1980s doing a pyramid. Nowadays, PHYLLIS SILVER (71) calls her daughter CHER (35), a commercial director on a set in Burbank; ARNIE (81), Cher's father, seems confused. After Cher and her girlfriend SYBIL (34) celebrate their one year together with friends MUGSY (35), WENDY (36), and LISA (37), Sybil argues with Cher, who takes everything as a game and still has not expressed her love. When Arnie, who had two strokes, stops breathing, Phyllis gets him to the hospital. Her matriarch sister, DOTTIE (69), joins her, and DR. SCHWARTZ reveals Arnie will not survive.

Cher joins them, her sister FRANCIE (42), crying, and ultra-orthodox brother SAMUEL (41), praying. Phyllis decided to honor their father's will by terminating his life support but Samuel considers its murder. He leaves angrily to call his rabbi and Phyllis retracts her decision. A flashback shows Arnie was a highly authoritarian father and an unsupportive husband. Cher's brother, ROBBIE (39), has AIDS infecting his brain with signs of dementia but only agreed to "alternative healing."

Samuel finds a way with Dr. Schwartz for Arnie to die naturally under Jewish law: the hospital will leave Arnie off the machine when they clean the pump. They plan the funeral accordingly with Phyllis’ rabbi. Cher and Phyllis bring Robbie to a Catholic Hospice, and Dottie asks Cher to lie for him to consent to drugs. VICTORIA (31) joins her family while pregnant for the cleaning of the pump. A flashback to 1995 shows Arnie angry, unfair, and inconsiderate to the point Samuel runs away.

Arnie unexpectedly breathes without the machinery and Samuel wants to feed him with a tube while Cher and Francie would let him die. Phyllis opts for the tube for Samuel but soon decides to take it off. Mugsy and Sybil join Cher and support her as she lies to Robbie to consent for the drugs. But when Sybil asks him from the heart, Robbie willingly accepts. Cher angrily argues with Sybil for trying to change her. When Samuel discovers Arnie's tube was removed, he violently confronts Phyllis. Cher stumbles upon him pushing their mother and draws a gun. It accidentally fires as she lowers it, and Victoria gets premature and painful childbirth of two sons.

Cher breaks down over the phone with Sybil about her inability to watch people die, and Arnie dies. At his funeral, Samuel's eulogy mentions Arnie's patience and laughter — features not apparent to his family. Robbie interjects, "I'm glad he's dead. I hate him." But Phyllis has a happy memory dancing with Arnie. Diggers continue an orthodox ceremony despite Phyllis' will, but Cher gets them to stop with an awkward eulogy. Cher presents Sybil to Phyllis as an acquaintance. Sybil is mad.

After a family reunion, Cher reveals she is dating Sybil to her mother and admits she loves her a lot. Phyllis reacts well in a finally intimate mother-daughter moment. Cher goes to Sybil’s and expresses her love. They kiss. They move in together. Home movie scenes feature Cher, Sybil, Mugsy, and Wendy, trying to make a pyramid.

**COMMENTS**

THE MEYEROWITZ STORIES meets THE DESCENDANTS in this dramedy showing the intricacies of a dysfunctional Jewish family as each copes with the patriarch’s upcoming death. The tragicomic tone and dialogue serve this bitter-sweet story. The classic childhood flashbacks throughout resonate with the more contained present and further build the complex characters. BEING SILVER’s premise, story, and structure are not original, and a few scenes can feel generic. Still, the writer knows her subject, and the excellent overall execution connects with the reader emotionally.

All the complex family members are heavily and differently flawed. Phyllis favors practicality instead of intimacy and keeps smiling emptily. Cher acts like a child to shield herself from adult relationships and feelings, which makes the romance with Sybil even more compelling. Samuel hated his father growing up but became a lot like him and loves him as he dies. Samuel differentiates himself from Arnie by being ultra-orthodox. Still, he focuses more on the rules and their technicalities than the spiritual and intimate moments he could live with his family.

The organic dialogue gives life to the characters and rises in absurd situations with character-based humor featuring witty lines from Dottie and Cher. The dark humor is effective as well as the occasional spotty humor — Cher’s phone and neckless (given by Sybil) respectively slip in used toilets on two occasions.

Nevertheless, the writer sometimes tells what characters realize and think — instead of giving more visual or sound cues — and a few dialogues can feel overly explicit. For example, Lisa expresses Cher’s flaw on page 10, pointing out an “obsessive avoidance combined with a fear of growing up and creating adult emotional ties.” Many cues — ranging from Cher playing Gameboy to her Peter Pan watch and her fear of admitting any feelings — point to Cher’s flaw, and the audience could realize it in a more impactful way without Lisa’s explanation.

Ultimately, this well-written tragicomic story will heavily rely on the performance and charm of its actor to exploit its full dramatic and humorous potential. BEING SILVER, as most dramedies, would benefit from a famous cast’s appeal to draw audiences.