

DEBTS OF THE DEAD

EVEN DEATH HAS A PRICE...

Feature Film Pitch Deck

THE STORY

Logline

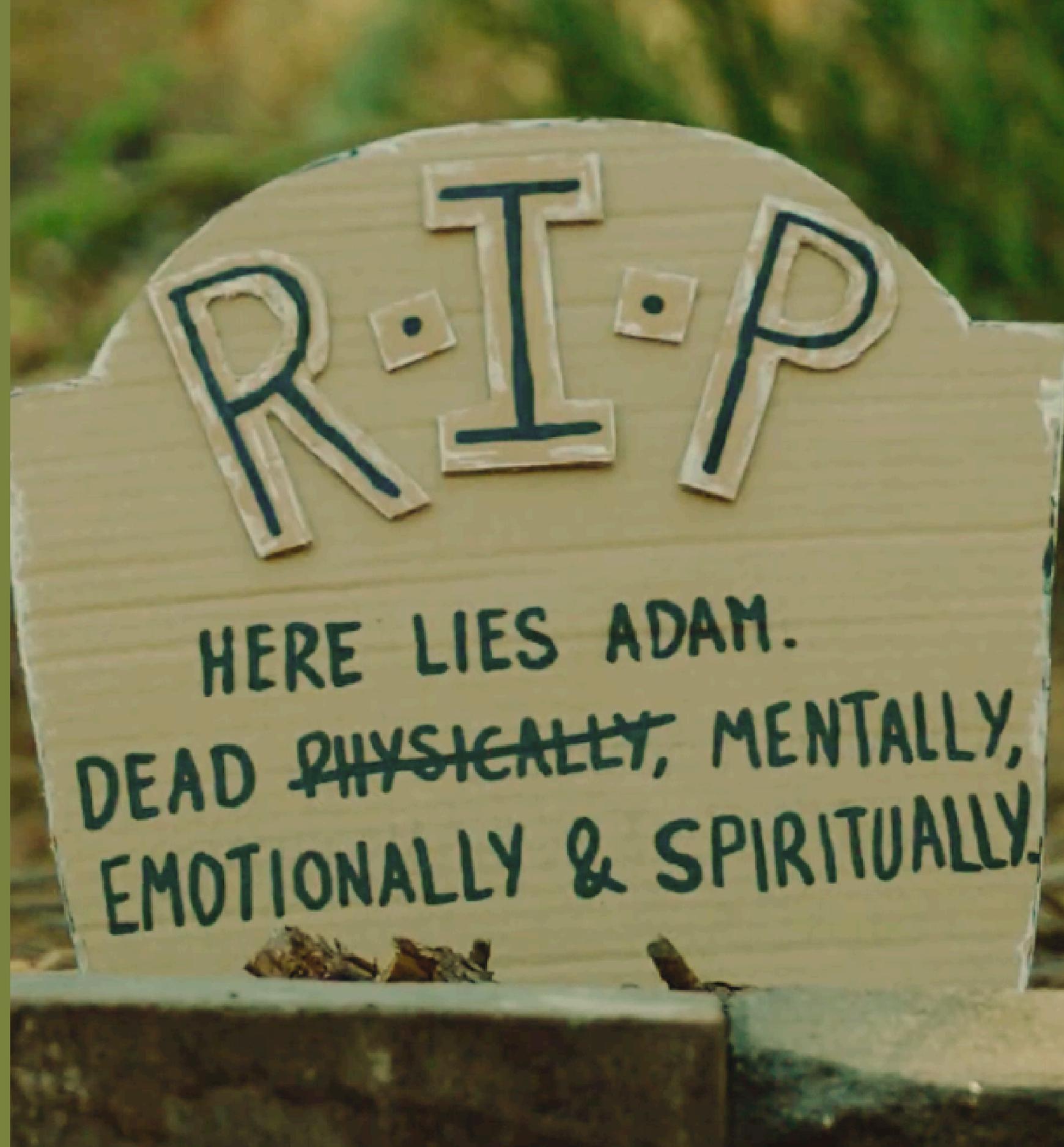
In a dystopian near-future where the dead are resurrected to work off their outstanding debts, a fed-up zombie named Adam fights to unionise with his undead coworkers.

Genre

Dark Comedy

Tone

Satirical, cynical, equal parts hopeful and hopeless



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

After directing the short film, *Debts of the Dead*, and seeing how audiences resonated with Adam and his story, we realised the potential the film had to be expanded into a feature. The short followed Adam from the moment he woke up in his shallow grave, to the dreadful moment he sat down at his desk. This gave us a natural point for us to continue from. In expanding the story, we wanted to see just how much drama we could throw at Adam, which the script definitely achieves. This combined with seeing how people of all genders and ages relate to Adam; his dead-end job, his debts, and his desire to retire (die) made us realise the story had mass appeal, if we could just get it in front of more audiences.

Debts of the Dead is becoming increasingly relevant. The idea of forcing the dead to work off their debts isn't just absurd, it's a reflection of the increasing exploitation of labour under late-stage capitalism. I'm one of the many members of Gen Z unsatisfied and uninspired by the life that late stage capitalism lays out for us. Full time work, constant stimulation, little to no downtime all with the hope of maybe one day affording a home and retiring in it. By making humans the monsters of the zombie uprising, we aim to hold a mirror up to where we are headed.

My hope for the film is that audiences can be entertained the whole way through, with the observational cinematography style, the fast-paced and action-packed story, and the quirky collection of characters. At the same time, I hope that this entertainment may be a vessel for audiences to question the system they find themselves under.



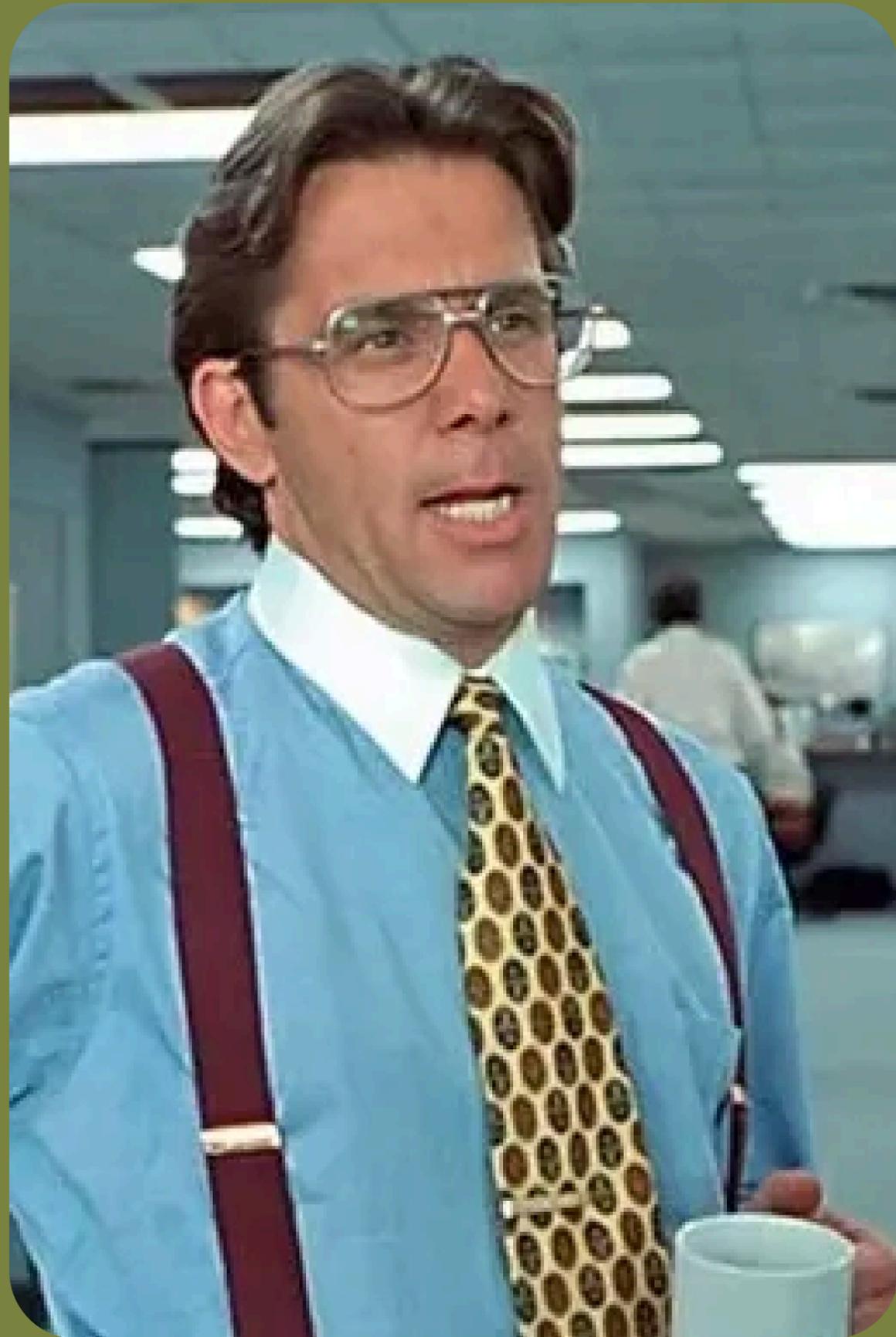
FIFI LOPEZ

CHARACTERS



ADAM

- Our 'hero', an ordinary, run-of-the-mill zombie wage slave, who hates his new life and goes through the motions until he can pay off his debts and rest in peace.
- In his human life, he did everything they told him to do - get a degree, get a job, get a house. But a rigged system left him unsatisfied, unhappy and broke.
- Laying dormant inside Adam is a rebel and a leader, yearning for meaning and ready to be awakened.



JIM

- A middle-manager from hell, who projects his insecurities onto his undead staff.
- Exploits, bullies and harasses his underlings in order to hit sales targets and feel a sense of sadistic joy.
- Cowardly. He bullies the weak, but grovels before the powerful, and panics at the first sign of adversity.



FREYA

- A charismatic idealist whose name is short for 'Freedom'.
- The heart and soul of the union. She stresses peaceful protest, and always uplifts and encourages others to see the bigger picture.
- In her human life, she was bright and brilliant, before she followed a bad path that ended in tragedy.



VICTOR

- Abrasive, cynical and never afraid to speak his mind. Needs therapy, but copes through a dark sense of humour instead.
- Freya's partner-in-crime.
- Extremely capable in his past life but had to watch less deserving people climb the ladder through nepotism and corruption. He hates the system and has a lot of pent up anger inside.



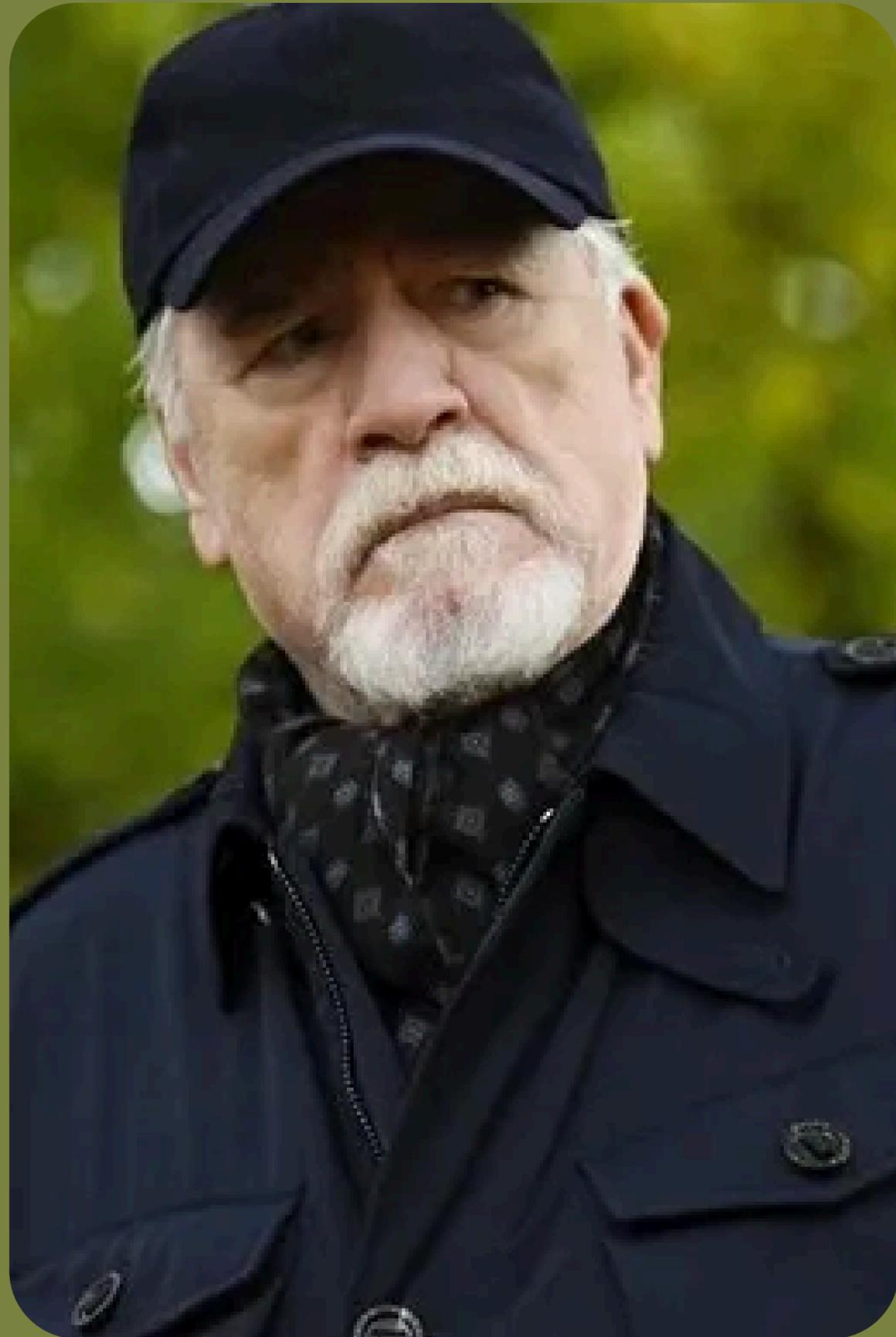
ZED

- The antithesis of peaceful protest. Pure chaos and anarchy.
- Spends his work days writing his manifesto.
- In his human life he was given the death penalty, but thanks to the Eternal Repayments Act, he's back with even less to lose.



PRESTON

- The CEO's son who's fresh out of university, where his father's donations earned him a bachelor's degree in business.
- Holds a high rank in the company through pure nepotism, but credits his success to his rigorous morning routine.
- Doesn't realise American Psycho was a satire.
- Just wants his Dad to love him.



CHARLES

- A ruthless corporate overlord, representing the horrors of late-stage capitalism.
- Controls a conglomerate of 220 companies fuelled entirely by zombie labour, and lobbies the government for even fewer zombie rights.
- Has never lost in a negotiation, even if it meant playing dirty.

VISUAL STYLE & TONE

The film takes a very grounded approach to zombies. A majority of the film will be shot in a handheld observational documentary style, taking inspiration from classic workplace sitcoms.

The handheld style will add immersion, as if one of the zombies is filming it or we are one of the zombies with them.



VISUAL STYLE & TONE - CONT.

A key aspect is juxtaposition in the lighting and colour palette. The locked off, serene, vibrant outside world is immediately contrasted by Adam's lifeless and drab appearance.

The primary setting for the film is Adam's workplace, LoopFinance, where soft, cold, fluorescent lighting keeps the entire place looking sterile and unpleasant. Heightening the effect of LoopFinance's lifeless atmosphere is the contrast with other scenes.



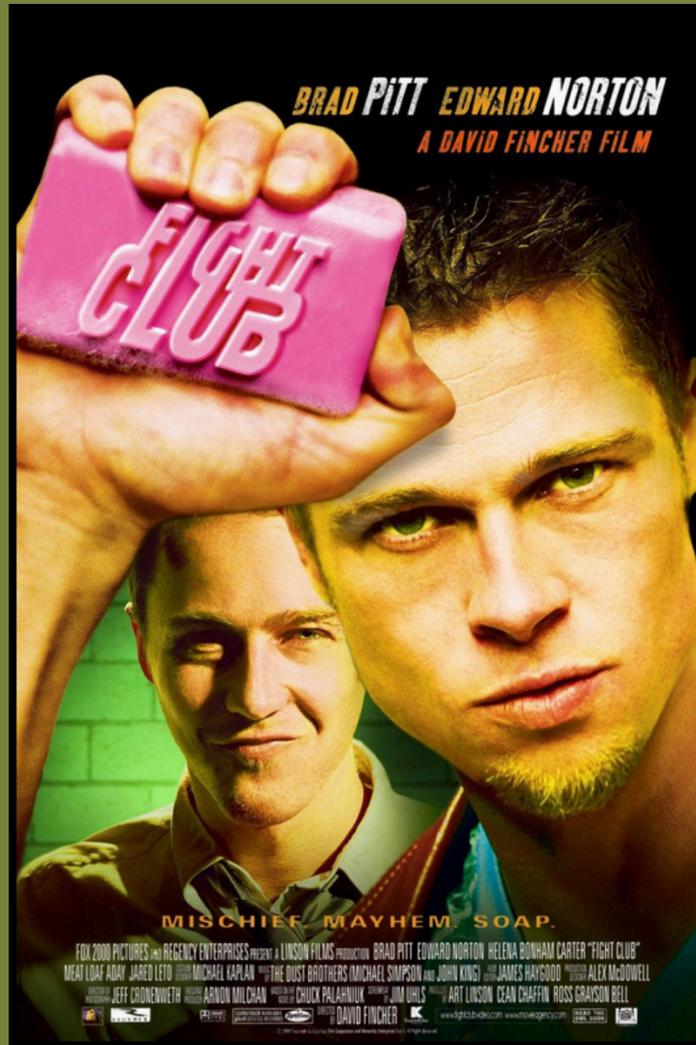
PRODUCTION PLAN & TIMELINE

- Shooting will take place in the second half of 2026, all located within the Perth metropolitan area.
- We're targeting a completion date of mid 2027, followed by a festival run.
- Specifics to come!

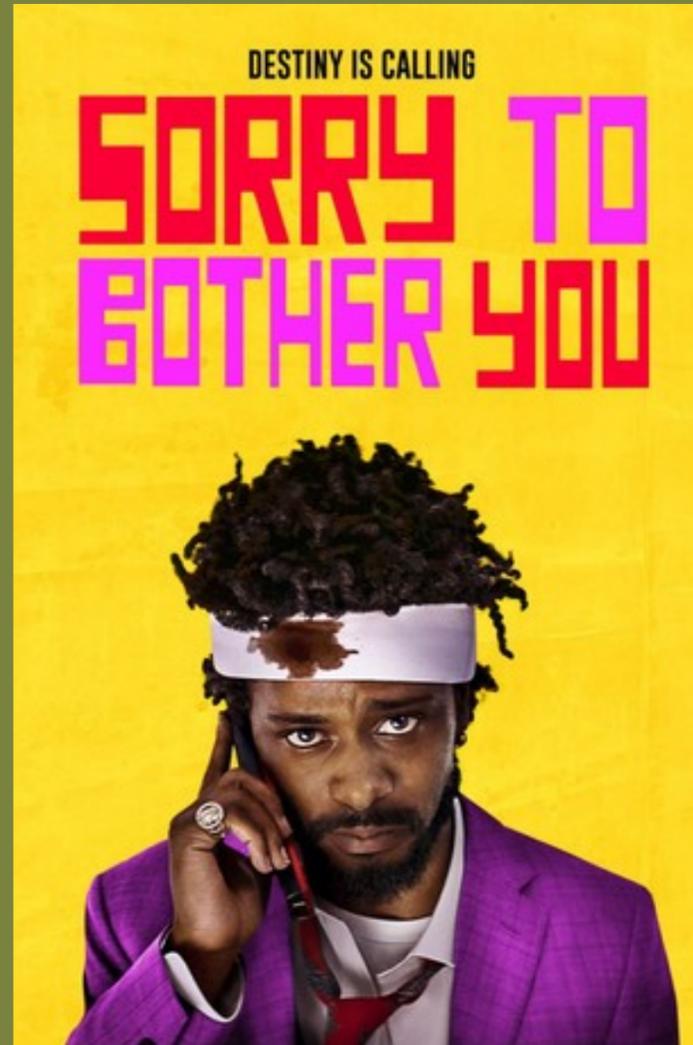
Being a low budget film, we aim to hire up and coming actors and crew consisting of fellow alumni and students we know. We're aiming to use our budget constraints to inform our style. The idea is our constraints will promote creativity, rather than inhibiting it.



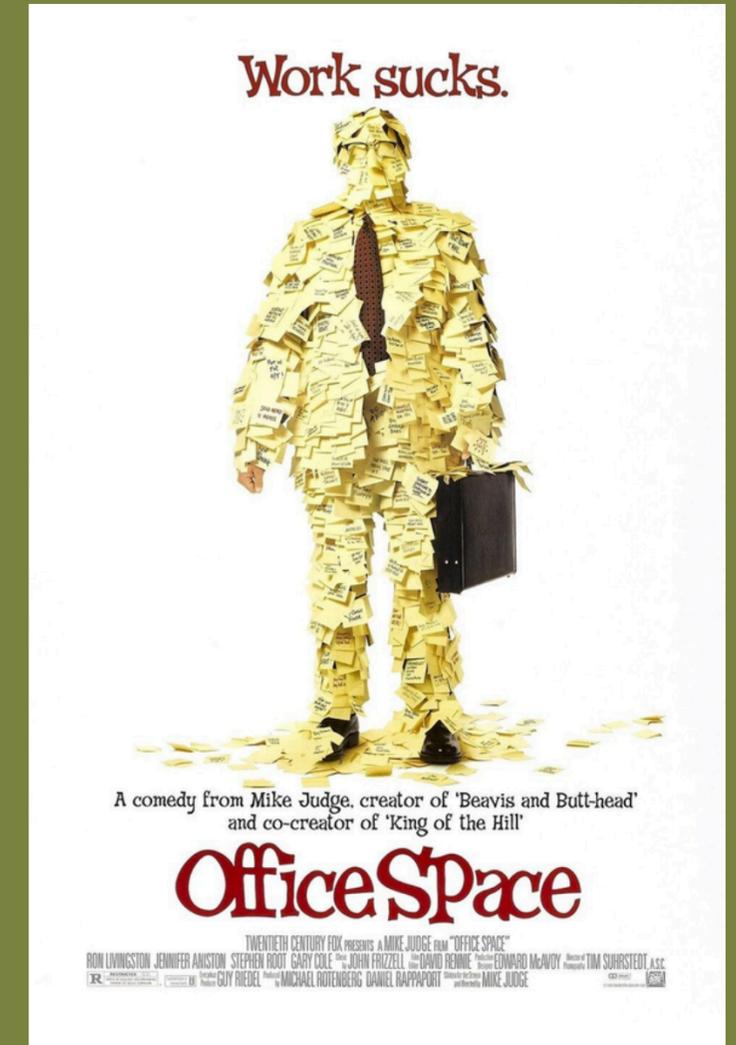
COMPARABLE FILMS & SIMILARITIES



Features a disillusioned office-bound protagonist who keeps a running inner-monologue. Themes of extremism and rebellion. Story descends into chaos quickly.



A struggling telemarketer protagonist thrust into rebellion. Criticism of capitalism and corporate exploitation. Story escalates from workplace comedy into a chaotic social commentary.



An uninspired employee decides to make a change. Satirises corporate culture and bureaucracy. Small acts of defiance spiral into a risky workplace scheme.

THANK YOU FOR READING

Get in touch!

contact@debtsOfthedead.info

Check us out on Instagram!

@lopezhamiltonproductions

See the website!

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