



CITI OF  
BOOKS

# HOLLYWOOD MOVIE TREATMENT



Drama/Thriller

## **Logline**

When a shrewd Western businessman ventures into China to capitalize on the allure of cheap labor, he must confront cultural clashes, ethical quandaries, and personal sacrifices, forcing him to question the true price of success in a land where business isn't just about profits but also about survival.

## **Synopsis:**

In the bustling world of global business, John Harding stands as a seasoned entrepreneur known for his astute decisions and relentless pursuit of profits. Having achieved considerable success in his home country, John sets his sights on expanding his manufacturing empire into China, enticed by the allure of cheap labor and vast market potential. Armed with ambition and a carefully crafted plan, he embarks on a journey that will test his resilience, ethics, and understanding of a culture vastly different from his own.

As John steps off the plane into the vibrant chaos of Shanghai, he is immediately struck by the sheer scale and dynamism of the Chinese business landscape. Accompanied by his trusted advisor, Sarah Chen, a Chinese-American with a deep understanding of both Western and Eastern business practices, John dives headfirst into negotiations with local officials and potential business partners.

However, John's initial enthusiasm soon encounters the stark realities of doing business in China. Cultural nuances that he once brushed aside as trivialities now loom large, threatening to derail his carefully laid plans. From the concept of time, where a meeting scheduled for noon could span several hours, to the importance of building *guanxi* (relationships) before discussing business matters, John finds himself navigating unfamiliar waters with increasing trepidation.

One of John's first challenges arises during a meeting with a potential Chinese partner, Mr. Liang, whose booming manufacturing operation could be a valuable asset to John's expansion plans. Despite Sarah's warnings about the significance of face-saving and indirect communication, John's direct and assertive approach inadvertently offends Mr. Liang, jeopardizing the entire partnership.

As John struggles to mend the fractured relationship with Mr. Liang, he faces another dilemma within his own company. Back home, rumors swirl about the ethical implications of outsourcing jobs to China, with concerns raised about labor conditions and environmental impact. John must navigate the delicate balance between profit margins and corporate responsibility, grappling with the weight of his decisions on both sides of the globe.



Meanwhile, personal challenges add another layer of complexity to John's journey. His family, accustomed to the comforts of their affluent lifestyle, struggles to adapt to the cultural and social differences in China. John's wife, Emily, finds herself isolated in a foreign land, while their teenage daughter, Mia, rebels against the upheaval, craving the familiarity of home.

Amidst these challenges, John finds an unlikely ally in Mr. Wu, a seasoned Chinese businessman with a deep respect for traditional values and a keen understanding of the intricate web of Chinese bureaucracy. Through Mr. Wu's guidance, John begins to unravel the complexities of *guanxi* and learns the art of indirect communication, slowly rebuilding trust with Mr. Liang and forging new connections within the local community.

As months pass and John's manufacturing plant takes shape, he witnesses firsthand the resilience and work ethic of his Chinese employees. Inspired by their dedication, he implements fair labor practices, ensuring that his workers are treated with respect and dignity.

However, just as John begins to find his footing in China, unforeseen challenges arise. A sudden change in government regulations threatens to disrupt his operations, while tensions with neighboring businesses escalate into fierce competition. John must rely on all his wit, resilience, and newfound understanding of the "Chinese way" to navigate these turbulent waters and secure his foothold in the fiercely competitive market.

"A White Man's China" is a compelling tale of ambition, cultural exploration, and the transformative power of understanding and respect in the world of global business. It shines a light on the complexities and challenges of cross-cultural interactions, reminding us that success is not just about profits but also about forging meaningful connections and leaving a positive impact on the communities we operate in.

## **Premise**

"A White Man's China" delves deep into the world of international business, focusing on John Harding, a successful entrepreneur from the West, as he ventures into the complexities of expanding his manufacturing empire into China. The premise of the story revolves around John's ambitious pursuit of profits, juxtaposed against the intricate cultural nuances, ethical dilemmas, and personal challenges he encounters along the way.

At the core of the premise is John's decision to capitalize on the economic advantages offered by China, particularly its abundant and relatively inexpensive labor force. With his eye on tapping into the vast market potential of the region and leveraging cost-effective production, John sees China as the next frontier for his business expansion.

However, the story quickly unfolds to reveal the multifaceted challenges that await John in China. The cultural landscape presents a significant hurdle, as John grapples with understanding and navigating Chinese business customs, social etiquette, and communication styles. From the concept of time, where schedules are fluid and meetings often stretch beyond their allotted times, to the importance of building *guanxi* (relationships) before diving into business discussions, John finds himself in unfamiliar territory.

This cultural clash forms the backbone of the story, highlighting the misunderstandings, faux pas, and challenges that arise as John attempts to forge partnerships, negotiate deals, and establish his manufacturing presence in China. Each interaction with local officials, business partners, and employees becomes a learning experience for John, forcing him to reassess his approach, adapt his strategies, and gain a deeper appreciation for Chinese customs and values.

Amidst these professional challenges, the story delves into John's personal journey. His family's relocation to China brings its own set of struggles, as his wife Emily and daughter Mia grapple with cultural adjustment, isolation, and the upheaval of their familiar lives. This subplot adds emotional depth to the narrative, exploring themes of family dynamics, identity, and the impact of cross-cultural experiences on personal relationships.

As John navigates the intricacies of business and personal life in China, ethical dilemmas come to the forefront. Questions about labor practices, environmental sustainability, and corporate responsibility arise, challenging John to reconcile his pursuit of profits with ethical considerations and societal impact.

Throughout the narrative arc, John's character undergoes transformation and growth. He learns valuable lessons about humility, empathy, and the importance of cultural sensitivity in business dealings. His relationships with Chinese counterparts evolve from initial misunderstandings to mutual respect and collaboration, showcasing the power of genuine connection and understanding in bridging cultural divides.

## **Theme**

"A White Man's China" explores the theme of cultural adaptation and understanding in the realm of international business. It delves into the complexities of navigating unfamiliar customs, communication styles, and social norms when expanding into foreign markets. Through the protagonist John Harding's journey, the theme emphasizes the importance of humility, empathy, and open-mindedness in building successful cross-cultural relationships. It highlights the transformative power of embracing diversity, learning from cultural differences, and bridging gaps to foster mutual respect and collaboration in global business ventures.



Another prominent theme in the story is the ethical dilemma faced by businesses operating in foreign territories. "A White Man's China" delves into questions of corporate responsibility, environmental sustainability, and labor practices in the context of international expansion. It challenges the notion of profit driven motives versus ethical considerations, urging characters and audiences alike to reflect on the broader impact of business decisions on society, the environment, and the well-being of employees and local communities. Through nuanced exploration of these themes, the film encourages critical thinking about the intersection of business, culture, and ethics in a globalized world.

### **Tone & Style**

The tone of "A White Man's China" balances between light-hearted comedy and thought-provoking drama. It incorporates humor to navigate cultural misunderstandings and moments of cultural clash, providing levity amidst the challenges faced by the characters. The comedic elements arise from the cultural differences, language barriers, and the fish-out-of-water experiences of the protagonist, John Harding, as he navigates the intricacies of doing business in China. However, underlying the humor is a deeper exploration of serious themes such as cultural sensitivity, adaptation, and the complexities of international business.

Stylistically, the film combines visually engaging scenes of bustling Chinese cities, vibrant markets, and traditional customs with intimate character-driven moments. It employs a mix of dialogue-driven interactions, visual storytelling, and reflective narrative elements to convey the emotional and intellectual journey of the characters. The style seamlessly blends Western and Eastern cinematic influences, incorporating elements of both cultures to create a visually rich and thematically resonant narrative that appeals to a global audience.

### **Target Audience**

The target audience for "A White Man's China" is broad, appealing to both Western and Eastern viewers interested in cross-cultural experiences and business themes. Primarily, the film targets individuals interested in international business, entrepreneurship, and cultural exchange. Professionals in these fields, including business students, executives, and entrepreneurs, will find the film engaging due to its exploration of the intricacies and challenges of conducting business in a foreign country, particularly in China, a global economic powerhouse.

Additionally, the film appeals to a general audience interested in comedy-drama films that offer a mix of humor, heart, and cultural insights. Viewers who enjoy light-hearted comedies with underlying messages of cultural understanding and personal growth will find "A White Man's China" captivating. The film's blend of humor, drama, and cross-cultural exploration makes it suitable for a wide range of viewers, from young adults to older audiences, who appreciate films that entertain while also offering thought-provoking themes.

## Character(s) description

A detailed character descriptions for the key characters in "A White Man's China":

### 1 - John Harding

- Role: Protagonist
- Description: John Harding is a seasoned entrepreneur from the Western world with a sharp business acumen and a relentless drive for success. He is ambitious, decisive, and always seeks opportunities for expansion. John is the central character whose journey forms the core of the story as he ventures into the complexities of doing business in China. Initially confident in his abilities, John faces challenges that test not only his business skills but also his understanding of cultural nuances and ethical considerations.

### 2 - Sarah Chen

- Role: Supporting Character
- Description: Sarah Chen is a Chinese-American business advisor and John's trusted confidante throughout his journey in China. She brings a unique perspective with her bicultural background, seamlessly blending Western business strategies with Eastern cultural insights. Sarah is diplomatic, knowledgeable, and serves as John's guide in navigating the intricacies of Chinese business customs. She plays a pivotal role in helping John understand the importance of guanxi (relationships), indirect communication, and cultural sensitivity in building successful partnerships in China.

### 3 - Mr. Liang

- Role: Antagonist/Obstacle
- Description: Mr. Liang is a prominent Chinese business magnate and potential partner for John's expansion into China. Initially, he appears as a formidable ally, but his character takes on shades of antagonism as misunderstandings and cultural clashes arise between him and John. Mr. Liang's reservations about John's approach to business in China create tension and obstacles that John must navigate to achieve his goals.

### 4 - Emily Harding

- Role: Supporting Character
- Description: Emily Harding is John's wife, representing the personal side of his journey in China. She is accustomed to a comfortable lifestyle in the Western world and initially struggles to adapt to the cultural differences and challenges of living in China. Emily's character adds depth to the story by highlighting the personal sacrifices and adjustments required when embarking on a global business venture.



## **5 - Mia Harding**

- Role: Supporting Character
- Description: Mia Harding is John and Emily's teenage daughter, providing a youthful perspective on their family's experience in China. She rebels against the upheaval of moving to a foreign country, longing for the familiarity of home. Mia's character adds a generational contrast and emotional complexity to the narrative, showcasing the impact of cultural transitions on family dynamics.

## **6 - Mr. Wu**

- Role: Mentor/Advisor
- Description: Mr. Wu is a seasoned Chinese businessman with a deep understanding of traditional values and the intricacies of Chinese bureaucracy. He serves as a mentor and advisor to John, offering valuable insights into building relationships, navigating government regulations, and understanding local business dynamics. Mr. Wu's character represents wisdom, experience, and the importance of learning from local experts in a foreign business environment.

**These characters collectively drive the narrative of "A White Man's China," showcasing the complexities, humor, and growth that arise from cross-cultural business ventures. Each character brings unique perspectives and challenges, contributing to the film's exploration of cultural diversity and business dynamics.**