

It's How You Have To Play The Game

by
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Logline:

An office employee, caught in a power struggle, is unaware of her misuse of power until she has a dream.

FADE IN:

INT. OFFICE RESTROOM - DAY

RUTH, (28) young and well-groomed, stands in front of a mirror pumping herself up. She takes an exaggerated deep breath and turns to leave.

INT. MEETING ROOM - DAY

Ruth enters. Sitting at the table is--

FAHAD, (34) a shy, thin, small man with papers and a pen carefully placed on the table in front of him.

FAHAD

Hello Ruth.

She finally notices him. She fumbles with her laptop on the table.

RUTH

Oh, hey Fahad.

FAHAD

I trust that you got my email with the updated data.

She sets up her laptop for a presentation and doesn't hear him.

Fahad wants to speak up again, but doesn't.

She gets the projector running and it shows the first slide of her powerpoint.

The door opens again. In comes--

MICHAEL, (26) a young know-it-all hot shot. He holds identical items as Ruth. He sets them down in Ruth's way. With him enters--

MR. STONE, (58) with a plump face and serious demeanor. He moves with authority and power.

RUTH

(to Michael)

What are you doing?

MICHAEL

I'm setting up for my presentation.

RUTH

Mr. Stone, I'm giving the presentation.

MR. STONE

Michael asked me last night at the lodge if he could present and I agreed.

RUTH

But we agreed prior to that, that I would be the one to present.

MR. STONE

It doesn't matter. You both have the same data. Besides, he's already prepared his presentation. Let him present, Ruth.

Ruth slowly unplugs her laptop, as Michael takes her place. She sits down at the table next to Fahad and holds back tears. Fahad notices and scoots his chair an inch away from her.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

So as you can see from the data I compiled...

INT. RUTH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ruth is dressed for bed and holds a large bowl of ice cream. Her eyes are heavy and swollen from crying. A clock on the night stand shows 12:37 am.

RUTH

(sassy voice)

We agreed at the lodge. The men's only lodge. So poop on you Ruth. No credit for your work. I don't even want to see it.

She sighs, wipes her eyes and takes a big bite.

RUTH (CONT'D)

(with mouth full)

It's not fair God! It's just not fair.

She sets the bowl on the night stand next to her, lies down and crosses her arms. Her eyes begin to droop, then close.

DREAM SEQUENCE - INT. - DREAM ROOM - DAY

Ruth lies on a psychiatrist's couch and opens her eyes. She looks around at the endless white room. Sitting near her is--

GRANDMA, (67) with a twinkle in her eye and a smile that says, "I love you." She is knitting.

RUTH

Grandma?!?

GRANDMA

This is a dream honey.

RUTH

Oh.

GRANDMA

You had a rough day, pumpkin.

RUTH

You don't even know the half of it--

GRANDMA

Actually, I do Ruthie dear, because this is a dream.

RUTH

Oh.

GRANDMA

Let's go on a trip!

RUTH

A trip?

INT. RUTH'S OFFICE - DAY

Office Ruth sits at her desk typing. Behind her is Dream Ruth with Grandma.

GRANDMA

This is you. Isn't this fun?

RUTH

It's kinda weird.

GRANDMA

I'm so proud of you by the way. You've grown up so strong and smart. And you're so pretty too.

RUTH
Thank you Grandma. I really miss you.

GRANDMA
So what are you doing there?

RUTH
Working. This is where I work--

GRANDMA
I know all that honey. What are you
doing right there?

RUTH
I'm writing a report.

GRANDMA
Using Fahad's data?

RUTH
Yeah.

GRANDMA
And who's taking all the credit?

Ruth, shocked, looks up at Grandma.

INT. MICHAEL'S OFFICE - DAY

Office Michael sits at his desk typing away. Dream Ruth
and Grandma stand behind him.

RUTH
Well it's not wrong what I'm doing--

Ruth notices the location change.

GRANDMA
What's he doing?

Ruth looks over his shoulder.

RUTH
He's stealing credit for my work!

GRANDMA
And that's different how, muffin?

RUTH
Cause he's a slimeball. That's why.

INT. FAHAD'S HOME - NIGHT

Fahad sits with his WIFE. In tears, she's MOS complaining to him. He tries to explain himself. Dream Ruth stands nearby with Grandma.

RUTH
Why are we here?

GRANDMA
See them?

RUTH
Yeah...

GRANDMA
He's trying to explain to his wife why he didn't get the raise last review. It said that although his work has proven accurate, it has never rendered usable data.

RUTH
Well, that's not true.

GRANDMA
I know that. He knows that.

RUTH
I use it all the time. So does Michael.

GRANDMA
And who takes the credit for it?

RUTH
...we do.

Grandma gives her a look. Ruth looks away.

INT. DREAM ROOM - DAY

Ruth sits on the couch across from Grandma. Grandma now holds a finished knit shirt. For an 11 year old.

Grandma holds it up and looks at Ruth.

GRANDMA
I'd forgotten you've grown. Haha.

She sets it down. Ruth thinks.

RUTH

It's not the same. Mom told me that we need to be winners. And winners get ahead. If he wants to get ahead, he needs to work hard just like the rest of us.

GRANDMA

Doesn't he?

RUTH

...maybe harder now that I think of it. I didn't even realize he ever went home.

GRANDMA

So why shouldn't he get credit?

RUTH

He does! We all give him credit.

Grandma gives her a look.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Don't give me that look Grandma. I'm not a kid anymore.

Grandma intensifies.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Ugg. Fine-fine-fine. No. But if he gets some of the credit, what will be left for me? I work *so* hard and they don't see any of it!

Grandma nods.

INT. RUTH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ruth lies in her bed. Grandma sits in a chair next to her. Ruth looks around, then at Grandma.

GRANDMA

It's tough.

RUTH

Ye-aah.

GRANDMA

Was Jesus powerful?

RUTH

Yeah, He did miracles, healed people, rose from the dead...

GRANDMA

And He was humble. He continually gave credit to Father God too. When He spoke, people listened. He loved AND commanded attention. People gave it to Him.

RUTH

That's what I'm trying to do! But it's not working.

GRANDMA

But when you are, are you loving your neighbor? Are you willing to be a servant?

RUTH

That's different. I'm trying to get ahead. This is business. I'm not God. I can't do it all.

GRANDMA

Can't you do all things through Christ who gives you strength?

RUTH

Yeah, but-

GRANDMA

Are you saying the bible isn't true?

RUTH

(exhales deeply)

No. It's just too hard.

GRANDMA

Hard? Definitely. Too hard? No.

RUTH

You don't know what it's like to be a woman in the business world. It's always an uphill battle. Someone's always wanting to put you down.

GRANDMA

Does that mean you should do the same thing to others? Does other people's evil justify yours?

RUTH

Ouch. Easy Grandma.

GRANDMA

The world is filled with evil. We are commanded to live above that.

(MORE)

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

If we play the games of the oppressors,
what does that say about us? Who are we
becoming?

RUTH

But if we don't play the game, how can we
win?

GRANDMA

Play a different game. Ruth, you're
smart and talented. You know how to work
hard.

RUTH

But if I just work hard, someone's going
to steal my credit.

GRANDMA

Jesus always loved, but He wasn't a
pushover. He stood up for Himself many
times. When the leaders challenged Him,
He never backed down.

RUTH

But He was Jesus.

GRANDMA

And who lives inside of you?

RUTH

(reluctantly)

Jesus.

Grandma gives her a smile.

GRANDMA

Do the impossible. Live from a place of
love. Be diligent, be a good worker, and
shine for the kingdom wherever you go.

RUTH

It's not that easy Grandma.

GRANDMA

I didn't say easy. Jesus never said
easy. But He is with you, honey. And
He'll help you.

Ruth looks at her with concern in her eyes.

END DREAM SEQUENCE.

INT. RUTH'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Ruth opens her eyes and sits up.

RUTH
(looking up)
So You're going to help me, huh?

She pulls the covers back to get up.

INT. MR. STONE'S OFFICE - DAY

Mr. Stone sits at his desk, works.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

MR. STONE
Come in.

Ruth and Fahad enter and sit.

RUTH
Mr. Stone, Fahad found a new, more
efficient way, to take raw data and make
it usable.

Mr. Stone looks at him in a new light.

RUTH (CONT'D)
He's been using our system of conversion
on the data. Then--

MR. STONE
(to Fahad)
How long have you been doing this?

FAHAD
Since I started, sir.

MR. STONE
Really?

RUTH
Yes. His work is very solid. We've been
using his data.

MR. STONE
You have?

RUTH
Yes, sir.

MR. STONE

Interesting. Continue.

RUTH

He created a program that organizes the data so much better. And not only that, well, Fahad, you tell him.

Mr. Stone looks at him. Fahad's nerves begin to fail. Ruth give him a reassuring smile.

FAHAD

It makes it easy to compare it to other data sets.

RUTH

Which is helpful because...

She waits for him to finish her sentence.

FAHAD

With the comparison, one can predict future outcomes by 98% accuracy.

MR. STONE

Really?

RUTH

Yeah.

FAHAD

We tested it using past data.

MR. STONE

You did that on your own, huh? I'm definitely intrigued. Next meeting, I'd like you to present it. Share your findings with Michael. I'd like to hear his take on it.

RUTH

With your permission sir, we're prepared to share Fahad's findings with you now.

He thinks it over. Looks at his watch.

MR. STONE

Okay. Go ahead.

Ruth's and Fahad's faces beam as they put a laptop on his desk.

FADE OUT.

