

Whatever Happened to Amanda?

written by

Dean Hodsfray

11 East Street, Bicester, Oxfordshire, OX26 2EY
07528 924361
deanhodsfray-screenwriting@gmx.co.uk

FADE IN

INT. BARN ROOM, CHEQUERS PUB - EVENING

AMANDA is a 40-year-old wannabe author, she has been a member of a writing group called West Oxfordshire Writers for several years. She is sitting on a chair shuffling through punched pockets, each with a copy of her CURRENT MANUSCRIPT.

She shuffles nervously in her chair as if coming round from a daydream. A new member of the group FRANCIS is in his mid 40s enters the room. Francis is almost goth-looking, wearing a kind of ragged yet smart jeans and a T-shirt Amanda thinks she has met him before, but she shrugs it off.

AMANDA

Oh hello, I am Amanda is this your first time here?

FRANCIS

Oh, hi there is this where West Oxford Writers meet?

AMANDA

Hi, yes this is where WOW meets. You are?

Amanda gets up and greets Francis she holds out her hand and Francis recoils in horror.

FRANCIS

Whoa there, please don't touch me.

AMANDA

Okay, Sorry... I don't know your name

FRANCIS

I'm Francis I have OCD and this is spinning me out.

AMANDA

Right okay, so what do you write?

FRANCIS

I write spiritual books.

AMANDA

(feigning interest)
Oh really, That's...
(beat)

Interesting. So do you have anything published?

FRANCIS

Nah, not yet. Oh, it's a bit chilly in here. Is it usually like this?

Francis shivers a little and does his jacket up.

AMANDA

It's OK Francis when the others get here it will warm up. I am sure.

Amanda sits back down and holds her punched pockets to her chest. Francis goes to sit down on the opposite side of the room, but before he does he pulls out an antibacterial baby wipes and wipes the chair down.

Francis pulls out another baby wipe and wipes the chair over again. He then sits down. He just stares at Amanda and makes her feel uncomfortable.

FRANCIS

So Amanda, is it? What's your gig then?

AMANDA

(offended)
I'm sorry

FRANCIS

I mean, what are you doing here? Don't you have somewhere better to be?

AMANDA

I am here to share my manuscript. It is about a dead person, a ladies man not knowing he is dead. He gets killed by his last conquest's evil boyfriend, he then kills them and commits suicide.

FRANCIS

(feigning interest)
Oh OK, I see. Very intense!

Amanda picks up on his lack of interest and coughs. She picks up her bag and leaves to go to the ladies toilet.

AMANDA

Excuse me, I'll be back in a minute. Nature calls.

Francis just raises his hand as a gesture of farewell.

INT. LADIES TOILET, CHEQUERS PUB - MOMENTS LATER

Amanda feeling uneasy goes to the toilets. Amanda can see that one of the cubicles is out of order. She decides to hide in that one.

AMANDA (V.O.)

I do not know what that Francis' problem is. He is weird. Anyway after I get the feedback from the others I'm gone.

(beat)

I hope Mable is not here tonight either. I do not like her. She somehow always makes the meetings about her and her stories. They are not even that good all mushy and stuff.

She pulls her dress down to straighten it and shrugs. She picks up her bag and manuscript and leaves the toilet.

INT. BARN ROOM, CHEQUERS PUB - MOMENTS LATER

Amanda strides into the Barn room expecting everybody to look at her and welcome her with open arms. The reality is that much different, there is a cacophony of voices having their conversations and nobody even acknowledges her.

She sits despondently at the back of the room. As she passes Mable looks straight through her. Her only consolation is Francis mouthing I'm sorry.

All the voices slowly calm down as DAVID (50s) stands up gesturing his hands in a downward motion

DAVID

Hello everyone, settle down let's get this meeting started. But first I have some devastating news regarding our friend Amanda.

AMANDA (V.O.)

Has he found out I'm leaving? Does he know about me and Mable's feud? I have had enough of this.

Amanda goes to stand up and as she is about to cough she notices Francis shaking his head and gesturing her to sit down. Something compels her to listen.

She watches David intently blocking everyone out she notices he has a plastic folder with all of her manuscripts in it that mirrors her own.

DAVID

Thank you. Before we get started I have an announcement. It is with great sadness and sorrow that I must inform you that our good friend Amanda has died.

There were murmurs of surprise and gasps of sadness.

CHRIS
How did she die?

DAVID
Well, According to her family, Very peacefully, she fell asleep on her writing desk just after she had finished her manuscript and never woke up.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. A WRITING DESK, AMANDA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

SUBTITLE - TWO NIGHTS AGO

Amanda is sitting at her desk after just printing her manuscript out to show at the next WOW meeting. She closes her laptop, then suddenly she grabs her left arm and puts her head on the desk. She cannot call out, it is as if her voice has been stolen.

She then suddenly finds herself looking at her desk from the other side of the bed. ANN-MARIE (25) her daughter comes in.

ANN-MARIE
Mum, I'm off to bed good night.

Ann-Marie then goes into Amanda's bedroom and approaches her mum, she touches her shoulder but nothing happens.

ANN-MARIE (CONT'D)
Mum, stop messing around I'm off to bed, don't stay up too late.

Ann-Marie touches Amanda's shoulder again but no response so she feels for a pulse. Ann-Marie gets straight on her mobile to phone the ambulance service.

Amanda goes to turn away, but she cannot watch anymore, she hears Francis speaking.

FRANCIS (O.S.)
It's ok Amanda, you are in a better place now. It is always darkest before the dawn.

INT. BARN ROOM, CHEQUERS PUB - EVENING

Amanda is back in the Barn room of the Chequers moments after the announcement of her death. Francis is sitting next to her holding her hand.

David is still standing addressing the group Amanda can see there are tears and looks of surprise on everyone's faces.

She stares intently at Mable her eyes are streaming with tears

FRANCIS

It's ok we will wait a little longer and then we can go.

AMANDA

Go where?

FRANCIS

All will be revealed, just wait and see!

DAVID

So that is how Amanda passed. I have a copy of her manuscript and as a gift to her family, I will edit it for free and publish it Posthumously.

Amanda goes to get up and leave but Francis holds her hand firmly.

FRANCIS

Not yet!

DAVID

So does anyone want to share anything about Amanda?

MABLE (50s) gets up wipes her eyes and starts to speak with a cracked voice.

AMANDA (V.O.)

Oh, here we go again its going to be all about her.

MABLE

Yes, I would like to say a few things.

(beat)

It may be common knowledge that Amanda and I did not see eye to eye on a lot of things but she was a founding member of WOW

(beat)

When I joined, she challenged my writing and in that instance has made me a better writer. God bless Amanda, may she rest in peace.

DAVID

Thank you, Mable. Well if you both did not get on you hid it well.

There was a small group chuckle.

FRANCIS
Are you ready to go now?

AMANDA
Yes, I think so.

Amanda and Francis walk hand in hand into a white bright room.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
I know you from somewhere but for
the life of me I do not know where

FRANCIS
I think you dreamed of me when you
were 16.

AMANDA
I used to be into EMO music when I
was younger. Come to think about it
I had a boyfriend called Frank.

FRANCIS
Yeah, I know I had a hard life and
after you moved on it got harder.
So now I help troubled souls
Passover.

FADE OUT.

THE END