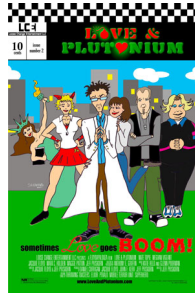


# I LOVE & PLUTONIUM

www.LoveAndPlutonium.com



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

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*Love & Plutonium* is a film I absolutely had to direct. Seriously. If I didn't direct it, my then-girlfriend (now wife) Jacquie Floyd would have left me. Which didn't leave me with much of a choice!

When she showed me her script for a stage play involving a mad scientist who lives in his mother's basement, I was intrigued. As we discussed it, we determined that we could get wilder, crazier and funnier if we shot it as a feature film. So we wrote. And adapted. And expanded. Until finally we ended up with the script which you can now see portrayed as the 85-minute feature film *Love & Plutonium*.

At its heart, *Love & Plutonium* is a romantic comedy, with the frilly adornments of a comic book/superhero world. What really interested me were the many love connections there were to play with, both romantically and brotherly: Dr. Medlo and Holly, Hank and Little Liberty, Hank and Dr. Medlo, Dr. Medlo and his mother, Justice Kitten and Dr. Medlo, Justice Kitten and Little Liberty. And of course, the Little Girl and her parents. All these characters have such rich personalities individually, but when coupled with their "love" interests, they just seem to fly off the page and screen.

In a romantic comedy, one needs to balance the comedy with warmth, understanding and a touch of drama. And that's where the Little Girl comes in. She creates the superhero world of Suburbiaville as a means to escape her real-life world in

which her parents are constantly fighting. In fact, the story becomes a kind of morality play to her parents, who are, of course, Hank and Little Liberty. She wants to tell them that even if they discover they're different people—even as different as night and day, black and white, good and evil—they can still work through their differences and find love and joy and happiness. She symbolizes this by bringing the Dark Angel and the Good Angel together whenever Hank and Little Liberty are together alone.

When we finally made the realization that the story would be told by the Little Girl, through the book she was drawing for her parents, it was liberating. We made a conscious decision to show as few super powers as possible. The Little Girl was focused more on building and mending relationships than she was with having supervillains blow things up. (I think that's a lesson that can be applied to our real lives as well!) We shot everything with a wide angle lens, except for the opening and closing scenes with the Little Girl. This distorted the edges of the frame just a bit, and when combined with some unconventional camera angles, lent to the idea that we're watching a story conceived, written and performed by the imagination of the Little Girl.

The Dick & Bob sportscaster sequences illustrate how the Little Girl sees her parents when they fight—a sort of skybox view of her mom and dad. She's not directly involved in the conflict, and yet she's an integral part of their relationship. She creates the Good vs. Evil battles in Suburbiaville to mirror her parents' disagreements, and yet these battles are not violent, just as her parents' arguments never devolve into violence. She injects herself into the middle of the action as a sports commentator, pointing out silly behavior and hoping to make a difference through her logical view of an illogical world—and ultimately succeeding in the end.

As the title implies, the theme of the movie is two-sided: love and work—which in this case is world domination by way of radioactive material. I wanted to reflect that dichotomy as frequently as possible, which is why we made such wide use of colors in the film. Dr. Medlo's lab is lit with greens and reds to reflect both his deep-seated love

of evil and his blossoming love of Holly—in fact, it almost splits his lab in half in some shots. The Secret Hideout bar is darker, and yet reds are still present, as every bad guy has a softer side somewhere. Hank wears a dark shirt while he's obsessed only with his service to Dr. Medlo, but he wears lighter colors when he gets serious about Little Liberty. The somewhat harsh lighting also accents the comic book motif we were trying to create.

I wanted a more modern feel to the music throughout the movie, something that would fit more easily within the confines of the Little Girl's mind and the crazy world of Suburbiaville. Comedy is generally not a venue for lush orchestrations anyway, so we were fortunate to be able to collaborate with two people who use very modern instruments to create their music. Katie Held performed most of the synthesized ambient music on a Clavinova, and Glenn Poorman added the rest on Chapman Stick and piano. The featured songs blend comedy and rock and roll, like any good comic book should. The main song, "Living @ Home" by Throwing Toasters, is about a grown man living in his mother's basement. It actually inspired my wife to begin writing the script. And I wrote "Sometimes Love Goes Boom" specifically for the movie. It's a poppy little number that basically chronicles Hank and Little Liberty's relationship.

The making of *Love & Plutonium* was a wonderful experience for me. It brought me closer to my future wife, helped me grow as a filmmaker, and introduced me to an incredible group of people who helped create the world of Suburbiaville. My hope is that the story of *Love & Plutonium* will help people realize that, though sometimes love can go boom, it's worth the time and effort to put it back together again.

Jeff Priskorn

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