FEATURE FILM CONCEPT

CHIAROSCURO

By
Matt Schenk

An unfulfilled artist thinks an accident has robbed him of his ability to create, when in truth, he's actually let his true artistic side out. However, the result is far darker than he could ever have dreamed.

Vincent Palaci is a mildly successful artist, pigeonholed into designing the kind of mundane paintings bought up by offices, waiting rooms, and senior citizen care facilities. He wants to create works that inspire, but he doesn't even have the ability to inspire himself.

Vincent's girlfriend, Emily, has remained by his side, but Vincent's growing unhappiness has her questioning whether or not they really belong together. Emily, and Vincent's best friend, Brian's attempts to get Vincent out of his slump prove fruitless. In a wild attempt to create something unique, Vincent takes a spill from a ladder and finds himself in the hospital.

When he awakes he is given devastating news: his head trauma appears to have impacted the sections of his brain that are responsible for creativity. As he tries to cope with this startling revelation, he realizes that one skill has actually improved: his ability to sketch. While he can't create images of his own, he can look at any tableau and sketch it perfectly, down to the smallest detail.

Vincent begins to draw what he sees around him, but finds it not holding his attention. When he draws a wounded soldier he sees on the evening news, he begins to formulate a plan. He teams up with a crime scene photographer with a lot of very dark and disturbing images on file and amazingly Vincent's artistic fires are once again lit. He begins to seek out more existing imagery to sketch, but it proves to be insufficient to quench his artistic palette.

It is at this point that Vincent realizes the true artist within him has been set free, and he is powerless to stop this doppelganger from creating his own horrific works of art. When Vincent begins staging his own scenes to sketch, a series of murders turns him into the number one suspect. With a detective, Frank Pierson, growing suspicious of Vincent, it's left to Brian and Emily to help Vincent remember who he was, before his new self takes over for good.

This psychological thriller is part ***American Psycho*** and part ***Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde***. Conceived as a low budget suspense thriller direct to DVD, the idea is for a gritty look and heightened shock value targeted towards a demographic composed primarily of young males, 18 to 45.