

KARAOKE KID

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PASS

Logline: A Korean family that owns a karaoke bar adopts a young girl who ends up helping them save their business.

Summary:

12 years prior to when the plot begins, KARI HOBBS (8) walks through MacArthur park alone at night. The park is filled with homeless people and drug addicts. Scared, she comforts herself by listening to “Come Sail Away” by Styx on a walkman. The scene turns into a large musical number with everyone in the park singing with Kari as she forgets about the danger she is in — until she is snapped back to reality when the ribbon of the tape spins out. Kari hears music coming from a distance and she walks to the Treble Lounge, a karaoke bar. She sneaks in through the kitchen and watches TRINITY (19) sing “I Put a Spell on You.” BEAST (30s), the bar bouncer comes up and interrogates the little girl as to why she’s there and KEN OKE (late 40s), the owner, comes up and covers for her. He lies to Beast and tells her that she is his niece. She stays for dinner and sits in the sound booth with Ken’s son, PATRICK (9). Patrick tells her that his dad likes to take in strays. Ken drops Kari off at the group home after she finishes her dinner.

Kari goes back to the Treble Lounge the next day. Ken takes her in and over the course of 10 years, Kari becomes part of the Oke family. As they grow up, Patrick and Kari develop feelings for one another, but she starts dating his best friend MARC (16 at the time we first meet him). Ken teaches Kari the ins and outs of producing a karaoke show, while ELLA (late 40s), Ken’s wife, treats her more and more as her own daughter. Ken teaches Kari the three reasons people do karaoke: they want a record deal, they want to feel like a star, or they understand the magic of music. Ken goes to the bank and discusses how much debt he is in — he uses the karaoke bar more as a way to give back to the community (free meals for homeless people if they sing) than as an actual business. In renovations, Ken accidentally sets up the club so it is optimal for sex workers to conduct business. With Kari’s help, they clean the place up. On Kari’s 18th birthday, the Oke family officially adopts her and gives her a room in the back of the club to live in. Ken leaves to bring the leftovers from their event to the homeless shelter, where he has a heart attack and dies.

Two years later, the Treble is still open, but all of the energy is gone. CEDRIC MADISON (50s) and MISS V (late 20s), representatives of Encore Entertainment, are submitting an offer of acquisition, which Ella, now running the bar with Kari, declines. They attempt to force Ella’s hand by sending the health inspector, which the club barely survives. Patrick is cooking new foods that he wants to put on the menu, but Ella is very adamant about keeping everything the way Ken left. Marc, having broken up with Kari and gone to college, returns and is now bragging about how worldly he is. Ella takes out another loan, sinking the Treble in even more debt. Everyone aware of how much trouble the business is in, they let two of the sex workers back in. They only eat and drink and sing, but when one of the men gets a little forceful with one of the

sex workers, FREDDIE (late 20s), breaks it up. Seeing this, Beast tells Kari that he is quitting to go to law school, comfortable that the Treble is in safe hands. That night was still the most profitable night the club had seen in some time. Everyone (except Ella) hatches a plan — after 10pm, they would send Ella home and they would allow sex workers to come in and entertain their clients, as long as they only sing, eat, and drink. Patrick would get to cook what he wants and the bar would make money.

Madison and Miss V make one more offer that is declined. Some of the sex workers push for Kari to work with them — only flirt and take the tip money. After some time, she agrees, but her drink gets spiked and ends up having to be rescued in the park. After imagining a conversation with Ken, Kari comes up with the idea to have one more event for the homeless and frame it as a goodbye party for the bar, but have it actually be a fundraiser. There would be a lot of press and hopefully celebrity traction because of the reputation the bar, and more importantly Ken, used to have. Patrick and Kari finally get together on the same night that Miss V sneaks into the bar and burns it down, having heard about the fundraiser.

The team moves the fundraiser to be in MacArthur park across the street. There is a huge turnout. Madison and Miss V show up and Miss V, having always been the less intense of the two, sings a song and is offered a record deal. Beast shows up, having graduated law school, and tells Kari that he applied the Treble Lounge for a business grant and for landmark status. With the money, the Treble would be clear from debt and the landmark prevents Encore from purchasing them. Everyone gets on stage and sings “Happy Ending” by Mika.

Comments:

While an incredibly fun read and having compelling characters and an interesting story, the plot and script have too many flaws to be recommended for consideration.

The lines of this script jump off the page. Everything is so easily visualized and the characters are strong enough to carry the long and clunky plot. What makes this different from films such as *Rock of Ages* is the dynamism of the cast and how there are much fewer characters, and therefore plotlines, to follow, allowing for the audience to invest more into the few that are presented.

That said, for a plot with so few characters and such a simple plot, there is no reason for this to be as long as it is. Whole characters can be cut out with little to no consequence to the story as a whole. What also remains unclear is what type of film this is supposed to be. While there is the intention of being a jukebox musical, which may be a hard sell, it is hard to tell whether this is supposed to be taken as a comedy or drama or both. The ending is also too easy. Everything gets wrapped up in a bow in a matter of a page or two and, while the payoff is satisfying and comical, feels rushed.

If this script were to go through a few more rewrites to really tighten and clean up the plot, this would be an instant recommendation, but despite how fun it is, it has too many issues to be considered.

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