

SCREENCRAFT

2022 CINEMATIC SHORT STORY COMPETITION

BORN TO BE ALIVE

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The voice in this story stands out among everything else because the many encounters that Michael experiences come off very personal and as if there is no one else better to tell this story. The writing itself is very detailed and poetic that it allows for strong visuals and storytelling. The setting is well established with the time period as well without having to make it very clear. Eye-candy locations like Studio 54 establish the livelihood of the story well and the ambiguity in the LGBT community does a lot for the story as well. Sexuality is a major part of one's identity, but because the time period was not one where it was commonly accepted, the story read it from a secretive perspective that indicated what it was really like back then.

All the characters are very well developed and each one contains an anecdote that adds to the style and theme of the writing. Although we are meant to follow Michael's journey into fame and success, the structure of the story does not shy away from steering the plot away from the protagonist's long term goals. Each character he meets takes the audience on an entire journey for just a short moment and helps us see how any encounter can truly affect someone. One of these eccentric characters was Madonna herself which is extremely intriguing and memorable for the story. Occasionally characters come up again later in the story and their background and relevance is forgotten for a moment because of the many new ones introduced which can be overwhelming. For a short story like this it can be difficult to keep up with as many people, but such is life.

The introduction of love as a theme was very well done as well. Michael's relationship with Bernard was like looking under a microscope with how emotionally involved we are into their journey together despite knowing this is a temporary phase in life. Their relationship grows to be genuine despite meeting with no intention of truly getting past surface level. Their relationship and the drama it caused escalated very fast and further development in Bernard's past and mental state was great for the story. Despite having vastly different situations, Bernard and Michael proved that they both are living a life as if they are trapped in a way.

This story only offers a snippet of the protagonist's life in a series of events as we follow his journey into shaping his identity. It feels like more focus on the music he makes is essential for his character and the story especially since it is said to be a new kind of music that was not easily brought to light then. This story captures the turbulence of Michael's life very well but would benefit from a closer look at the art that made him. This is also why this is a piece that has strong potential for adaptation. All the characters are rich with backstory and are very colorful in the way they present themselves on paper, that the adaptation on the screen would be even more entertaining given the amount of opportunity they have to shine. The dialogue in this story is limited to short snippets of what was spoken in the moments that Michael is reminiscing about, but even then it paints a very clear picture of how the scene unfolded without needing a full

conversation. However, in terms of adaptation, these moments are perfectly set up to be filled with subtext and drama that would be great to see play out. The pacing is also a strong point because it gives the effect of looking through someone's memories and focusing on the key moments that make up the essence of a being. There is so much appeal to a story like this because of the hidden history that is hinted at on top of an engaging narrative.