



The Duchess of Malfi

Film script by Alice de Sousa

(Inspired by John Webster's stage play of the same title)

The Duchess of Malfi provides for unique cinematic possibilities for great acting and a thrilling plot line. It is a heart rending revenge story; an intensely psychological and often morally shocking tale of Machiavellian corruption, incest, madness and uncontrollable carnal passion.

This new screenplay is inspired by John Webster's greatest tragedy. It offers through linguistically vibrant dialogue, a modern, design led, visually arresting reworking of a timeless classic.

Synopsis

The ill-fated and prematurely widowed Duchess of Malfi falls in love with Antonio, a commoner. In defiance of her ruthless, powerful brother's wishes, she secretly weds Antonio. The marriage is successfully concealed for several years, until her brothers employ Bosola to spy her and he is successful in securing evidence that she has had a child.

Following a threatening encounter with her incestuously jealous brother Ferdinand, the Duchess sends Antonio with their child into hiding.

Meanwhile, her brothers order Bosola to imprison her, psychologically torture and finally, cruelly execute her. Following her murder the remaining characters brutally turn on each other to avenge suffered wrongs and the plot resolves itself with a cinematically thrilling blood bath.

However, the film concludes with the redeeming forces of hope and rebirth: and as the Duchess's ghost watches her surviving child happily play, the story is brought to its uplifting ending.

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A full script is available on request