

XXXXXXXXX PRODUCTIONS

TITLE: NO SUN WITHOUT SHADOW

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FORM/PGS: 438 p. novel

SUBMTD TO:

GENRE: Drama

DATE:

CIRCA: Present

READ BY: M. Jordan

LOCALE: Los Angeles, Las Vegas.

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LOGLINE: Approaching 30, a Catholic man wrestles with his personal demons as he contemplates a difficult marriage with his pregnant Jewish girlfriend.

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	EXCLNT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
PREMISE		XXX		
CHARACTERS	XXX-----	XXX		
DIALOGUE	XXX-----	XXX		
STRUCTURE		XXX		
SETTING		XXX		
WRITING	XXX-----	XXX		

RECOMMENDATION: Yes.

## SYNOPSIS

Insurance claims adjuster VERGIL TYNAN (29) escapes from his work drudgery by burying his nose in Camus' "The Myth of Sisyphus" until he catches sight of typist PERDITA (18) and is dumbstruck by her luminous beauty. Seduced by the effect she has of making him feel alive for the first time in a long while, he obsesses over her from afar. Finally, in his attempt to introduce himself, he trips her and retreats in embarrassment. After getting encouragement from roommate and co-worker NICK (29), he tries again and is thrilled when she agrees to go out on the boat he owns with Nick.

Tynan scuba dives and barely pulls back from going too far into the ever-alluring ocean depths. Things go so well between him and Perdita that she gives up her virginity to him even though she worries her mother will find out. Later, her mother warns her Tynan is a treacherous man. Tynan's guilt over Perdita worsens when his waitress girlfriend REGINA (32) announces she's pregnant. The simmering resentment between them ends as it usually does – in a passionate bout of sex orchestrated by the dark siren. She pressures him to marry her or threatens to get an abortion. A Catholic, Tynan worries about the spiritual repercussions and pleads with her not to do it.

Tynan and Nick throw a party and invite Perdita but not Regina. Tynan gets drunk and gives a speech on the duality of love and the absurdity of life. Perdita decides her mother is right and breaks off their relationship in spite of his passionate pleas for a second chance. He tries to assuage his anger by bedding another woman there but gets into a fight with her boyfriend instead. The police arrive and break up the wild party. Depressed over losing Perdita, Tynan calls in sick at work and loses himself in Camus' discourse on suicide being the one truly serious philosophical question man faces.

Regina calls to admonish Tynan for ignoring her. He visits her at work but gets into a brawl with a customer who flirts with her. They return to her place and she brings up the marriage issue again. He gives in and agrees to a Las Vegas wedding. Appeased, she rewards him in bed then insists he face his responsibilities and return to work. She makes arrangements for a friend to baby-sit her daughter SARA (6) while they shop for wedding rings. Regina raises objections to rearing their child as a Catholic. She tries to placate him by grudgingly giving permission for their child to be exposed to both the Jewish and Catholic faith and eventually make his own choice but he knows it's just a lie. They pick out a ring set for 18 thousand and he reels from the instant state of debt he's stepped into. She reassures him she's going to help him succeed in business and earn the money they need to live in style.

Nick warns Tynan that their boss is unhappy over his lackadaisical work attitude. Tynan returns to the office but his boss advises him to improve his work performance or he'll lose his job. In the meantime, he's put on probation. Tynan promises his boss he'll turn over a new leaf. He finally confesses to Nick he's getting married and asks him to serve as best man and his girlfriend TRIXIE (24) to be Regina's bridesmaid. Regina drags Tynan on a trousseau-buying spree and complains about Trixie's snobbishness.

They arrive in Vegas and take in Wayne Newton's show. Tynan endures it all by keeping himself drunk. Regina brings up the idea of having a Rabbi perform their wedding and it sets off another argument over the baby's religious upbringing. He tries to resolve the conflict in their old way – with wild sex – but she refuses him. He turns his attention to Trixie and sends Regina into a fury. They visit the Liberace Museum, Hoover Dam and Ethel M Chocolate Factory at Regina's insistence.

Back at the hotel, Regina's ire at Tynan's flirtations with Trixie drives her to escalate their feud and she demands their child be raised as a Jew. Regina retreats into a Mikvah, a traditional cleansing bath, while Tynan seeks solace at the bar. He overdoes it and security guards forcibly escort him out. Regina cleans him up and the foursome arrives at the chapel. Regina signs them up for the pricey deluxe ceremony -- including an Elvis impersonator. Mistaking the chapel for the one they've reserved, another couple enters and turns the ceremony into a shouting match. The mistaken couple is ushered out but the insulted man vows his revenge.

The ceremony resumes until Tynan, imagining Perdita is the one beside him, faints at the altar but Regina still insists that they complete their vows. Afterwards, the foursome goes to a restaurant for their wedding feast. Tipsy, Regina shocks the prim Trixie by baring her breasts on a challenge. Tynan attacks the lucky recipient of Regina's revelation and the foursome wind up wearing most of their dinner. Undaunted, Regina insists that they go dancing, which turns out to be fun until the insulted man from the chapel sees Tynan and jumps him. Victorious and full of confidence, Tynan decrees that their child will be baptized a Catholic. Unable to come to an agreement, the newlyweds take out their frustrations gambling in the casino.

Regina hits a winning streak with dice but Tynan goes into debt playing cards. Jealous, he publicly insults her and takes her winnings to keep gambling. Fighting off a premonition that she's made a mistake in marrying him, she retreats to her room and begins gorging on the Ethel M chocolates. She picks up Camus' book and, skimming the underlined passages, is chilled by its message that suicide is dictated by the absurd. Her nervous consumption of both existentialism and chocolate makes her sick to her stomach.

Tynan loses his money, goes into a drunken rage and is thrown out of the casino. He finds Regina moaning in the bathroom, cleans her up and promises to take better care of her. They drive home and Tynan moves into Regina's apartment. Nick moves in with Trixie and seals the new arrangement. Determined to be a good husband, Tynan buys a life insurance plan on himself with Regina designated as the recipient. They make plans to take a celebratory scuba diving trip to Catalina. Soon after, Tynan is called into his boss' office and is told he's being laid off.

Fearing her wrath, Tynan gives Regina the bad news but is surprised when she assures him they'll find a way to survive by pulling together. She charts out plans for him to attend night school and become a lawyer. She also tries to convince him that his obsessive reading of Camus' book isn't helpful in achieving his new goals. He counters that he finds meaning in Camus' work and tries to tell her about what happened when Sisyphus tested his wife's love. She dismisses the book as academic posturing and he resigns himself to the melancholy that is fast becoming his retreat.

Regina goes in for a doctor's checkup and is embarrassed when he admonishes her for not taking better care of her health. Tynan, Regina, Nick and Trixie set off for Catalina where Tynan's attraction to Trixie is rekindled and ignites Regina's jealousy once again. They barely make it because of engine trouble but find the harbormaster unhelpful. Regina not only charms him into a 180 change of mind on the repairs but gets a recommendation from him for lodgings. At dinner they make plans where to scuba dive the next day and try to have a romantic evening but the debate over their child's religious upbringing surfaces again. Regina falls back on familiar tools and uses Tynan's desire to

finally evoke a promise that their child will be raised Jewish. He takes his reward for concession in an extended session of erotic lovemaking.

The next day, they set out to go scuba diving minus a seasick Trixie. Tynan tries joking with Regina that their child should at least be baptized but she firmly reminds him that his promise has closed the issue forever. In spite of the beauty of the sun and sea surrounding them, Tynan's feelings of despair return. He dives into the water, hungry for the serenity it offers. He pushes himself farther than he's ever gone before and begins to experience narcosis, the hallucinations that characterize the rapture of the deep. Phantom visions of Regina, Perdita and God drive him down into the dark inkiness. As he runs out of air, the voice of Camus calls to him and he finally embraces, in both sorrow and joy, the call of the eternal night.

After Regina receives the insurance settlement she visits Tynan's grave and pledges she and her new lover will make sure the child will be raised a proud Jew. She places Camus' book on the grave and walks away.

## COMMENT

NO SUN WITHOUT SHADOW illuminates a poignant, conflict-filled romance that stems from the pathos and introspection of a disparaged man. Vergil Tynan's odyssey reaches a key turning point as he approaches his 30-year watermark. His struggle with that crux offers an evocative look at Hamlet's quandary via existentialist Camus' writings in "The Myth of Sisyphus" and recalls Oscar winners such as LEAVING LAS VEGAS.

An insurance claims adjuster who hits the wall, Protagonist Tynan gradually severs all connections to his traditional existence in his determination to do right by pregnant girlfriend Regina. She is an erotic Eurydice who relentlessly pressures him to marry her -- regardless of the consequences on his soul. The chemistry between them is both all consuming and poisonous simultaneously and produces a disastrous effect on him. It literally tears their lives apart. Tynan's is obsessive in his search for meaning. When enlightenment is elusive he succumbs to self-medicating with alcohol and he does it with harrowing realism. As Huston did in UNDER THE VOLCANO the author has dipped into Greek mythology not just with Sisyphus but also in mirroring the tragedy of Orpheus' failure to save his dead wife from Hell. Here, as in that classic tale, love challenges the inevitability of death. Tynan's arc is a study in how the need to know the answer to existence can unbalance every aspiration, every desire, even inner consciousness, and it's a powerful one.

As his adversarial siren Regina is like a modern day Kate from TAMING OF THE SHREW. In the war between the sexes she is a formidable opponent. Clearly contrasting with the staid Trixie, Regina's lusty spirit creates an explosive romp filled with animal high spirits. She is fiercely unleashed, untamed and, while she herself will not be tamed by any man, tries furiously to tame her sometimes loutish Petruchio. Their boozy and bickering battles provide an examination of what happens when two lovers are caught in a cycle of self-destruction. The tempestuousness of their love and the depths of his despair add up to an audacious, fiercely realistic bout that truly captures the chaos inside a doomed relationship. The finale of their story ironically concludes with Regina proving she is not idly named.

From the moment these two hook up sparks fly and don't stop until final blood has been shed. Largely played out along the ragged edges of Vegas, its bold premise that in order to enhance your life you must first clear the battlefield underlines the complexity of relationships. The binding forces of passion and the tragic effects of depression combine to offer cathartic roles that often lure awards. It's a daring portrait, a compelling one with misgivings about truth and illusion that is sometimes difficult to embrace yet has proven successful for others such as LOST WEEKEND and DAYS OF WINE AND ROSES

RECOMMENDED.

## MAIN CHARACTERS

VERGIL TYNAN (29): A Catholic insurance claims adjuster at a key turning point in his life. In a frustrating quandary over which of two women to choose, which of two religions to commit to and, more importantly, whether he should follow his heart and truly explore the existential philosophies Albert Camus puts forth in “The Myth of Sisyphus.”

REGINA LAZAR (32): A Jewish divorcee and cocktail waitress who has not only set her sights on marrying Tynan but is bound and determined to get him to agree to raise their soon-to-be born child in the Jewish religion. Voluptuous and earthy, she stirs the libidos of all men who cast their eyes on her and knows exactly how to use that power.

PERDITA ESPERANZA (18): The virginal girl of Tynan’s Catholic dreams. Although pressured to do the right thing with pregnant Regina, it’s Perdita he wishes was his bride. Innocent and unaware, she gets a rude awakening to the truth when Tynan’s chronic drinking unleashes his personal demons for all to see.

NICK LOSANTO (29): Tynan’s co-worker, roommate and closest friend. Trying so hard to be happy for his friend’s upcoming marriage he’s completely unaware his girlfriend Trixie is luring Tynan away from Regina.

TRIXIE (24): Nick’s slender, fashionable, and somewhat elitist, girlfriend who is designated to be Regina’s bridesmaid but clashes with the working class bride. While it’s Nick who is her boyfriend, it’s Tynan who sends the sparks flying.