

THE FANDOM

Fake blood. **Real** monsters.

A HORROR/COMEDY SCREENPLAY WRITTEN BY LISA RUFUS

images with misspelt words generated by Midjourney





IT'S
ALL
FUN
AND
GAMES
UNTIL
VAN
LOSES
AN
ARM

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A BIT ABOUT ME

My love for horror started in the mid-80s when my family got a VCR. Ratings? Pfft. No one cared about ratings back then. I was a pre-teen in hot pink socks watching *The Omen*, *The Exorcist*, and *Fright Night*. I even played the *Amityville II* theme on my little Casio keyboard.

I've been watching horror movies ever since.

In 1995, I started working at Blockbuster where I raided the horror section and discovered my love for talking about movies. After leaving in 2003, I wrote over 400 [reviews on my blog](#).

In 2013 I graduated from UQ with a Bachelor of Creative Arts in Film & TV and Writing from UQ (2013).

In 2014, I wrote my honours thesis on the television series *Hannibal*. An abridged version of it was published in [Hannibal for Dinner: Essays on America's Favorite Cannibal on Television](#) (McFarland Books).

I got addicted to academia, so I then completed a Master of Arts (Writing) from Swinburne (2017).

The Fandom began as a screenwriting assignment for UQ and evolved through multiple rewrites—including feedback from comedy legend, Tim Ferguson care of Screen Queensland.

I love horror. I love fandoms. And I love this script.

FESTIVALS



Winner AFIN Best Feature Screenplay Award 2023

A refreshing story about fan culture and fan films... Action, laughs, solid drama, and a strong narrative
– Peter Koevari, AFIN Film Festival Director



Finalist Byron Bay International Film Festival 2023

It's knowing, pacy, genuinely funny, and utterly 2023. Original but also a clever homage to the horror/sci-fi/zombie-survivor genre
– Alex Mankiewicz, BBFF Screenplay Competition Judge



Semi-finalist Brisbane Indie Film Festival 2023

It's fun, pacy, and a wild ride
– Joel Fleming, BIFF Director

WHAT'S YOUR FANDOM?

Australians spend over \$4 billion a year on their fandoms.* That's a lot.

I totally get it. I was obsessed with *Lost* when it aired. I spent six years on a forum, rewatching episodes, transcribing podcasts, and scouring over thousands of screen captures searching for Easter eggs. I'm still friends with people I met online.

Then came the tv series *Hannibal*—I wrote uni assignments about it, bought Funko Pops, got a tattoo, bought a cookbook by *Hannibal* food stylist Janice Poon, and even had an essay published in *Hannibal for Dinner*.

Paula, my protagonist, is the same. She loves *Monster Assassins*. She has tattoos, posters, figurines, and rewatches episodes religiously. So, when a fan-film competition is announced, she is determined to win.

But... when the townsfolk start turning into actual monsters, her obsession blinds her to the danger—until it's too late.

The Fandom is a horror-comedy written by a fan, about fans, for fans.

<https://www.nineforbrands.com.au/media-release/australias-4-3-billion-fandom-industry-represents-opportunity-for-brands/>



WHY MAKE THIS MOVIE?

Unique Spin on Fandom Culture and Horror

The Fandom taps into the passion and dedication of fans while exploring the dark side of obsession. It speaks directly to fans, making it highly marketable to conventions, online communities, and genre enthusiasts.

Character-Driven Story with Real Emotional Stakes

The Fandom is Paula's story—a woman whose love for a fictional world blinds her to reality, even when it's literally turning monstrous around her. Her arc, along with the friendships, betrayals, and personal growth, makes *The Fandom* more than just a horror film—it's a character-driven narrative that resonates.

Visually Exciting Film

The found-footage elements from the web series and the practical effects-driven monsters create a visually distinct and immersive horror experience. The live streaming aspect connects the film to modern digital culture, making it relevant to younger audiences.

Love Letter to Fans

This isn't just a horror film—it's a love letter to fandoms. But it also warns about the dangers of losing yourself in fantasy, making it relatable to anyone who's ever been a superfan.

LOGLINE

When contaminated vodka turns a sleepy Queensland town into a monster-infested nightmare, a web series uberfan realises the fandom she built her life around may be her only weapon.

As the bodies stack up, she must rally her friends –if they'll still talk to her–and face the real monsters in town before everyone's toast.

STRUCTURE

ACT 1 – Setup:

- Paula & friends prep for a *Monster Assassins* fan film competition
- Tensions rise with Stacie, who thinks the show is real (Monsters? Seriously?)
- A mysterious vodka starts causing... strange changes

ACT 2 – Confrontation:

- Competition day = chaos
- People start turning into monsters
- Paula refuses to believe it's real—even after Van loses an arm

ACT 3 – Resolution:

- Paula & survivors fight back using improvised weapons made out of gym equipment
- *Monster Assassins* stars Kevin & Lucy show up (Stacie was right??)
- The final battle: who survives? Not many, it's a horror movie!



SYNOPSIS

Paula, an uberfan of the supernatural web series *Monster Assassins*, is determined to win a livestreamed fan film competition judged by the show's stars. She's wrangled the townsfolk of her tiny Queensland town into participating.

But tensions boil as Paula's obsessive need for perfection alienates her closest friends, threatening to sabotage the competition before it begins. Just as the group starts to splinter, something far more sinister surfaces: locals who drank a mysterious new vodka begin transforming into real, bloodthirsty monsters.

What starts as cosplay quickly spirals into a monster invasion, and Paula must figure out whether winning is worth losing everyone she cares about. Armed with gym equipment and a whole lot of fandom knowledge, the surviving townsfolk must band together to fight back against the nightmare they never saw coming.

As the bodies pile up and the town burns down, one thing becomes clear, roleplaying is easy, being a real *Monster Assassin* is something else entirely.

WHAT'S IT LIKE?

Fright Night (1985, 2011)

Blending the real and the fake. Peter Vincent is a TV vampire hunter who doesn't believe in real monsters—until he's forced to. *The Fandom* explores a similar theme of reality colliding with fantasy.

Psycho Goreman (2020)

B-grade practical effects & prosthetic mayhem. The over-the-top creature designs and ridiculous gore mirror *The Fandom*'s love for classic horror aesthetics. If you like oceans of latex and goo, you'll feel right at home.

Bait (2012)

The Fandom echoes the tension of *Bait*, trading sharks for superfans and a flooded supermarket for a (hopefully) locked-down gym. Both trap characters in one location and unleash escalating horror with a local twist.

100 Bloody Acres (2012)

The Fandom shares the gruesome humour and rural Aussie chaos of *100 Bloody Acres*, where laughs and gore go hand in hand. Both films lean into offbeat characters and splatter-filled set pieces to deliver horror with a wicked sense of fun.

Galaxy Quest (1999)

The ultimate fandom deep dive. Just like the *Monster Assassins* superfans, the *Galaxy Quest* devotees know every detail of their favourite show—only to find out it's real. A perfect parallel to *The Fandom*'s satire on die-hard fan culture.

Shaun of the Dead (2004)

GASP! Do I dare compare *The Fandom* to this Most Sacred Screen Text? Horror-comedy in a small town. A group of ordinary people facing extraordinary horrors, blending comedy with genuine stakes. The town-based setting and fandom-driven humour of *The Fandom* share a similar DNA.

THEMES

Fandom: Passion vs. Obsession

Fandom can be a source of joy, community, and creativity—but when taken too far, it can consume a person. Paula's obsession with *Monster Assassins* blinds her to reality, while Stacie's unwavering belief in the show's authenticity has unexpected consequences.

Community & Belonging

Fandoms create families—sometimes chosen, sometimes dysfunctional. The film explores friendships, loyalty, and what happens when differing views threaten the group dynamic.

Reality vs. Fantasy

Where does role-playing end and reality begin? Paula refuses to believe that people are turning into real monsters, while Stacie insists the show is real. When the lines blur, the results are deadly.

Horror Meets Satire

The Fandom blends dark comedy with genuine scares, poking fun at obsessive fan culture while also embracing its quirks. It's a love letter to fandoms with a cautionary twist.

Paula vs. the Monsters

Paula refuses to believe in the monsters because it means losing control. She also doesn't realise that her obsessive behaviour is a bit monstrous, until it's too late. Her journey is not just about surviving—it's about letting go of control and facing the truth.

CHARACTERS



PAULA

- 30s, gym owner
- Über-obsessive *Monster Assassins* fan
- Wants to win the fan competition
- Needs to put her friends before her fandom
- Frustrating perfectionist
- Loves ring binders
- Hates body spray at the gym



HARPER

- A teenage *Monster Assassins* fan
- Won a *Monster Assassins* fan art competition
- Adopted by Dave and Joe after her parents died
- Scrappy and resourceful
- Brave, but also reckless
- Loves the taste of fake blood



VAN

- Paula's BFF, and owner of hairdressing salon Comb On, Eileen
- Coordinates her makeup and hair
- Gives Paula an ultimatum—her friendship or her fandom
- Barbara Hershey in *Beaches*
- Van is named after Vanessa Baldwin, a friend and fellow horror nerd who passed away a couple of years ago.



STACIE

- A tattoo artist with a vintage aesthetic
- Married to Brian
- The first to challenge Paula
- Thinks *Monster Assassins* is real. Really?
- When Tara Rae Moss needed a mobility aid, she bought some fabulous walking canes and shared them on [Insta](#). As a fellow chronic pain peep, seeing her rock her walking aids gave me a lovely dopamine buzz. Stacie is my Tara.

CHARACTERS



DAVE

- Stereotypical Dave
- Pretty laid back
- Married to Joe
- Adopted Harper
- Paula's sister
- Not a mega fan, but very happy to support Paula and Harper with their competition entry



TIM

- Loves coke spiders
- Talks like a police handbook
- Fan of *Monster Assassins* and will do anything to help his community
- Named after my comedy icon Tim Ferguson



LUCY

- Half of *Monster Assassins*
- So awesome with a bow and arrow
- Kevin's twin
- She is so #done with his shit
- Loves him all the same
- The brains of the operation
- Puts Tim Tams in the freezer
- Hates spiders and Latin and snakes and...



KEVIN

- The other half of *Monster Assassins*
- Buff
- Lucy's twin
- Buff
- The opposite of the brains of the operation
- So buff
- Has pjs with his face on them
- Wears finger socks

LOCATIONS



THE GYM



THE MANKY TURNIP



VAN'S ↑ STACIE'S ↓



MONSTERS



THE SLIME SERPENT

The one from episode 19 in the carpark!



MONSTERS DES AND TROY

Turning into a monster is no excuse to miss leg day!



GIANT SPIDER IN THE DELI

Eating sliced ham from the deli section. Eww that's gross.



MONSTER STACIE

So *that's* where Rivers' cats got to! The Big Boss.

Thank you so
much for your
time.

Sooo... are you
a fan?

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That's so Kevin.