Title

Kung Kung (A chinese word meaning ‘Grandpa’)

Genre

A period drama

Logline

A true story about a boy bought and sold in a market, migrated to a foreign country, abused by his foster mom, started working as a child, the boy who happens to be a mechanical talent and a genius grows up to be a successful businessman against all odds due to his out of the box thinking and his perseverance.

Comparables/Tone/Themes

Shawshank Redemption 1994

* A character with an extraordinary talent that makes him/her special.
* A story within a story, told by a narrator.
* A period drama

Forrest Gump 1994

* A character with a deficiency yet displays extraordinary abilities that catapulted him into success.
* A story narrated by the main character from the present time to an audience, a story within a story.
* A period drama
* A life story.

The Legend of 1900 1998

* A character that has a talent that has never set foot on land.
* A story narrated by his friend, a story within a story.
* A period drama
* A life story.

Setting

A young man learning about his dying grandfather’s life of struggles, failures, and successes through the words of his relatives as he awaits his grandfather’s passing. The period drama is told through flashbacks as they are narrated by the young man’s visitors. Each story told in the present time that flashes back to that past period of his grandfather’s life. The main character, the young man’s grandfather, is a mechanical genius and an opportunist that eventually becomes successful in business with a big loving family. Something that he started without. The overall story deals with abuse, struggles through hardships, romance, forgiveness, perseverance, dementia.

Note\* I would love to use one single actor playing the grandfather role from teenage years to a 100-year-old utilizing current CGI technology akin to Marvel films of de-aging Robert Downey Jr’s Tony stark as well as aging Chris Evan’s Steve Rogers. I feel that the current technology is advance enough for a feature film; The Irishmen starring Robert DeNiro, Joe Pesci, and Al Pacino de-aged the actors to play the younger version of their respective characters. The reason behind this is to maintain an emotional attachment between the audience and the main character as I feel that casting different actors for different time period of the same character would require the audience to ‘familiarize’ with the character again.

Synopsis

Act 1 – The beginning and setting the situation.

Heavily raining in the middle of the night, Alvin (40) is awakened by a phone call. He hears the news of his dying grandfather Simon (100 years old) and immediately leaves for the hospital. As he awaits his grandfather’s passing, Alvin hears the story of his grandfather’s life through each visiting relative. Beginning with being sold at a market to a foster family at young age in China, to migrating to Indonesia and living with his foster family. Simon (7 years old) goes through hardships as a child. Often abused by his Foster Mother, Simon was forced to work with his uncle at a very early age to help his poor family.

Act 2 – going through each life problem and resolving them and repeats.

Assisting Uncle Hu (42 years old) with his leather tailoring store, Simon learned to sow and repair leather goods such as shoes and handbags. As Simon goes through his teenage years, his talent for fixing all sorts of things starts to emerge and eventually gained the attention of Uncle Hu as well as the neighboring stores. Many of the neighboring stores employ Simon’s help with fixing their broken items and as his income grew, Simon learned to save up. A few years later, as a young man at the age of 20, Simon met the love of his life. Not long after getting married, Simon was offered by a childhood friend an opportunity to start his own business. Seeing it as an opportunity to increase his savings for his new family, Simon accepts and utilizes his talent for fixing things to fix automobiles. As the automobile market starts to boom, Simon was enticed by his friend’s offer of importing cars into Indonesia. With the promise of a fortune, Simon agrees and invests. But unfortunately, the investment failed, and his friend runs away with his money. Although disappointed, Simon continues to work hard and save up. One day, Simon bought and took over his retiring Uncle’s business. Simon grew the business and eventually abled to expand with a new factory and secured a deal with a foreign company as a supplier. As his fortune grew, Simon’s family grew as well. One day an accident happened, and his factory was burned down. Having lost a large sum of his savings, Simon continues to work hard and save up again. Reaching his middle age, Simon sees the property business as a growing opportunity and decides to invest in the property business. With not enough money, Simon brokered ‘Build-Operate-Transfer’ deals with local homeowners to rent their property to Simon as he rented it out to expatriates. Simon, along with his sons, grew the property business and as his fortune grew, Simon was eventually abled to own his own land and properties. Simon was eventually offered the chance to start his own bank by his relative. However, Simon was faced with another disappointment as his bank was unable to survive, Simon was forced to sell off the bank at a loss. As the years passed, Simon’s family grew. Wanting his grandchildren to receive the best education, Simon tells his children to send their kids to study in Singapore.

Act 3 – As things start to stabilize, a tragedy occurs that eventually sets a resolution for the main character.

One day at the age of 59, Simon’s wife Ling Jun was diagnosed with Cancer. In her dying bed, Ling Jun made Simon promise to continue supporting their family and make sure that they don’t break apart. After Ling Jun’s passing, Simon’s fighting spirit eventually winds down. But Simon continues to support his children and makes sure that they are still a family. With his children eventually taking over the business, Simon slowly aged into retirement as he watched his grandchildren graduating and eventually having families of their own. As Simon aged, he was eventually diagnosed with Dementia. And over the years as his children and grandchildren visit him, Simon slowly loses his memory and becomes frail. Alvin sits outside his grandfather’s room as he hears Simon’s life stories from his uncles and aunties. As dawn breaks, Ewen witness his grandfather’s last breath. With knowledge of his grandfather’s life, Alvin gazes out into the bright morning sunrise as he remembers his happy moment as a young boy with his grandfather.

Logline recap

The film begins with a night of heavy rain and ends with a bright shining morning. The main character begins life alone, abused, and poor, as he journeys through his life challenges utilizing his talents and smarts, he passed away at the age of 100 with a successful life and a big family.

Questions

What do you think of the logline? Does it make you want to know more about the story, or do you feel like it’s overly common among existing films?

Do you think a foreign language film such as this could be a driving force in my career as a filmmaker?

Would any American film financier be willing to invest in a foreign film such as this? I believe that this film has an international audience and would appeal even more among north American audiences as well as Chinese audiences as it has no political issues. However, I feel that the Indonesian audience my be a secondary market if this film works out among the critics and wins a few awards.