

SARAH'S HOME AND HEART

Feature Film | Dark Comedy / Social Thriller / Drama

LOGLINE

A fading lifestyle influencer and a brilliant nuclear physicist must work together to survive when they are taken hostage by a religious extremist group - forcing both women to confront the identities they have built and the lives they actually want.

THE FILM

Sarah Hawthorne has spent fifteen years turning her life into a product: the perfect home, perfect marriage and perfect motherhood, broadcast to millions. Valentina Moroz is her opposite - a gifted nuclear physicist who understands unstable systems better than she understands herself. Their worlds collide during a livestream interview that becomes a public ambush and then a hostage crisis. Trapped together with Sarah's autistic son, the two women initially despise one another. Survival, however, requires exactly what makes each of them different: Valentina understands the science; Sarah understands people, fear and performance.

At the centre of the story is a stolen radioactive alpha source Valentina has been carrying because she intends to use it to end her life. By the climax, the same object becomes the key to their escape. Valentina provides the physics. Sarah provides the lie. They survive, but survival changes them in opposite directions: Valentina discovers how badly she wants to live, while Sarah emerges more powerful, more famous and perhaps more dangerous than before.

WHY ME

I did not research these women's worlds from the outside. I am a nuclear physicist with a PhD, a research scientist at the Ruđer Bošković Institute in Zagreb, and the leader of the DAENERYS research project. My working life takes place in the world Valentina inhabits: international laboratories, radioactive sources, experiments, scientific ambition, competition and people who spend their lives studying matter at the edge of stability.

I am also a mother of six, and I have watched mom-influencer culture grow almost from the beginning: the transformation of motherhood, family life, beauty, relationships and children into public identity and content. I know the gap between the chaos of real family life and the polished version presented to the outside world. Sarah and Valentina come from two very different worlds, but both are worlds I know intimately.

I have also been telling stories for most of my life. I published two novels while still in school and university, later made short films, science films and theatre productions, and my science parody SCI-CSI won Best Medium-Length Film at the Croatian Amateur Film Festival. SARAH'S HOME AND HEART is my first feature screenplay.

WHY THIS STORY NOW

The movie celebrates women who refuse to remain what the world expects them to be, while grotesquely portraying an America where everything becomes a show, tragedy becomes content and fear spreads faster than truth. A tiny alpha source can trigger national nuclear panic, an influencer can become both saint and villain, and religious extremism can turn obsession into spectacle.

At its core runs a nuclear-reaction metaphor: two unstable things collide by accident and somehow emerge more stable—a small reminder that life, like the universe itself, may be shaped as much by accident as by design.