

Living in difficult conditions

Literature, Russian Literature



The secret life of Walter Mitty is a movie made in 2013. It has received a lot of positive feedback since then. Ben Stiller is both playing Walter Mitty and he is the director of the movie. Walter Mitty is a man working with the magazine LIFE and he is the one in the lead of processing the negatives that they receive. In this essay, I will try to explain the setting, write about the plot and how the movie uses effects to convey the themes of the movie.

The movie takes place at multiple locations all around the world. The story starts in the US and this is also the main location in the movie. The other spots are Greenland, Island, Afghanistan and the Himalayas. The movie does not give an exact location in the United States, nor what year the history takes place. We can, however, imagine when because of the use of technology. The characters use Macs, smartphones, online dating and such, so we can guess that it is probably after year 2000. It could also be that the movie is based on the year of production, 2013.

Walter Mitty is an employee in the magazine LIFE, and he is a negative asset manager there. That means that he receives negatives from the well-known photographer Sean O'Connell and Walter's job is to process these negatives. Walter finds his own life boring, and this is probably the reason why he often daydreams. He has a crush on a colleague, Cheryl, and he tries to reach her by online dating. The company is being bought by another, larger company, and Mitty and his colleagues are going to make a last cover for the original LIFE magazine. Sean O'Connell has sent some negatives for Walter to process for the first page. He also sent him s wallet as a gift, but Walter throws this away. O'Connell suggests using negative number 25 for the magazine's last cover, but this exact negative is missing. Walter's new boss

is quite domineering and demands Walter to give him the photo. The photo is very important since O'Connell has told that it captures the “ quintessence of life”. Walter decides to set out on a journey to try to reach Sean and ask for it.

Walter and Cheryl look at three of the negatives together and accomplish to find that Sean is in Greenland by looking at a reflection of a boat name.

When Walter arrives Nuuk, Greenland's capital, he goes to a pub and accidentally sees a man that was in one of the photos from Sean. Walter is told that O'Connell have been on a boat nearby and he decides that he wants to get to this boat and meet Sean in person. Luckily for Walter, a guy is going to fly out there, but Walter is afraid to join the helicopter since the pilot is clearly drunk. Mitty starts imagining Cheryl singing Space Oddity and this cheers him up a little and he decides he will join the helicopter. Walter must jump to get to the boat and ends up in the water with sharks. These are real and not only in his daydreams, but fortunately he is rescued and gets aboard. Walter finds out that Sean has already been at the boat, and that he has now left for Eyjafjallajökull, which turns out to be a volcano on Iceland.

Luckily for Walter, the boat is going to Iceland, and he can join them on the voyage. In Iceland, he uses a bike to get to the volcano to look for Sean. The bike gets ruined and he manages to get hold of a longboard which he uses the last part of the journey on Iceland. When on Iceland, the volcano gets an eruption and Walter realises why Sean was going to Iceland. Walter can see Sean in a small plane taking photos of the volcano during the eruption.

Walter gets away from the volcano and receives a text saying that he is fired because he did not deliver negative number 25 to the new boss.

Walter has to go home and with help from his mom, who has met Sean, he finds that Sean has travelled to the Himalayas to take photos of a rare snow lion. Walter manages to get to the Himalayas through Afghanistan before he finally meets Sean in person. Sean says that the negative has always been in the wallet that Walter threw away. Luckily, it turns out that Walter's mom picked it up from the trash, and Walter finally finds the negative. Soon after, the magazine's last cover is revealed with negative number 25, a photo which turns out to be showing Mitty sitting outside the LIFE building, looking at a contact sheet.

This movie has multiple themes, and one of them is the contrast between dreams and reality. Walter thinks he has this boring life, and therefore he daydreams a lot. These dreams are what he wants to do or achieve and all of them are great and wonderful, a really big contrast to how his life really is. Another theme can be found in the motto of the magazine where Walter Mitty worked: "to see the world, things dangerous to come to, to see behind walls, draw closer, to find each other, and to feel. That is the purpose of life". It means that you could daydream every day if you have a boring life, but it also encourages you to get out in the world, see new places and experience what you have always dreamed about. It means that you should live every day as if it is the last, and that you should make great memories. The movie conveys this theme by showing how much happier people become by

experiencing new things and places, and also by literally having this theme as the LIFE's motto.

Now that I have explained the setting, written about the plot and how the movie uses effects to convey the themes, I can see that this is a great movie. It is really a relevant movie for a lot of people in the world today because of how the movie "speaks" to you about life. The movie encourages you to get a job you like and to experience the world and life. Many people are just sitting at home, going to a job they don't like, then home again, and repeat all the time, when you really should be doing something special with your life. It encourages you to live your life as if everyday is the last, and not only dream, but to experience.