

THE STAR MAKER

A one-hour dramatic television pilot
By Luke Yankee

***This script is a currently a finalist in the 2010 NexTV competition and is one of eight finalists out of over 700 pilots submitted**

Hollywood, 1958. The glamour capitol of the world. Lunch at The Brown Derby, cocktails at The Trocadero, dinner at Ciro's. Hedda, Louella, Marlon, Natalie and Rock rule the world. One of the players in this arena is Nick Ralston, a hustler in every sense of the word. Nick, a closeted gay man, is an up and coming agent who will stop at nothing to promote his clients and maintain the appearance of an extravagant lifestyle – whether that means charm, extortion, sexual favors, blackmail or selling out to the highest bidder.

In to this world walks Jamie and George, two handsome, young men in search of an agent. Even though this is a world where sexuality is highly repressed (at least on the surface), these two guys flaunt their many attributes in front of Nick, who invites them to a pool party with some other members of his “stable of regulars”. The boys are so hungry for success in Tinsel Town, they'll do whatever it takes.

Nick is in hot pursuit of a new client, Stephanie Meyers, a former child star now trying to be taken seriously as an adult actress. Stephanie and her overprotective mother aren't interested in a second rate agent like Nick, until he promises Stephanie a screen test for the hottest director in town, who is doing a rebellious teen movie called *Hell on Wheels*. Of course, the only way Nick can actually get Stephanie seen for this role is by threatening to blackmail the director with compromising pictures of him with an underage girl. Nick doesn't like to lose.

Jamie and George are a big hit at the pool party and Nick sees a real star quality in Jamie. He wants to remodel him as the next beefcake matinee idol...but only if he dumps his boyfriend, George. He is too concerned about the Hollywood image factory to settle for anything less. Meanwhile, Stephanie's egocentric stage mother will stop at nothing to keep her little girl from growing up. After all, the squeaky clean image is her meal ticket. The public may turn on her as a “bad girl.” She employs every kind of psychological abuse a parent can use on a child...until it nearly kills Stephanie. Add into this cocktail shaker of depravity and comprises Nick's “old world” Greek mother who wants nothing but for her son to settle down and get married, producers and publicists who are trying to keep their clients' dirty little secrets out of the papers and a world ripped from the tabloids and you have the glitz and glamour of the golden age of Hollywood that is the *The Star Maker*.

Writer **Luke Yankee** knows “old Hollywood” first-hand. His book, *Just Outside the Spotlight* (about growing up as the son of Oscar, Emmy and Tony winning actress, Eileen Heckart) has garnered rave reviews from coast to coast and has been touted by critics as “One of the most compassionate, illuminating, showbiz memoirs ever written.” *The Star Maker* combines many of these elements, and the series would include first-hand accounts from his book of celebrities loosely based on Marilyn Monroe, Marlene Dietrich, Paul Newman, Ronald Regan and many others. His film, *The Jesus Hickey* (based on his award winning play) is currently in development.

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