

## Film Review: How to Lose Friends and Alienate People

Although the film has a horrible title to have to memorize, it is actually quite enjoyable. It is based on the memoirs of Tony Young, a British journalist who, unsuccessfully, tried to make it in the U.S. as an editor of Vanity Fair Magazine. His obnoxious wit has earned him almost as many enemies as admirers and the title of "England's heterosexual Truman Capote".

The film tells the story of English journalist Sydney Young (played by Simon Pegg, who also starred in *Hot Fuzz*) who tries to make it in the U.S. Sydney's mother was a Hollywood actress who died when he was young. He loves films and ever since he was little he has always wanted to belong to Hollywood.

When he goes to the yearly Apollo Awards (the equivalent of the Oscars) to cover it for his satiric magazine *Snipe* he cannot get in, not even with Babe III (yes, a pig) as his guest. He then decides to crash the after-party, held by the Clayton Harding (Jeff Bridges), editor of *Sharpss Magazine*, which is of the most respected magazines of the U.S. He disguises himself as a waiter. Just when he has finally managed to talk to an upcoming actress, Babe III has escaped out of his hotel room (after having made an incredible mess) and is peeing against a famous actress's leg. The event is all over the newspapers. Clayton Harding is naturally angry, but also impressed, and offers him a job at *Sharpss Magazine*.

Clayton places Sydney at the Eye-Spy department, which deals with famous celebrities. At a party he meets Sophie Maes (played by Megan Fox), a gorgeous young actress, who has just be-

come a big star. He gets a little obsessed with her. She plays mother Theresa in a strangely erotic biopic about the nun.

What follows are Sydney's efforts to 'shake things up a bit', or, pulling a lot of awful stunts, because he doesn't like the fact that *Sharpss* is so commercial. The Americans in the office just think that Sydney is some strange obnoxious Brit. No one really likes him, except for Allison Olsen (played by Kirsten Dunst), who has a secret affair with Maddox. Allison frequently saves Sydney after several big blunders. For instance, when Sydney accidentally kills Cuba, Sophie Maes's Chihuahua, she saves his skin by pretending not to know anything about it.

When after a lot of stuff-ups Sydney just decides to do his job, he does manage to make it to the top, the very top. He even makes it to the Apollo Awards, as an actual guest, dressed in an Armani tuxedo, with an expansive Omega watch around his wrist and in Sophie Maes's company. But still something is missing in his life ... love! Yes! It even gets a little bit romantic, but giving it away would spoil all the fun of course!

Look forward to some brilliant types: an evil Polish-Jewish landlady (Sodom and Gomorrah!), Jeff Bridges as editor-in-chief and lots of shallow Hollywood people. Altogether typical English humour, a little a bit of a culture clash, an insight in the world of a famous magazine, and even a little bit of romance make this film remarkably versatile and hilariously funny.

*by Anna Visser*

