PRETTY WOMAN & FREGA

THE WALL STREET SAGA



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Some movies become classics. Others become mirrors.

Pretty Woman did both.

Millions of people watched it and saw a love story.

I watched it again and saw something else.

I saw a movie about loneliness disguised as wealth.

A movie made for dreamers, especially the ones who never got where they wanted to go and found refuge inside fantasy instead of reality.

Over the years I have learned that films never reveal their secrets in the plot. The interesting parts are hidden in the details.

Edward Lewis is a titan of finance.

He can buy companies.

He can buy hotels.

He can buy an entire floor of a building without looking at the price.

Yet he cannot find a woman.

That is why he ends up meeting one on a Hollywood street.

Not because he is looking for sex.

Because he is looking for connections.

The irony is almost painful.

The richer he becomes, the further away he seems from the one thing he cannot purchase.

People often say women are searching for rich men.

That has never been my experience.

Most women are not searching for wealth.

They are searching for stability.

The money itself is usually just a tool.

Food on the table.

Security for children.

Protection for the people they love.

A woman thinks in terms of people.

A man often thinks in terms of assets.

That difference explains more about human history than most economics textbooks.

Then there is the penthouse suite.

The best room.

The highest floor.

The kind of view that successful people are supposed to enjoy.

Except Edward cannot enjoy it.

He is afraid of heights.

He owns the highest point in the building but never really looks outside.

I know a lot of people like that.

They spend their entire lives climbing.

Then they reach the top and discover they are afraid of the view.

Later he admits that buying his father's company made him feel good.

Think about that sentence.

A billionaire buying emotional reassurance.

A corporate acquisition is used as therapy.

The company was never the objective.

The feeling was.

The balance sheet was simply the delivery system.

Then comes my favorite moment.

The grass.

She asks him to walk barefoot.

No boardroom.

No attorneys.

No negotiations.

Just a man feeling the earth under his feet.

For a few seconds, the high priest of Wall Street reconnects with something older than money.

Reality.

Nature never sends invoices.

That is why so many successful people eventually miss it.

The next contradiction is even better.

He defends the dignity of a woman he originally hired.

He challenges one of his own associates over her honor.

The businessman who entered the relationship believing everything had a price suddenly discovers that some things do not.

Respect.

Dignity.

Affection.

Trust.

Markets are excellent at pricing things.

They are terrible at valuing them.

The movie could have ended there.

The lesson was already complete.

But Hollywood understands human weakness better than most philosophers.

Reality rarely becomes a blockbuster.

Fantasy does.

So, Edward returns with red roses.

The limousine arrives.

The music rises.

The fairy tale is delivered exactly on schedule.

And the audience leaves believing that love conquered money.

I am not so sure.

I think the movie survives because it tells a different story.

Not the story of a woman rescued by a rich man.

The story of a rich man rescued from himself.

There is a reason men in expensive suits have loved this movie for decades.

Not because they dream of becoming rich.

Many of them already are.

They watch it because they suspect there must be something beyond the next deal, the next acquisition, the next bonus, the next victory.

They keep looking for evidence.

For many of them, Pretty Woman is evidence.

A two-hour fantasy that suggests there might still be a human being underneath the tailored suit.

So, what remains after the credits roll?

Not the roses.

Not the penthouse.

Not the money.

Not even the love story.

What remains is a simple observation.

Everything a man builds begins with a woman somewhere in the background.

A mother.

A sister.

A wife.

A daughter.

A stranger.

And sooner or later life has a strange habit of bringing him back to that original truth.

The mistake is believing she can be bought.

She cannot.

The smarter move is to pay attention.

And wait.

Because women have a radar for special cases.

Most of the time, they recognize them long before the men do.

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BLADEFREGA
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