

**DATE: 1/2/25**

**TITLE: "TRAIL MIXED"**

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**PAGE COUNT: 84**

**GENRE: Romantic Comedy**

**BUDGET: "LOW"**

**RATING: "STRONG CONSIDER"**

**SCORES:**

**Characters: 5**

**Tone: 4**

**Dialogue: 4**

**Visual Elements: 3**

**Originality: 4**

**Structure: 4**

**Plot: 5**

**Commercial Appeal: 5**

**TONE**

The script for "Trail Mixed" is a poignant exploration of grief, friendship, and personal growth set against the backdrop of a challenging mountain hike and laugh-out-loud characters. The narrative tone is both somber and humorous, with moments of levity punctuating the characters' emotional journey. The setting evokes images of rugged wilderness, towering peaks, and dense forests, creating a sense of isolation that mirrors the characters' internal struggles. The story's tension arises from the interplay between the natural dangers of the trail and the interpersonal conflicts among the hikers. The script also employs elements of suspense and surprise, particularly in the character of Percy, whose eccentricities add an element of unpredictability to the narrative. Overall, the tone is one of resilience and reconciliation, mixed with the levity of humor, underscored by the majestic and unforgiving landscape.

**AT A GLANCE**

"Trail Mixed" is a poignant romantic comedy drama about Marco, a man in his early 30s, who embarks on a challenging hike to scatter his sister Rebecca's ashes at their old favorite hiking trail. Joined by Amelia, his ex-fiancée, and Percy, an eccentric elderly hiker, they navigate

through unexpected adventures, past relationship tensions, and a bear encounter. Along the way, they learn about forgiveness, acceptance, and the importance of moving forward.

## **SYNOPSIS**

Marco, a chef in his early 30s, is mourning the loss of his sister Rebecca at her funeral. He is tasked with scattering her ashes in specific places, including the challenging Mt. Norbert. Marco's mother suggests asking one of Rebecca's friends, hinting at Amelia, to accompany him on the hike.

After some hesitation, Marco calls Amelia, who initially mistakes him for her dog-sitter. Despite their past relationship, Amelia agrees to join Marco on the hike to scatter Rebecca's ashes. The next morning, they meet at the trailhead and begin their journey, reminiscing about old times and discussing their current lives.

During their hike, they encounter Percy, a spry 75-year-old hiker who claims to know Amelia. Despite their suspicions about Percy's intentions, Marco and Amelia continue their hike with him, leading to unexpected adventures. Percy's eccentric behavior, such as collecting a dead rabbit and using hand sanitizer as hair gel, intrigues and concerns the pair.

As they navigate the trail, Marco and Amelia face challenges, including a deep ravine filled with rattlesnakes and the realization that they have taken the wrong path. They decide to follow a stream to reach their intended destination, Cameekee Curve, but find themselves lost in the deep woods as evening descends.

Setting up camp for the night, Marco and Amelia share a heart-to-heart conversation about their past relationship. Their conversation is interrupted by the sound of a bear outside their tent. In a panic, they flee, and Percy makes a timely entrance, using a makeshift flamethrower to fend off the bear.

The next morning, Marco discovers that the urn containing Rebecca's ashes is missing. Amelia comforts him, suggesting they keep looking and, if unsuccessful, explain the situation to his mother. Tensions rise between Marco and Amelia as they discuss their past and present circumstances.

Percy leads Marco and Amelia on a mission to track the bear and retrieve the urn. He reveals that he is a decommissioned agent with the park service on a mission to extract someone important from the woods. With Percy's guidance, Marco and Amelia successfully retrieve the urn from the bear's cave.

Upon examining the urn, Marco realizes that it's almost empty, with only a handful of ashes left. Distraught, he decides to continue up the trail to scatter the remaining ashes, encouraging Amelia to leave for her photoshoot. At the summit, Marco delivers a heartfelt eulogy to Rebecca, scattering the ashes. Amelia, who had followed him, comforts Marco after his eulogy.

Their moment is interrupted by the arrival of park rangers, causing Percy to panic and flee, believing they are operatives sent to find him. The lead ranger, Seth, explains that Percy suffers

from dementia and Alzheimer's. As the rangers are about to take Percy away, he seizes control of Seth's ATV and speeds off.

Percy crashes the ATV into a ravine, and Amelia jumps in to help him, followed by Marco. In the pit, they discover a nest of snakes. With the help of the rangers, they manage to escape the pit, but not before Marco and Amelia confess their feelings for each other.

The rangers take Percy into custody, intending to return him to his care home. Amelia learns that she has missed a career opportunity due to their adventure, but she and Marco decide to continue their relationship. The story concludes with Amelia and Marco visiting Percy at his care home, helping him escape, and heading off into the woods for another adventure.

## **CHARACTER BREAKDOWN**

### **Lead Characters:**

**1. Marco:** Marco is a **male** in his **early 30s**. He is a chef who is mourning the loss of his sister Rebecca and is tasked with scattering her ashes on a challenging mountain hike. Marco is shown to be stubborn, and usually a "by the book" person; as seen in his insistence on following a specific trail and reaching the summit, but also caring and dedicated, as evidenced by his determination to fulfill Rebecca's last wish.

**2. Amelia:** Amelia is a **female** in her **early 30s**. She is the ex-fiancee of Marco and Rebecca's past best friend, and she joins Marco on the hike to scatter Rebecca's ashes despite initial reluctance due to work commitments. Amelia is shown to be practical yet adventurous and spontaneous, as seen in her suggestions to scatter the ashes at their current location and to use an offline GPS map, but also compassionate, as she comforts Marco when he loses the urn and agrees to help him find it.

### **Supporting Characters:**

**3. Percy:** Percy is a **75-year-old male**. He is an eccentric hiker who claims to be a decommissioned agent with the park service and joins Marco and Amelia on their hike. Percy is shown to be knowledgeable about tracking and survival skills, but also somewhat delusional, as he believes he is being pursued by operatives.

**4. Marco's Mother:** Marco's mother is a **female** in her **50s**. She is supportive of Marco's mission to scatter Rebecca's ashes and suggests that he ask one of Rebecca's friends to accompany him on the hike. Marco's mother is shown to be understanding and compassionate, as she reassures Marco when he loses most of the ashes.

**5. Seth:** Seth is a **park ranger**. He explains to Marco and Amelia that Percy suffers from dementia and Alzheimer's and assures them that they will treat Percy well. Seth is shown to be responsible and professional, as he leaves to call for backup when Percy, Marco, and Amelia are in danger and returns with a rope to help them escape a pit filled with snakes.

## **DETAILED SUMMARY**

“Trail Mixed” begins with a photograph of three young hikers, Rebecca, Amelia, and Marco, in their early 20s, celebrating a successful mountain climb. The photograph is revealed to be in a funeral home, where Marco, now 33, is mourning the loss of Rebecca. The room is filled with remnants of a remembrance event, and Marco is alone with an urn containing Rebecca’s ashes.

Two elderly maids, Betty and Veronica, enter the room and start cleaning, disrupting Marco’s solitude. Marco’s mother, in her 50s, approaches and they discuss Rebecca’s wish to have her ashes scattered in specific places. They’ve completed all but one location, Mt. Norbert, a challenging hike. Marco’s mother suggests asking one of Rebecca’s friends to accompany him, hinting at Amelia.

Later, Marco is at his work being a chef, asks his sous chef, Andre, to accompany him on the hike, but Andre declines. Marco then contemplates calling Amelia, but decides against it. He finds an old engagement ring band among his mementos, indicating a past relationship with Amelia. Eventually, he calls Amelia, who initially mistakes him for her dog-sitter. After clearing up the confusion, Marco invites Amelia to join him on the hike to scatter Rebecca’s ashes. Amelia initially declines due to a work commitment, so Marco goes alone.

The next morning, after Marco mistakes a man for Amelia; Amelia surprises Marco and is ready for the hike. They start their hike, reminiscing about old times and discussing their current lives. Amelia reveals she’s in a relationship, and Marco lies, saying he’s also in a serious relationship. Their conversation becomes tense as they argue about their past relationship.

Their hike is interrupted by Percy, a spry 75-year-old hiker who claims to know Amelia. Amelia, not recognizing Percy, plays along. Marco and Amelia become suspicious of Percy, fearing he might be dangerous. Despite their concerns, they continue their hike with Percy, leading to more unexpected adventures.

In the midst of a daytime hike, Percy finds a dead rabbit and shows it to his fellow hikers who are both disgusted and intrigued. Percy, who seems to be a bit eccentric, suggests the rabbit died of old age and calls it a taxidermist’s jackpot before marching off with it. Marco and Amelia continue their hike, discussing Percy’s odd behavior. Amelia suggests that Percy is just lonely and looking for someone to talk to, but Marco is skeptical.

As they continue their hike, Percy catches up with them, breathing heavily. Amelia offers him some hand sanitizer, which he uses like hair gel. Percy reveals that he hikes as much as he can and is married. His wife, Claire, is camping at the summit and he invites Marco and Amelia to join them for food. Percy jokingly suggests that Marco, who he perceives as a vegan, will have to forage for his own food. Marco denies being a vegan, and the conversation turns to why Marco and Amelia are on the trail. Marco reveals they are there for a private family event, and Amelia clarifies that they are no longer a couple, but “friend-birds.”

Percy expresses sympathy for their breakup, and Marco reveals that Amelia abandoned him in rural Spain. Amelia counters that she had good reasons for leaving and hands Marco an envelope

containing her old engagement ring. She then compliments Percy on his relationship with his wife, Claire, and corrects Marco's claim that they were in rural Spain, stating that they were just outside of Madrid.

As they continue their hike, they come across a trail sign that directs them to take the left path. Marco insists that they've always taken the right trail, which is a medium level, and refuses to take the left path, which is labeled as expert level. Amelia suggests they could scatter the ashes they are carrying at their current location, but Marco insists on reaching the summit. They decide to take the right path, despite Percy's objections.

As they continue along the right path, Amelia notices that Percy is struggling to keep up. Marco suggests that Percy might be dangerous, but Amelia dismisses his concerns. Suddenly, Amelia stops Marco from walking into a deep ravine filled with rattlesnakes. Percy suggests that the pit was man-made and they decide to cut through the brush to avoid it.

As they continue their hike, Amelia and Percy have a heart-to-heart conversation about Amelia's past relationship with Marco. Percy encourages Amelia to move on from the past and warns her to stay alert, revealing that he believes he is being pursued by operatives. Marco and Amelia decide to leave Percy and make a beeline for the other path to save time. They hear a noise in the woods and, fearing they are being followed, they run.

They eventually reach a clearing, but realize it's not the one they were aiming for. Amelia injures her arm on some thorns and Marco bandages it up. They decide to follow a stream to reach their intended destination, Cameekee Curve.

As evening descends upon the deep woods, Marco and Amelia find themselves lost. Marco, relying on an old map, is unable to locate the trail they are supposed to be on. Amelia, frustrated, points out that Marco should have cross-referenced with an offline GPS map, a practice that Rebecca used to follow. Marco admits he forgot about it, leading Amelia to accuse him of getting them generally lost. Marco suggests they camp for the night and re-orient in the morning. Amelia reluctantly agrees, and they set up camp.

As night falls, Marco struggles to light a fire while Amelia sets up the tent. After a few failed attempts and some light-hearted banter, they manage to get a small fire going. They eat pre-packaged food by the fire, reminiscing about their past hiking trips and their friend Rebecca, whose urn they have with them. Later, inside the tent, they share a blanket to ward off the cold. They have a heart-to-heart conversation about their past relationship, with Amelia apologizing for ending things the way she did.

Their conversation is interrupted by the sound of snapping branches outside. They initially joke about it being Percy, a character they met earlier, but soon realize it's a bear. In a panic, they scramble to find something to fend off the bear. Marco mistakenly grabs a can of deodorant instead of bear spray. The bear charges their tent, causing them to flee.

Percy makes a timely entrance, using Marco's lighter and the deodorant can to create a makeshift flamethrower. Marco throws cheese-berries into the woods to distract the bear, and they manage to escape. They hide in the bushes, where Marco apologizes to Percy for previously suspecting

him of being a murderer. Percy forgives him and warns him not to abandon his superior officer in the field again.

The next morning, Marco wakes up to find the campsite in disarray and the urn containing Rebecca's ashes missing. He frantically searches the area, but to no avail. Amelia wakes up and joins him, only to learn that Rebecca's urn is gone.

In the early morning, Amelia finds Marco sitting on a log, head in his hands, his half-filled backpack by his feet. The urn containing his sister's ashes is missing. Marco believes a bear must have taken it. Amelia tries to comfort him, suggesting they keep looking and if they can't find it, they can head back down the mountain and explain the situation to his mother. Marco is upset, fearing he will have to tell his family that he lost his sister's ashes. Amelia reassures him that his sister is not the urn, but is wherever he needs her to be.

Suddenly, Amelia's phone buzzes. She checks it and appears surprised. Marco asks if she's getting service, to which she confirms a little. She reads a text and exclaims, causing Marco to ask what's wrong. She dismisses it as nothing. Marco points out that Amelia had said they would leave at 3pm and it's now eight in the morning. Amelia apologizes, saying she's trying her best. Marco accuses her of not being fully present and trying to find an excuse to end the trip since it started. Amelia defends herself, stating that she has worked her entire life for her career and Marco has suddenly reentered her life, expecting her to drop everything for him. Marco insists that the trip isn't for him, leading to a tense silence. Amelia softens and agrees to help Marco find the urn, but insists she has to leave afterward.

Amelia then wakes Percy, who is disoriented and initially mistakes her for Claire. Amelia informs him of the situation with Marco's sister's ashes. Percy is initially confused, thinking Marco's sister has been physically attacked by the bear, but Amelia clarifies that they are trying to retrieve her ashes. Percy springs to his feet, ready to help.

Percy leads Amelia and Marco on a mission to track the bear, demonstrating his knowledge of tracking and survival skills. Marco reveals to Percy that his sister was cremated weeks ago, leading to a moment of sympathy from Percy. Percy then reveals that he's a decommissioned agent with the park service and is on a mission to extract someone important from the woods. He warns them that local law enforcement doesn't know he's undercover and if they bring him in, his mission is over.

Percy then coaches Marco on how to retrieve the urn from the bear's cave, giving him advice on how to behave around bears and how to protect himself. Amelia decides to join Marco in retrieving the urn, despite Marco's initial reluctance. As they approach the cave, they spot the urn among the trash outside. Marco retrieves the urn, but the bear emerges from the cave. Amelia and Marco manage to scare the bear off by making loud noises and acting aggressively. Percy then leads them away from the cave and back into the forest.

In the woods, Marco, Amelia, and Percy slow their pace, relieved that they've escaped the bears. They celebrate their successful mission, with Marco commending Percy on his knowledge. Percy then cleans the urn they've been carrying, which contains the ashes of Marco's deceased friend,

Rebecca. As Marco and Amelia clean themselves up, Percy admires the urn, commenting on the difficulty of letting go of loved ones.

Upon examining the urn, Marco realizes that it's almost empty, with only a handful of ashes left. Distraught, he laments that he's lost Rebecca again, as there's not enough ashes to scatter and share with his mother. Amelia comforts him, reminding him that he saved Rebecca's ashes from the bear. Marco decides to continue up the trail to scatter the remaining ashes, encouraging Amelia to leave and attend her photoshoot.

Marco reaches the summit and calls his mother, confessing that he lost most of the ashes. His mother reassures him, asking him to save just a pinch for her. After the call, Marco delivers a heartfelt eulogy to Rebecca, scattering the remaining ashes. Amelia, who had followed Marco, comforts him after his eulogy. Percy also arrives, offering his own words of comfort.

Suddenly, they hear a yell from afar. Two park rangers are approaching them, causing Percy to panic and run off, believing they are operatives sent to find him. Marco and Amelia chase after Percy, eventually catching up to him. They agree to help Percy escape the rangers, despite their concerns about Percy's health and their own.

However, they are stopped by two more park rangers. The lead ranger, Seth, explains that Percy suffers from dementia and Alzheimer's. He assures Marco and Amelia that they will treat Percy well and do their best to get in touch with his family. Just as they are about to take Percy away, he seizes control of Seth's ATV and speeds off, leaving Marco, Amelia, and the rangers behind.

The narrative opens with Percy, an elderly man, driving an ATV with reckless abandon, heading towards a ravine. Marco and Amelia, who are jogging up the trail, hear a crash and Percy's cries for help. They rush to the edge of the ravine and find Percy dazed from the crash. Amelia jumps into the pit to help Percy, who has hurt his ankle. Marco, frustrated with Amelia's impulsive action, follows her into the pit.

Down in the ravine, Amelia helps Percy up and they discover a nest of snakes. Percy, who is not as frail as he seems, brandishes a stick like a sword to keep the snakes at bay. Meanwhile, Marco calls for help from two park rangers, Andy and Seth, who are nearby. Seth, the more experienced ranger, leaves to call for backup, leaving Andy to handle the situation. Marco, frustrated with Andy's lack of action, jumps into the pit to help Amelia and Percy.

In the pit, Marco bravely fends off the snakes, allowing Amelia to lift Percy out of the pit with the help of Ranger Andy. However, when Marco tries to lift Amelia out, the makeshift rope they are using rips, causing Amelia to fall back into the pit. As the snakes close in, Marco and Amelia confess their feelings for each other. Just as they are about to be overwhelmed by the snakes, Ranger Seth returns with a rope and they are able to escape the pit.

After their ordeal, Marco and Amelia share a passionate kiss, much to Percy's delight. However, their moment of triumph is short-lived as the rangers take Percy into custody, intending to return him to his care home. Amelia receives a phone call, learning that she has missed a career opportunity due to her adventure in the woods. Despite this setback, Amelia and Marco decide to continue their relationship.

The narrative concludes with Amelia and Marco visiting Percy at his care home. They help Percy escape and the three of them head off into the woods for another adventure. The story ends on a hopeful note, with Marco and Amelia's relationship strengthened by their shared experiences and Percy embarking on a new adventure.

### **6 comparable television shows or feature films:**

1. "The Way" (2010): This film shares similarities with "Trail Mixed" in its themes of grief, self-discovery, and the transformative power of travel. In "The Way," a father embarks on the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage to honor his late son, meeting a variety of characters along the way. The comparison is made due to the shared themes of a journey prompted by loss, the importance of companionship, and the personal growth that comes from confronting the past.
2. "Wild" (2014): This critically acclaimed film, based on Cheryl Strayed's memoir, follows a woman who decides to hike the Pacific Crest Trail alone after experiencing personal tragedy. The comparison is made due to the shared themes of using a challenging hike as a means to process grief and find personal redemption. Both narratives also feature strong character development and the healing power of nature.
3. "A Walk in the Woods" (2015): This film, based on Bill Bryson's memoir, follows two old friends who decide to hike the Appalachian Trail, encountering various challenges and eccentric characters along the way. The comparison is made due to the shared elements of reconnecting with a past relationship during a challenging hike, the comedic elements introduced by eccentric characters met along the way, and the themes of self-discovery and personal growth.
4. "The Proposal" - This film also features a couple who were once in a relationship and are forced to spend time together in a remote location, leading to comedic situations and a rekindling of their romance.
5. "Leap Year" - Similar to "Trail Mixed", this film involves a journey with unexpected adventures and a past romantic relationship that is revisited.
6. "Just Go With It" - This film also features a couple pretending to be in a relationship, leading to comedic situations and eventually, real feelings.

### **OVERALL:**

1. Strong Character Development: "Trail Mixed" showcases strong character development. Each character has a distinct personality, are all well-rounded, and undergoes significant growth throughout the story. Their interactions and relationships add depth to the narrative and make the characters relatable to the audience.



2. Engaging Plot: The plot of "Trail Mixed" is engaging and filled with unexpected twists and turns. The story is a well-crafted narrative that combines elements of adventure, suspense, and romance, keeping the audience invested in the journey from start to finish.

3. Effective Use of Humor: Despite the serious themes, "Trail Mixed" effectively uses humor to lighten the mood and add depth to the characters. This balance of humor and drama enhances the overall storytelling.

4. The screenplay is also commendable for its exploration of themes such as loss, friendship, and personal growth. These themes are woven seamlessly into the narrative, adding layers of complexity to the story and making it more impactful.

5. A favorite scene in the script that combines humor and emotionality is when Marco and Amelia are camping for the night and they are interrupted by the sound of a bear. In a panic, they scramble to find something to fend off the bear. Marco mistakenly grabs a can of deodorant instead of bear spray. The bear charges their tent, causing them to flee. Percy makes a timely entrance, using Marco's lighter and the deodorant can to create a makeshift flamethrower. Marco throws cheese-berries into the woods to distract the bear, and they manage to escape. This scene combines humor with the comedic elements of Marco's mistake and Percy's flamethrower, and emotionality with the fear and panic caused by the bear.