

TMI -- Fantasy Island

By Jeff Drinnan

Due to irreparable damage to the nuclear plant and public protest, Three Mile Island is being used for a vacation resort and is now Fantasy Island. The following is an account, in playscript form, of the island under this new use. Scene: Three Mile Island. Mr. Roarke and Tattoo stand at a clearing on the island, looking towards Harrisburg International Airport.

Tattoo: The plane, the plane!! (A DC 10 crashes into a cooling tower.)

Tattoo: Bawth! Look! Did you see that?

Mr. Roarke: Yes Tattoo. Don't be alarmed. That happened in reality and, consequently, is no concern of ours. Ah, here comes the Fantasy Island Plane now. (The plane lands and people deplane.)

Tattoo: Who's that, bawth?

Mr. Roarke: That is Mr. Walter Critz, president of Metropolitan Edison, the electric power company which had an unfortunate event on this island.

Tattoo: You mean he had a party that someone pooped, bawth?

Mr. Roarke: I suppose you could say that, Tattoo. Evidently, Mr. Critz is suffering from a misprojected image. You see, Tattoo, he is not the lovable character in the eyes of many people around Harrisburg as he feels he should be. His fantasy is to restore his image as a nice guy. (Mr. Critz approaches Mr. Roarke and Tattoo.)

Mr. Roarke: Welcome to Fantasy Island, Mr. Critz.

Mr. Critz: Thank You, Mr. Roarke. I've come to you in time of great crisis. Can you restore my image?

Mr. Roarke: Mr. Critz, this is Fantasy Island. Anything is possible.

Tattoo: Who's the next visitor?

Mr. Roarke: That is Mr. I. Conum, a Nuclear Regulatory official, Tattoo.

Tattoo: Oh yes. Didn't they recently announce that the amount of radiation received by any person during the March 28 event was like smoking 30 cigarettes in a lifetime?

Mr. Roarke: Yes Tattoo, that is correct.

Dr. Gross: Do I dare disturb the universe? Do I dare? Do I dare? (I. Conum approaches.)

I. Conum: Nice beach.

Dr. Gross: Yes, it is.

I. Conum: I'm here to see if the fish are doing their job of eating up all the radioactive water.

Dr. Gross: What's this?

I. Conum: Yes. We, the NRC, have stocked the Susquehanna with radiation-absorbing fish -- Radia Absorbis Maximus. They suck up radiation like boron control rods in a nuclear plant and then are washed up on the shore.

Dr. Gross: What do you do with the radioactive fish?

I. Conum: We ship them, one by one, to hospitals where their radiation is used in X-ray machines.

Dr. Gross: How do you transport them?

I. Conum: We flush them down a toilet and they're carried through lead pipes directly to the X-ray room.

Dr. Gross: Very interesting. So it's a lead-pipe cinch. I just wish that enlightening people to culture could be done so readily.

I. Conum: It can -- in the laboratory.

Dr. Gross: That may very well be. My associates and I have decided to start a science center at the college where I'm provost. One must not put all his eggs in one basket.

Scene IV: The plane boarding area. (Through master diplomacy, Mr. Roarke has worked out an agreement between Mr. Critz, Mr. Conum, the Students, and Dr. Gross.)

Mr. Roarke: Now the Frank N. Stein Memorial Science Center can be built, the beer pipeline project can go full steam ahead, and the public relations office can have a branch at TMI information center, and we can all be friends.

Scene V: The student center

Dr. Gross (raising a beer mug): Friends, Nukes and countrymen, lend me your ears. Danceteller will now present a tribute to the beer pipeline. Curtain!

Mr. Critz: Good. Now just sign this contract . . .

Dr. Gross: Don't do it, Faustus!

(Mouths agape, everyone looks at Dr. Gross, as he is now visible.)

Dr. Gross: Away, Mephistopheles! Don't tempt those students!

Mr. Critz: The names Critz. Walter Critz.

Dr. Gross: A rose by any other name is still a rose.

Mr. Critz (to the students): What a strange person!

Tattoo: Isn't that what people said about Pete Rose's daughter.

Mr. Roarke: What's that, Tattoo? Oh, yes. Pete Rose's alleged illegitimate daughter. A Rose by any other name is still a Rose.

Students: Hey! He's the guy who foiled the plan to finish the beer pipeline.

An Engineering Junior: What is the beer pipeline?

Seniors: It's an engineering project which would convert the towers here to cool beer instead of water and will pump beer to the student center.

Junior: That's a good idea. (A voice booms over a loud-speaker)

Voice: Of course it's a good idea!

Everyone: What was that?

Mr. Roarke: That was R.I. Dculus, the originator of the beer pipeline idea. He is the standard for engineering ideas just as Monty Python is the model for absurdist humor.

Students: Let's go get 'em.

Mr. Critz: Who? Dculus or this beer pipeline foiler? (Dr. Gross runs off. The students pursue. Dr. Gross ducks behind a bush and hides. Frustrated, the students give up the chase.)

Mr. Critz: Don't worry about him -- we'll work something out. After all, Capitol Campus has a public relations department.

Scene III: a small strip of beach on Three Mile Island. (Dr. Gross strolls along, talking to himself.)

Tattoo: How do they come up with stuff like that?

MR. Roarke: Ours is not to question why. We are here merely to provide a service. Anyway, Mr. Conum's fantasy is to concoct the most far-fetched story ever told and have the public believe it -- sort of an ultimate April Fool's joke, but with no "April Fool" following the person being told the joke's deception.

Tattoo: Who's next?

Mr. Roarke: That man is Dr. Theodore Gross. His fantasy is to have Capitol Campus become the cultural center of the world. (Dr. Gross nods as he passes Tattoo and Mr. Roarke.)

Dr. Gross: Let us go then, you and I . . .

Tattoo: Bawth?

Mr. Roarke: Yes, Tattoo?

Tattoo: Who's he talking to?

Mr. Roarke: I believe what he just uttered was a figure of speech. You know how these humanities people are.

Scene II: Somewhere on the island

(Some engineering students from Capitol Campus, who had been wandering about the island, spot Walter Critz.)

Engineering Students: Our hero!

Mr. Critz (smiling): Some of my fans! Wonderful!

Engineering Students: Long live nuclear power!

Mr. Critz: Yes, I'm glad everybody hasn't listened to Chicken Little. (Mr. Roarke and Tattoo approach)

Mr. Roarke: I see you found some fans, Mr. Critz.

Mr. Critz: Yes. These guys and gals support me. They're even wearing Met Ed. T shirts -- the shirts with the dual cooling tower emblems. (To the students) How would you kids like to work for me?

Female Engineer: We're not kids! I am a woman!

Mr. Critz: I can very well see that!

Engineering Students: Yes, Uncle Walter, we would.

(Meanwhile, Dr. Gross

watches from behind a bush on a nearby hill.)

Dr. Gross (to a humanities colleague): I told you I'd pack them in somehow!

Humanities Colleague: Yes. And it should be a staggering performance!

Movie Review

Starting over-stated

By Shirley Stevens

"Starting Over," starring the glamorous trio, Candice Bergen, Burt Reynolds and Jill Clayburgh, has scenes in it which drop any pretense of glamor. Jill Clayburgh's nose runs in front of the camera, and Candice Bergen opens her throat to sing and what comes out is anything but melodic. And Burt Reynolds is looking anything but glamorous in his green army jacket and jeans. Despite the clever distractions, "Starting Over" isn't the least bit touching. If a story about a man going through a lonely separation doesn't open a little cut somewhere, then the humor it is supposed to evoke seems superficial.

Now for the good news. Candice Bergen may be the only reason anyone needs to see this picture. If you need even more incentive, then you might be attracted by the characters. Even though nothing of substance is said throughout the picture, the characters are so glossy that they manage to say nothing well. In one scene where Burt Reynolds and Candice Bergen are marketing together, she asks him what kind of coffee he would like. His wry reply is, "Colombian". Her wry response is, "Then we might as well get Folger's". Burt Reynolds suffers an acute anxiety attack in the middle of a department store. Twenty five people offer him a valium. Okay, mildly funny.

The plot revolves around a marital split and Burt Reynolds' vacillation between his ex-wife and his new girl friend. He ends up happily ever after with the girl friend (Clayburgh). Clayburgh is getting monotonous with that contemporary, hip, blah style that repeats itself in all her roles. Given the trite nature of picture, there is very little to review. Leaving the theater I thought, "I can't wait to see "The Rose."