

Director's Statement:

When I started working on "For Us" in early 2007, it was meant to be a quick project to end a long dry spell. After a battle with cancer and a folded production business, I was ready to start something new.

Someone had told me about Fox's show *On the Lot* and suggested that I throw together a short film to enter. Sure, why not? I enlisted Tina, a close friend of mine, and we quickly wrote up a film script.

It started as a pure science-fiction tale of espionage, but it quickly shifted into a dark film noir with a science-fiction twist. No problem. We passed the deadline for *On the Lot*, but we still wanted this to be a quick project. No special effects, no fancy camera moves, just quick. We gathered up a cast and crew, and despite some rushing to finish the musical centerpiece of the film, we were on track. We scheduled a shoot at a bar in Boonsboro, Maryland.

A week before the shoot, the location's owner had a heart attack. Thankfully, he was fine, but it pushed our production schedule back a few months. A month later, our lead actress needed to leave the production to take care of family.

Our "quick project" was now entering its eighth month of production, and I was getting desperate. I came fairly close to canning the whole thing when a long walk with a friend gave the film new life and a new direction. I had been improving my green screen skills, and he suggested that I just shoot the whole film on green screen to make scheduling easier.

With that, we had gone from a no-frills, one-day shoot to a film where every shot had to be composited onto a completely fake background. Despite this new complexity, the film started moving. We were able to bring back one of our other contenders for lead actress, and production progressed steadily for six months. With renewed focus and some newfound patience, the project chugged along. Nearly two years after the genesis of the film, we finally finished "For Us" in January 2009.

Even though it's taken me two years to make an eight-minute film, the challenges have yielded more experience and opportunity than any quick project could have. I've grown a lot as a filmmaker, and all the setbacks have only served to make it a better film in the end. My goal with this project is to eventually shoot a feature-length version that tells the rest of Ralph and Alice's story, but I hope that the film stands on its own and that people enjoy watching it as much as I enjoyed making it.