

## Fairydom with a Straight Face

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### *Little Victim*

Written by **Bruce Dellis**; Directed and Edited by **Dean Ronalds**

**JuSpan Productions © 2005**

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**JuSpan Productions** is a prolific company, and two of their latest films are proof that they're heading in the right direction. The short films *The Netherbeast of Berm-Tech Industries, Inc.* and their recently premiered *Little Victim* were given a screening at Harkins Valley Art Theatre on Thursday August 18. The well-attended event highlighted the talented brothers director **Dean Ronalds** and actor **Brian Ronalds**, and the martini-dry writing of **Bruce Dellis**.

Similar in tone and subject matter to their earlier *Netherbeast*, *Little Victim* ventures into the realms of the supernatural with a straight face. Brian Ronalds is Duane, a shady character meeting his upper crust divorced father Howard (the legendary **Robert Wagner**) in a parking garage. Howard has trophy Tracey (**Lori Singer**) draped in the passenger seat, while Duane has his rather lower-class mother Irene (**Laura Durant**) in tow. Duane has a treasure to deliver. However, he also has a surprise in the trunk that warrants a lot of discussion and debate.

The script is talky, but the talk is quite worthwhile. Dellis likes his humor presented with the kind of delivery that borders on dramatic. All four of the actors prove adept at saying the impossible as though it were routine. Wagner is strong.

Always known for his natural suaveness, he uses his sonorous voice to espouse some pretty fantastical lines. In the opposite extreme, Durant is very funny as trailer trash, making her character into a mockery even while proving the most knowledgeable about the subject. Ronalds plays deadly serious quite well, while the weakest performance comes from Singer, who starts off disjointedly as the stereotypical dumb blonde but gains momentum when given more to play.

Dean Ronalds' camera work is consistent and sometimes clever. The scenes are quite professionally shot and edited, visually keeping the tone of earnestness set forth by the script and actors.

The announcement has been made of expanding *Netherbeast* into a feature. I look forward to this prospect and many more films from the Ronalds brothers.