

## Interview: Adam Pally and Dan Gregor talk “Most Likely to Murder”, Comedy, and “Crazy Ex-Girlfriend”

Submitted by [JonHC](#) [1] on April 29, 2018 - 3:49pm

- [Adam Pally](#) [2]
- [Crazy Ex-Boyfriend](#) [3]
- [Crazy Ex-Girlfriend](#) [4]
- [Dan Gregor](#) [5]
- [Dog Days](#) [6]
- [HollywoodChicago.com](#) [7]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [8]
- [Interview](#) [9]
- [Jon Espino](#) [10]
- [Lionsgate](#) [11]
- [Most Likely to Murder](#) [12]
- [Rachel Bloom](#) [13]

CHICAGO - High school is either the best or worst experience of people’s lives. There is no middle ground. It’s always a constant battle that doesn’t end even after a decade. Add that pressure on top of coming home for the holiday with a hint of death and you get “Most Likely to Murder”. We talk with Adam Pally and Dan Gregor about comedy, “Crazy Ex-Girlfriend”, and more!



**HollywoodChicago.com:** Where did you get the idea to combine something Hitchcockian with something high school?

**Dan Gregor:** We knew right out of the gate that we wanted to do a coming home for the holidays’ movie. That night before Thanksgiving is such a potent little capsule of nostalgia.

**Adam Pally:** That weekend is very specific when you come home. Dan was saying that it was like Facebook before Facebook because it was the time where you got to hang out with everyone at your local Houlihan’s. You found out what everyone has been up to, and who got fat, who’s bald, and who got pregnant. That was the original setting we were always thinking of placing a movie.

**Dan Gregor:** We come from this comedy world where the hardest thing about writing a comedy is that you can have a really funny 45 minutes, and the idea is really funny but then you check out because you have all of the emotional stuff figured out. For us, it was super important to figure out how to tell a story that was completely engaging right through the end. It was important to put those feelings of trying to hold on to your nostalgia into something physicalized and scary.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** Was the character of Billy based on anyone you knew personally?

**Dan Gregor:** Well, we knew we were writing it for Pally.

**Adam Pally:** I think it’s not hard to picture me as someone who didn’t make it. Then to think of where would I end up and how would I be, and I think it was a pretty honest amalgamation of that.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** What was the hardest part about playing Billy?

**Adam Pally:** Honestly, the hardest part about playing Billy was gaining weight and feeling comfortable. I hadn’t been up to that weight since

“Happy Endings”.

**Dan Gregor:** We pushed Pally so hard because we had written the script and we knew we really wanted him to look bad to show a contrast from how he looked in high school. Nobody looks as good as they did in high school. We really wanted for everyone who saw him a decade later to be a little bit disgusted by his appearance.

**Adam Pally:** I had just come off “Band Aid” where I had to be super thin. Well, for me, super thin at least.

**Dan Gregor:** Your head was still enormous (*laughs*)

**Adam Pally:** (*laughs*) Well there’s nothing I could do about that. I’d have to sit in a steam room for a week.

**Dan Gregor:** I remember when he showed up to pre-production, my co-writer Doug [Mand] and I were like, “Man, Adam Pally is too skinny.” We just started putting pastries in front of him and forcing him to chain-smoke.

**Adam Pally:** I gained probably like 15 pounds in two weeks. The vanity of it all is the hardest part. I’ve become used to exercising. I like to exercise and I like to eat healthily, so when that gets taken away it can change your mental state.

**Dan Gregor:** Just about every day, Pally took it upon himself to order a little treat for the crew. It was basically just a parade of fried chicken and late-night pasta.

**Adam Pally:** It honestly made me feel better about having to eat all that stuff if they did too.

**Dan Gregor:** Everyone was getting fat. I even put on sympathy weight.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** At any point during the planning process, were you ever considering having a musical number? You have the incredibly talented Rachel Bloom from “Crazy Ex-Girlfriend”, Adam Pally who was just in “Band Aid”, and even your co-writer Doug Mand who played a pretty good YouTube drummer.

**Dan Gregor:** We actually took that idea and made a music video to promote the movie. It was a very ludicrous, tangential promo. The movie is absolutely not an 80’s mystery/action comedy, but we really love that genre and we always felt that this movie was kind of inspired by those buddy/mystery cop movies and we wanted to make an 80’s action movie theme song.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** This was your first time directing a feature-length film. How was your experience?

**Dan Gregor:** I had done a ton of short films, music videos, and web series. On the first day on set, I showed up and sat down in my big boy director’s chair and I overshot like crazy. Around lunchtime, I was told that we were already 3 hours behind. I had a mini panic attack and I realized that I boned our first day. In the second half of the day, we had no time to get it as good as we wanted. After that first day, it went into my bones hard and I realized that it was no different from all of the things I had been doing before. I know how to make something quick and get great performances and on a low budget. As soon as I relicked into my own skill set, I felt super confident and knew exactly what I was doing.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** You’ve worked on past projects with your wife Rachel Bloom, but this is your first feature film together. How is your experience working so closely with your partner?

**Dan Gregor:** It’s the best! Rachel and I met as comedians. We are each other’s biggest fans and first sounding board for everything we think of. We’ve always been very collaborative. Getting to work on “Crazy Ex-Girlfriend” has been an amazing experience because I get to be there and support her and be her ears on the outside a little bit. Likewise, she was able to be my support system there. As long as we maintain the rule of not talking about work in bed, everything is great.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** Adam, were you able to improv any of our scenes or was everything completely scripted?

**Adam Pally:** The script was amazing and really tight. This movie was a challenge for me because a lot of it is physical bits and Chaplin-y. You can’t really improvise there, but you have to play the moment. In the scenes where there was heavy dialogue, there were certainly times where Dan would let me experiment. We have such a shorthand where I can yell out, “Dan, what about this?” and he’ll say either yes or no.

**Dan Gregor:** Or vice versa. Ultimately, I don’t believe in directing that has to be word perfect to the script. The script has to come out through him so anything that sounds and feels better for him is better.

**Adam Pally:** On that level, it felt like a great collaborative effort.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** The cast mostly consists of actors with heavy comedic backgrounds. What are the advantages of working with comedians?

**Adam Pally:** There’s a fluidity and acceptance that there is no wrong answer. There’s this mentality that whatever time you have and whatever money you have let’s just shoot the moment. Let’s make it funny, there’s no wrong answer and no way something could be bad. There’s a comfortability to that.

**Dan Gregor:** That was also the biggest challenge. When we got Vincent Kartheiser to be the villain in the movie, I knew we would have to be better than that sometimes. He’s an actor actor and one of the most prepared actors I’ve ever met. It was very important to know to switch

out of that gear too.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** What are some of the disadvantages?

**Adam Pally:** People doing bits. Sometimes there are days when you’re not even in a headspace to be funny because the scene is just you just have to walk from point A to point B, and you go to sit down and everyone is doing a bit. Sometimes you just want to tell them to shut the fuck up. Personally, I like doing bits all the time because it keeps me awake, but I can see how it can be frustrating.

**Dan Gregor:** I had all of these good friends and hilarious people on set and I had to try my hardest to shut them out. Even then, it ends up being a positive for the set’s mood. Because everyone is so funny, sometimes they would improvise their way outside of the scene. You have to end up paying closer attention to what scenes you need and what you can use for an edited out picture.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** Any upcoming projects we should keep an eye out for?

**Adam Pally:** I have a movie coming out over the summer called “Dog Days” and it was directed by Ken Marino. It’s a big romantic comedy with Vanessa Hudgens and a bunch of dogs. I just finished a play in New York too.

**Dan Gregor:** “Crazy Ex-Girlfriend” is coming back for season 4 and work starts in May. I’m going to be directing some this year.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** That’ll be the final season, right? Is there a lot of pressure to go out with a bang?

**Adam Pally:** Well, you start “Crazy Ex-Wife” in 2019, don’t you? *(laughs)*

**Dan Gregor:** *(laughs)* Yeah, then we start “Crazy Ex-How I Met Your Mother”.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** *(laughs)* Or maybe a spin-off called “Crazy Ex-Boyfriend”.

**Adam Pally:** That would be great. I like that idea.

**Dan Gregor:** We’re going to just license this all over the world.

*“Most Likely to Murder” comes out on VOD and DVD on May 1st. Featuring Adam Pally, Rachel Bloom, Vincent Kartheiser, Billy Eichner, and Doug Mand. Directed by Dan Gregor. Written by Dan Gregor and Doug Mand. Rated “R”*



[14]

By [JON ESPINO](#) [15]  
Film & Video Game Critic  
HollywoodChicago.com  
[jon@hollywoodchicago.com](mailto:jon@hollywoodchicago.com) [14]

© 2016 Jon Espino, HollywoodChicago.com

**Source URL (retrieved on Apr 18 2024 - 8:26pm):**

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/28481/interview-adam-pally-and-dan-gregor-talk-most-likely-to-murder-comedy-and-crazy-ex-girlfr>

#### Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/jonhc>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/adam-pally>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/crazy-ex-boyfriend>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/crazy-ex-girlfriend>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dan-gregor>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dog-days>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagocom>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/interview.html>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/jon-espino>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/lionsgate>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/most-likely-to-murder>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/rachel-bloom>
- [14] <mailto:jon@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#JON>