



Test Sample

The First Draft (Televison)

01/13/2016

Page Count: 1

Genre: Drama

Analyst: 47376

Rating: Consider

## COMMENTS :

### CHARACTER:

DANIEL - The lead of the story is clearly a tormented man - he's been dragged into this life of crime by his father and has hated himself for it. While this isn't particularly unique, what works really well is Daniel's manic energy. This is a refreshing character trait in a genre known for brooding leads. It is also worth noting that the lead always remains likable despite his massive mistakes - including murder - because his decisions are always so impossible. We can almost see ourselves making the choices he makes. It will be very interesting to see how this character maintains his morality as the episodes continue.

While Daniel is extremely complex, what hurts this character is his connection to Maria. While we know he is obsessed with 'winning her back' we don't really get enough of their back-story to ever know why the two were together to begin with. What is it they saw in each other? As the story plays out in its current form, Daniel seems more just like an obsessed stalker than an ex-husband. While a level of that is clearly intentional, more of their relationship would make the driving force on this character shine.

MARIA - Maria is a very likable character and we fear for her safety. This makes it that much more painful and shocking that she's brutally executed at the close of the pilot! This is just the right hook that keeps audiences watching after the pilot.

This character's biggest problem is tied closely into Daniel's - we don't follow that relationship. This is especially true from Maria's end: why did she ever love Daniel?

LEN - The fact that the villain is the adopted brother of the lead is interesting, but doesn't play out to the level it could. How does this close relationship impact their choices? In this current draft, it doesn't really feel like it does. The brothers battle each other without hesitation. If they grew up as best friends we need to see that conflict now that they're enemies - even from Len.

Jack and Matthew, Daniel's father and son, are both effective characters, but we could get more about how Jack feels about Daniel to really bring both characters to life.

#### PLOT:

What is really amazing about this plot is that it is always completely unpredictable. We never quite know where it will turn and yet (almost) every twist is always believable.

The biggest area that feels like it needs to be revisited is the cops' search for Daniel. The way Daniel escapes their grasp feels a bit stretched. It's interesting to see Daniel interacting directly with Hughes, but watching him convince Hughes of his innocence only hours after murdering his partner feels almost impossible. There needs to be a more setup build up for this payoff to work.

As can often be the case in these stories, the villain seems to have no fear of the police. Is this because he has bought them? If so, it may be worthy to touch on so that his unhindered reign of terror on everything he crosses feels a bit more realistic.

However, save for the few issues mentioned, this plot is really solid.

#### STRUCTURE:

The pilot throws a lot of obstacles at our heroes, but almost so many that we find ourselves wondering if the story will be able to maintain the pace for even one whole season, let alone 5,6,7 seasons.

The pilot has a feel of a mini-series like FARGO. The scope is small enough that we suspect by the end of one series the plot lines will all be tied up. Any producers you're pitching to will have the privilege of knowing if that's the case and with the growing market for that kind of material, this script could be right at home somewhere.

#### DIALOGUE:

When you have a bunch of low-life criminals interacting in a small, specific part of town you inevitably end up with a lot of characters sounding similar. The best thing the author did to prevent this from being too problematic is focus heavily on giving Daniel a unique voice. However, after the lead, everyone else sounds effectively the same. Some have some quirks, but they aren't truly defined as unique individuals through their voice.

Matthew also suffers from speaking a bit younger than he actually is. This is a common problem with child characters in scripts.

Finally, Daniel's speeches early on (especially with him on Maria's porch) carry a lot of exposition.

#### CONCEPT

The crime-drama arena is crowded, but the nice infusion of higher paced action and a manic lead into a noir style story really works to set this script and concept apart. While this isn't something I would call "high-concept", it is certainly a very realistic platform for a fantastic pilot script.

OVERALL: PASS / **CONSIDER** / RECOMMEND

The pilot's unique characters and twisted plot set this crime-drama apart from the pack. The writer is clearly talented in this area and infuses just enough of their own voice into the genre for this to be a project that should get them some attention.

Make sure to inject the story with broad range of characters that have different backgrounds. Also, make sure that believability is never sacrificed for yet another plot twist. However, the writer has a very solid foundation and only minor revisions need to be made from this current draft.

Excellent work and I look forward to seeing your writing on the TV one day soon.

# tslnotes

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## Scores

plot: 8.0

character: 7.0

concept: 7.0

format: 9.0

voice: 7.0

structure: 6.0

dialogue: 6.0