



SCRIPT READER PRO

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

TITLE	XXXXXX	GENRE	Drama
WRITER(S)	XXXXXX	CIRCA	1970s/Present
SUBMITTED BY	XXXXXX	LOCATION	Various
FORM / PAGES	Feature/86	BUDGET	Low
DATE	XXXXXX	ANALYST	XXXXXX

LOGLINE

Removed for writer confidentiality.

COMMENTS

Thank you, XXXXXX, for sending in your screenplay for review. I believe that XXXXXX has the potential to become a striking, thematically resonant dramatic movie with a unique perspective that sets it apart from the pack. On the whole, I think your story works on a fundamental level and the overall structure/pacing you have in place is largely effective. As such, if I were to do a pass, it would be more of a polish rather than a ground-up rewrite. However, XXXXXX is currently affected by a handful of smaller, more specific issues -- ones that could be rectified through a relatively straightforward approach which I will lay out below.

First and foremost, I had some issues with the character of Alex. He's the protagonist of this script, but it often felt as though he wasn't the one pushing the story forward. From the get-go, it felt like a missed opportunity to have Greg find these adoption documents and foist them upon Alex. Instead, why not make Alex more active by having him come upon the folder in his adoptive mother's bedroom himself and then personally electing to learn about his birth mother, rather than being prodded into doing so.

Next, I generally quite liked the past sequences to Marina and Nhut's relationship, though they sometimes became logistically confusing when you would include "flashbacks within a flashback" to even earlier time periods, such as the border crossing scene on page 32 or the Vietnam scene on page 46. For the sake of narrative economy and clarity, I would suggest keeping the action to just two time-lines: the present and the late '70s, while simply having characters allude to these older events without necessarily showing them visually. Also, though I was moved by Marina and Nhut's dynamic, I couldn't help but feel that Nhut could use a more pronounced and colorful "voice" on the page. Currently, he reads as a bit flat and generic at points, so I would recommend giving a few more eccentricities or quirks to the way he speaks and acts so as to allow him to truly come alive. Similarly, it seemed as though there were a couple of moments in this storyline that should have been wrenchingly dramatic but didn't quite live up to their potential. For example, it struck me as odd that Nhut never witnesses one of Marina's schizophrenic episodes. This would be the ultimate test of their relationship and would push both characters to the brink, so it feels like a missed opportunity to up the stakes and tension.

Lastly, there were some circumstances in your plot which occasionally struck me as a little muddled. For example, I can't help but wonder whether Alex's adoptive mother's death should be the inciting incident of the script. On a certain level, it felt sort of redundant, since, later, Alex finds out that his birth mother is also dead. By having both tragedies stacked up on each other, the latter one loses a little of its potency.

CONCLUSION

Thanks again for sending in your script for review, XXXXXX. It's clear that you are an intelligent, nuanced writer, and I feel that XXXXXX really speaks to something universal about the human experience. That being said, I feel it needs some work in order to fully come together. Were I to take on this polish, I would focus on cutting down redundant plot elements, giving Nhut more of his own "voice" on the page, and making Alex a truly active lead character.