

SHORE SCRIPTS

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Title: *Spiral*

Writer: Stefán Steinsen

Length: 9 Pages

Genre: Drama

Location: Denmark

Circa: Present Day

Budget: Low

Coverage Date: 03/27/2022

Format: Short

Logline:

A dedicated daughter meets her mother in the park day after day – even though the aging woman no longer recognizes her.

Industry Scorecard:

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	PROFICIENT	NEEDS ATTENTION
PREMISE		X		
STORY		X		
CHARACTERS			X	
STRUCTURE		X		
DIALOGUE		X		
MARKETABILITY			X	

FEEDBACK:

Premise

A dedicated daughter meets her mother in the park day after day – even though the aging woman doesn't recognize her. *Spiral* is a quietly moving relationship drama, at once soft, sweet, and emotionally devastating.

The story here is working well. Savvy audiences likely won't be surprised by the reveal that Anne is Charlotte's mother, but maybe that's okay; the story can still pack a punch without that reveal feeling like a big twist. Anne finally recognizing her (pg. 8) is ultimately very satisfying.

Otherwise, the work left to do here may feel a little technical and surgical. Inserting some more character description when Anne and Charlotte are introduced is vital. Combing through for redundancies, reformatting to help the flow of the dialogue, and replacing the more ambiguous descriptions with clear, specific actions and images will all make this an even more memorable, emotional short script than it already is.

Marketability

This is an appropriately contained story for a short film, and it shouldn't be too challenging – financially or logistically – to produce. Casting will be the big challenge here, and inserting some more character description into the script will be vital to helping producers, casting agents, and, ultimately, the actors themselves bring these characters to life.

This is a generally very well written document, but will benefit from a proofread, even for small typos and grammar snafus, to ensure that the reader's attention always remains on what's actually important: the story.

Current Predicted Industry Outcome:

RECOMMEND	CONSIDER	PASS
	X	

Character

Writing some character descriptions – a bit of physical and even behavioral information, relayed when a character is introduced for the first time – will do wonders in helping the reader imagine these people as real flesh and blood, as they read through the unfolding action and dialogue. This description will help actors, too, even from the first time they read the script, as they form ideas of who these people are, what they look like, and how they might move through the world. Withholding this information misses an opportunity; it leaves perhaps too much ambiguity and room for each reader to form their own image of the characters. Inevitably, every reader will picture them differently. Relaying a few succinct, specific details will minimize that potential for misinterpretation.

Dialogue/Sound

The dialogue here is well observed, especially considering the complicated, sensitive, slightly disorienting nature of the subject matter.

A few technical notes: A description like “answers the question a bit insecurely” (pg. 4) might be more effectively communicated as an in-dialogue parenthetical like this: (insecurely) before Charlotte’s “My name is... Charlotte” (pg. 4). “Charlotte smiles a little as she asks Anne” (pg. 5) could be relayed simply as “(smiling a little)” before “Do they taste good?” (pg. 5). Reformatting dialogue-related descriptions like these might better maintain the flow of the dialogue in these scenes. “Charlotte gets interrupted by Anne” (pg. 6) might not even be necessary to include on the page. Consider instead replacing the ellipses at the end of Charlotte’s preceding line with a dash, then following it immediately with Anne’s dialogue. That might make it clear enough that Anne is interrupting Charlotte!

Structure/Pace

The action and description is generally very helpful, but comb through the script for redundancies and ambiguities.

Something like “...without saying a word. They sit in silence” (pg. 1) is redundant. Even removing those four last words will make for a quicker, cleaner reading experience.

Using an entire action line for an ellipses (pg. 1, pg. 6), similarly, feels like a missed opportunity. What will actually be happening on screen at this moment? What will the viewer see? Maybe Anne and Charlotte awkwardly steal glances at one another. Maybe one tries to avoid the other’s gaze. When “Charlotte looks at Anne” (pg. 3), maybe there’s something specific about her gaze that could be helpful in moving the story forward, or in creating more tension. When “Charlotte is obviously very bothered by the question” (pg. 4), maybe there’s something she does – a tick that suddenly reveals itself, a face she makes, etc. – that makes this clear to the viewer. Replacing ambiguous beats like these with clear, specific actions and images will make for an even more engaging, memorable read – and it will make the characters feel even more alive than they already do.

Conclusion

This is a moving story, told with a clear and intoxicating depth of feeling. The story is working well; Anne finally recognizing her daughter is an emotionally satisfying ending. Writing some more description for these two lead characters, reformatting to help with the flow of the dialogue, removing redundancies, and replacing ambiguous descriptions with clear, specific, and memorable actions and images may all make this an even more engrossing read.

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