

Entry Type: Standard Entry with Upgraded Feedback (WeScreenplay TV Contest (2020))

Synopsis included: No

Notes Date: 26 September 2020

Analyst: DT35

Ranking: 77th Percentile

OPERATION: VENGEFUL CROSS-UP

Drama

Television (one-hour)

60 Pages

By: Dennis F. Stevens

RATING

CONSIDER

77TH PERCENTILE

Percentiles are based on historical data of scores given out by this analyst.

For increased consistency, we calculate a project's pass/consider/recommend rating by using the scores input by the analyst and their history of scoring. Approximately 3 percent of projects receive a *recommend* and 20 percent receiver a *consider*.

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Opening Thoughts

A military thriller about careful coordination, revenge and the effects that one's pursuit of revenge can have, whether intended or not, on those we care about.

CHARACTERS

The Central cast is well-rounded and it contains a good number of key players.

Rachel: Shown to be a woman whose whole life has been centered around avenging the murder of her mother by radical terrorists. Rachel's existence comes across as so consumed by her desire for revenge that it doesn't really feel like we get much of a sense of who she is outside of this mission. While it is understandable that avenging her mother would be her primary life's aim, because the only context we really see her in is either discussing the mission or discussing the mission's aftermath, she has a tendency to come across as a little bare. Some things to consider that would elevate her characterization: what kind of things does she enjoy outside of work? In what ways does the loss of her mother at such a young age affect her emotionally speaking? What does she feel that Abu Jihad took from her? After she brings Abu Jihad down, in what ways does she think her life will be different? (And how does that end up contrasting to what comes to pass?) What is her relationship with her father like and how did it grow over time?

The above said, the title page of the script indicates that "Operation: Vengeful Cross-up" is the 60 minute pilot episode to a TV miniseries consisting of 12 additional 2-hour episodes (already writ-ten). If so then one can assume that due to page count restrictions, the characters are better fleshed out in subsequent episodes. Still, since she is the lead, it might be prudent to increase the pilot episode from 60 to 90 minutes in length so as to better flesh out Rachel's character.

It is indicated that Harry Fletcher and Jonathan Moore, skilled former Marines working with Rachel to help her achieve her ends, are extremely successful in civilian life. Indications are that following the pilot, it's their story that will propel subsequent episodes. Jonathan is the solid strategic brain that plans the missions while Fletcher is the commando who carries them out. In the 60 minute pilot, it would be interesting to learn a little more about Moore's personal history with Fletcher. How long have the two been working together? What kind of other situation have they found themselves? While this will undoubtedly be explored in future episodes of the series, hinting at these things a bit more in this pilot episode would help to further illustrate their relationship.

Issa Said (pronounced Seigh-eeid): Portrayed as an Arab interrupter and guide for western journal-ists who want to report from Gaza or the West Bank. Becoming Rachel's lover, Issa advises her not to let her violent desires get the better of her. It might be interesting to dive a little bit deeper into the emotions of their relationship. While we get a clear sense that the two are physically attracted to each other, what has brought them together beyond their physical attraction? What about each other has caused the two to fall in love? Of course, this would require the pilot episode to be expanded to 90-minutes.

Marwan & Adnan: Shown to be a pair of rogues who may claim to only be in things for themselves, but they will do the right thing when push comes to shove. They both come across as

solidly distinct from each other and they both have just enough presence, screen time and exploration of their motivations to come across as memorable supporting roles.

Plot

This pilot deals with the theme of revenge and the ways in which one's desire for it could consume a person or lead to destructive consequences for those that we care about. Rachel's desire to see her mother's killers brought down feels solidly motivated throughout the script, thus fueling her drive (and fueling Issa's worries about Rachel's desires). Everything builds solidly to the moment where Rachel chooses to spare Abu Jihad, thus giving a solid sense of catharsis to the proceedings (only for that catharsis to be cast away with Issa's death on Rachel's next assignment). Given that it seems like Issa and Rachel truly become close on her mission for revenge, his decision to accompany her to her next mission (and thus his doom) can't help but feel connected to Rachel's original mission, thus creating a sense of cost to everything that ends the episode on an appropriately tragic note; in other words, the perfect ending.

Ending the episode with the title cards explaining the fates of some of the characters gives the story a sense of closure for those characters that feels strange for the first episode of a series. Even though this series is based on an actual Mossad mission, it creates a sense that the story is over. Since this is the first part of a series, consider deleting these ending titles.

The action scenes are solidly written and engaging to read throughout the script.

STRUCTURE

The script follows a clear, linear story structure. There are a few major jumps in time, most notably the opening jump from the prologue to the main portion of the story years later. There is another jump in time on page 31. Both of these jumps in time are clearly labeled and they do not interfere with the overall flow of the narrative. All acts in the story feel clearly defined and the narrative structure is simple and easy to follow throughout the script.

Tension is raised at a steady pace throughout the script.

The script is of a good length.

DIALOGUE

All characters speak with unique and distinct voices.

The dialogue is sharp, smart and on point.

CONCEPT

A military (Mossad) thriller involving revenge against terrorists is a familiar but accessible premise with a lot of potential for emotional insight.

The script could be described as "Munich" meets "Jack Ryan."

This script would appeal to audiences seeking stories about relationships between lovers, stories about Mossad, stories about revenge and stories about conflicts in the Middle East.

Because of the love interest and female lead, the script has appeal to both male and female audiences.

Traditionally, a military themed script such as this would appeal more toward an older audience than a younger one; but, because of the love interest, this script will likely appeal to both.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The script features some strong action scenes and a memorably tragic ending; on the whole, a promising military thriller.

A few years ago a love affair between a Mossad agent and an Arab might have been problematic unless the Mossad agent was acting in the line of duty. Not so in today's Israel where Jews are actively seeking peace deals with Arab nations and vice versa – despite the Palestinians refusing to participate. Also, 20 – 25 percent of Israel's citizens are Arabs – with voting rights – and are represented among the 120 members of the Knesset; Israel's equivalent to the U.S. Congress.

Overall, a solid story with possible wide appeal.

OPERATION: VENGEFUL CROSS-UP

VIRTUALLY PERFECT

98th – 100 Percentile

EXCELLENT

85th – 97th Percentile

GOOD

50th – 84th Percentile

IMPROVE

0th – 49th Percentile

Plot

85th Percentile

Dialogue

60th Percentile

Concept

85th Percentile

Characters

65th Percentile

Structure

90th Percentile

RATING

CONSIDER

77th Percentile

Recommend: Script advance to quarter finals

ABOUT STORY ANALYST DT35

Reader is an independent filmmaker who has worked in every aspect of film from Transportation to Directing to Editing. Has worked with literary agencies as well as creating multiple award-winning short films.

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