

Screenplay Analysis

Script Title: *Dead Sexy*

Script Author: Andrew Mark

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Script Reader: Bobby K.

Grade: Pass

Overall

Dead Sexy is a raucous, gore-filled ride. Revenge comes to many of the shallow beauty queens in the Miss Teen South pageant. The girls meet fantastical deaths. The pacing whips around from one scene to the next, developing a whirlwind tale of revenge. The mystery involved in why a young girl has started attacking the majority of the cast will keep readers and future viewers of the film enthralled.

Concept / Premise

Although opening on a funeral isn't necessarily a unique device in film, the "10 years ago" scene skillfully lays the groundwork for the story. It cements Nicco and Lawson as main characters and quickly provides their history. The eight-year-old girl who kills Constance is clearly related to the funeral, and audience members will make the connection during the first act. The mystery of why exactly the little girl seeks revenge helps drive the narrative in an engaging way. Lawson's aversion to referring to Caldwell as her dad initially seems to stem from normal stepfather/stepchild dynamics. Their romantic involvement is a shocker, and it strengthens the hook. It delivers another surprise when Lawson reveals Caldwell has been raping her since a young age. The story comes full circle at the conclusion. The funeral scene, Lawson's nightmares and the deaths are all connected as the truth comes out.

Characters

The dialogue needs improvement. Characters sometimes rely on cliché or corny lines to progress scenes. For example, the cops telling Caldwell and Lawson, "You guys had better sit down for this." There's a more fulfilling way to break the news than resorting to this oft-used line. Another example of a weak exchange occurs on page 18. Roger asks Nicco if he is friends with Lawson. Nicco confirms. Two lines later, Roger again checks if Lawson and Nicco are friends. Remove the redundancy to strengthen the scene. Characters repeat themselves or each other in this manner often throughout the script. Nicco and Becky, the most innocent participants in the horror story, require more development. At the moment, there aren't many characters to get behind and support. Nicco may be blinded by his longtime friendship with Lawson, thus he doesn't see her for how she really is, but his misjudgment is just one of many variables that keeps him from becoming a compelling character. The use of Charl/Charlette is intriguing. She gains revenge without ever speaking a word.

Structure

The script utilizes three-act structure and runs at a quick pace. The use of a montage and voiceover for pageant girl introductions works well in two ways. It wastes no time in differentiating between characters. Doing so allows the screenplay to move on to the heart of the story. It's beneficial because most of the girls serve as a body count instead of fleshed out individuals. The narration also highlights Lawson's nastiness as a person. The pacing remains a major positive in the script. There's never a dull moment during the doomed beauty pageant or its lead up. Here are a few other notes: Make sure to include a title page in future submissions to companies or screenplay competitions. "CUT TO" is not

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required between every scene change. The scene heading already shows a different location. Description paragraphs should not usually run longer than three or four paragraphs. Try to break up some of the larger chunks in order to allow more white space.

Marketability

Dead Sexy can be marketed to teenage audiences and lovers of over the top gore. The action likely won't match the sensibilities of many older viewers, but the violence involved warrants an R rating. Most of the events occur at a beauty pageant auditorium. The small number of required sets bodes well in terms of cost. Although there are a number of expensive stunts, there's also plenty of room for practical effects. That approach might preserve a manageable budget.

Tone

All of the deaths occur in the most gruesome fashion possible. The combination of comedy and horror works splendidly throughout the script. Lawson receives the most time and development. She's a disgusting human being and doesn't have a heart, but her actions and commentary complement the developments. One concern is that there isn't a rhyme or reason to how Charl/Charlette actually enacts her revenge. It may not matter. If the point is simply to create shocking deaths and have fun destroying a beauty pageant, then it's fine. If not, questions linger. How does she take the form of her 18-year-old self? Why can the girl manipulate the computer to enter herself into the competition? Why is she supposedly running out of time? Also, even though Lawson is a despicable person, why does she shoot Susan? Most of these developments don't make logical sense. Again, if the point is to create a campy horror script, all of this still technically works.

Formatting, spelling, and craft

Write characters in ALL CAPS the first time they appear in the screenplay. Change "destine" to "destined (Pg. 1.4)." The sentence that starts with, "Rain fall hard now..." doesn't make sense the way it's worded (Pg. 1.8). You could *wear* a potato sack *and* still win (Pg. 3.1). Change "strike he assailant" to "strike the assailant (Pg. 5.8)." Don't capitalize "Hair (Pg. 6.2)." *Well* we can't be sure (Pg. 6.7). Police Officers are taping *off* (Pg. 7.9). Changed "chard" to "charred (Pg. 7.9/Pg. 9.1)." The *coroner* is still taking pictures (Pg. 8.4). Dr. Carpenter is a *coroner*, not a corner. "The" is repeated twice in a line on page 10.3. Change "come one" to "come on (Pg. 11.9)." It was *supposed* to be (Pg. 12.5). I'm still *your* Law-ly pop (Pg. 12.7). Becky nods in *agreement*, *stifling* her tears (Pg. 13.6). She was my only real *competition* (Pg. 15.5). Change "fain" to "feign (Pg. 15.7)." A soft *hiss* (Pg. 16.7). Lawson *wakes* up (Pg. 16.9). You didn't *hear* (Pg. 18.7). Don't capitalize "mean" in "I Mean (Pg. 21.5)." We are still *here* (Pg. 22.1). No, *you're* right (Pg. 22.3). Change "swim where compition in stead" to "swimwear competition instead (Pg. 23.6)." Change "better that" to "better than (Pg. 24.1)." All the girls *are* scared of her (Pg. 29.9). Change "acidemics" to "academics (Pg. 30.5)." *They* need to have a talk (Pg. 31.9). Don't capitalize "Someone (Pg. 34.3)." Change "there unmarked car" to "their unmarked car (Pg. 35.6)." Me *too* (Pg. 35.7). Change "I tall" to "a tall (Pg. 37.3)." Change "wear house" to "warehouse (Pg. 39.9)." "Look's" and "see's" do not require apostrophes on page 41. Change "his some how" to "is somehow (Pg. 41.7)." Remove the apostrophe in "open's (Pg. 42.1)." The script routinely has issues putting apostrophes where they don't belong. Scan through and correct this problem. *Apparently* human (Pg. 45.7). You guys *are* such pigs (Pg. 53.5). She *bolts* out of the dressing room (Pg. 59.7). *Ivy* begins to choke (Pg. 64.2). Change "salvia" to "saliva (Pg. 64.4)." A bunch of *lead* (Pg. 71.1). Change "As the curtain is slowly opens" to "As the curtain slowly opens (Pg. 78.5)." I just moved here a *year* ago (Pg. 82.8). Change "theses people" to "these

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people (Pg. 82.8)." She *breaks* down (Pg. 83.3). Something *has* snapped in her (Pg. 85.2). *Their* guns drawn (Pg. 88.2). The script keeps switching between the ghost being "Charlette" and "Charlotte."

Closing Notes

Dead Sexy currently receives a pass. The pacing and tone hoist up the story, but other areas fall flat. One of the most glaring issues involves the large number of typographical and grammatical issues in the script. It's the first test for a screenplay when submitted for consideration. Assistants reading the script will dismiss it due to the numerous errors. In an effort to leave room for substantial feedback in the other components, I was more lenient with formatting/spelling errors during the latter half of the script. I included the most egregious errors later on, but not all of the small typos. Regardless, the screenplay still has a few strong or genuinely terrifying moments. Build off these to craft a more complete script.