

Old World
by
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Genre: Sci-fi
Analyst: JAW76
Rating: Consider
Score: 8.60/10

Category	Score	Percentile
Plot	8.00/10	(81 percentile)
Characterization	10.00/10	(95 percentile)
Concept	8.00/10	(81 percentile)
Format	8.00/10	(81 percentile)
Voice	10.00/10	(95 percentile)
Structure	8.00/10	(81 percentile)
Dialogue	9.00/10	(89 percentile)
Overall Weighted Percentile		87

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

About Analyst JAW76

Worked for multiple development positions, this script reader has read and rated many scripts and worked closely with Story Executives on what they're looking for. Also, working for educational non-profit organizations like Scriptwriter's Network.

LOGLINE

Two supernatural women are connected through the murders of a superhuman serial killer and have to stop him before he finds his last victim, his own daughter.

SYNOPSIS

We begin in a warehouse where JESSICA BRAHM is being interrogated by MORROW. An angelic form of a young girl watches over them. Jessica asks this girl for help but, she just watches as Morrow stabs Jessica to death, a white light blinds us...

We travel to Effigy Magick Shop, two days prior, when DETECTIVE TOM ABRAMS calls in Jessica Brahm to a scene of a crime. A cop doesn't want to deal with her but, he has no choice. She shows up. Tom leads her to the body of the dead 9-year-old, MYRA REZGO: she has a carved symbol on her head. Tom begs Jessica to tap into her special ability and Jessica reluctantly agrees. Suddenly, she sees the ghost of Myra Rezgo across the street. We flashback to a therapy session with Jessica and her therapist as they dive into her past and current situation. Her parents are dead and she's a shopaholic. We return and she approaches Myra and asks for anything that can help Myra move on; Myra tells her to get a book under the cash register. Jessica grabs the book and leaves. We travel into the Old World where we meet MIRIAM JENG watching rain pummel children. A woman, THE MATRON, tells her it's because of her decision to leave and the Old World is sad. Miriam confirms that she has to go to be a better mother and Matron tells her there will be consequences. Miriam goes to sleep and wakes in her home on Earth, her daughter SARAH, waking her up. Miriam notices a news broadcast about killings and feels like she recognizes the pattern. Miriam drives Sarah to school and is afraid to tell her the truth of the impending danger. At work, Miriam uses her Magick book: The Book of the Old World, and travels to visit THE WATCHER. She asks this 9-year-old looking, wise Being about a man named Morrow. The Watcher confirms he's alive and knows she's in LA.

Snap-back to Jessica who's studying the Occult book. Suddenly, we see a family being murdered by a Dark Figure.

Miriam and Jessica bolt up, they just had the same dream. In the morning, Tom and Jessica watch a camera video of a little's doll time turning into horrific murder evidence. Tom meets up with Jessica, he praises her but, she just wants to be normal. Tom reveals there's a woman who knows what happened. We are now in a room with Miriam telling Tom and Jessica that she knows the man doing the killing and hands them a face sketch drawing. Miriam escapes and no one can recall what she looked like. Jessica and Tom decide to use the information she gave them. Miriam is back at the Old world, she talks to Matron about wanting to be a good mother and forgetting the past where she used to be a murderous monster with Morrow. She returns home and paints a symbol on the wall that protects her house and as she covers it, Sarah reminds her that they are missing their play-date. We flash back to Jessica with the therapist and learn that Jessica fears seeing her dead parents and them telling her she isn't good enough. We snap back to the present where Jessica's mind is linked to Morrow's and she sees him. She breaks down and Myra reemerges. Myra gives Jessica advice and tells her to go find him. At the playground, Miriam goes to the bathroom and gets spiritually visited by Morrow: He's coming for Sarah! Miriam jolts awake, asleep at the playground. That night, Jessica visits Tom's house saying she knows where the killer is and she's going to get him, Tom wants to come but, she leaves him behind. Jessica gets to the Old Warehouse and sees that Morrow has been living there and has the blood of his previous victim and a ritual circle set up. He wants to be immortal. Miriam is packing furiously and Sarah notices a book that she's dreamed about many times when she visited the Old World. Miriam realizes Sarah already knows about the other world but, somehow Miriam has been keeping her out. A comet-looking object slams into their house, exploding the top floor. Jessica just arrives and reaches in time to pull a gun on Morrow as he's taking Sarah but, he uses her bullet against her. As Miriam tries to summon the power of the Old World, Morrow steals Sarah away. Miriam heals Jessica and they go together to the Old Warehouse. Another flashback with Jessica's therapist reveals him telling her to integrate her abilities and stop resisting them. Miriam shows up at the Warehouse as a fiery-warrior demon to fight Morrow. Jessica tries to free Sarah. In Morrow's attempt to kill Sarah, Miriam hits him with a grenade. She's won but, guilt

stops her from killing Morrow. So he kills her. Then we're back at the beginning where Morrow questions and kills Jessica, a white light blinding us as Myra watches. Flash Forward to a destroyed warehouse, Sarah's over her mother's body and Jessica's unconscious. Jessica opens her eyes in the Old World and Miriam's there. She says Jessica's a Conduit; she took Miriam's power. They stare into the sun together.

COMMENTS

OPENING THOUGHTS

This story is quite an interesting one full of magic and horror. Very dark but, very well written. I enjoyed the story and you're very good with pacing, I felt things heating up and moving forward, you have a knack for building up the suspense of story. I loved Marrow! Every part he had was so cool, he reminded me of "Scream"! I felt like this was a mixture between the "Scream" Movie and "The Magicians" show. You developed a lot of backstory for these characters and it showed in everything they did. I honestly don't think you even need the flashbacks because I understood Jessica. You also have some prize scenes that let me know that you have some brilliant ideas floating in your head. For example, on Page 19, the fact that this little girl recorded her little story and all of a sudden you hear horror occurring in the back scene! It was so shocking and brilliant. I was waiting on bated breath for the ultimate moment. I personally am in love with Occultism and I believe you have some great and grand ideas that appear fun, terrifying, and different.

With a reminder of "The Magicians" and "Scream" this show does feel unique and in its own realm. Honestly, it also feels more like a movie than it does a TV Show, I'll break that down more below and I'll touch on what I suggest will help improve your script into something that you absolutely love and feel ready to shop around. Also, a tiny suggestion I wanted to make off the bat: Remove your address from the Title Page. This day and age it's best to be careful. Sending out your script with not only your address but, your apartment number is risky. Just keep the Email and

Phone number. That's enough information for anyone who wants to contact you.

CHARACTERS:

I love your characters. I think they are well thought out, they feel like they have different voices and wants. Most importantly those wants are all clear as day. That can be the hardest thing to portray and you nailed it. I did have some suggestions and things that I believe will make your story/writing stronger.

Suggestion: Tell us Jessica's previous position ahead of time. On page 3, the Cop seemed bothered about Jessica's presence and then she starts making commands and I never understood her previous role before she left. Which confused me on the relationship she had with Tom.

Also, I personally wasn't convinced that Jessica would dive back into her Medium abilities just because Tom said please. A suggestion would be to have Jessica either connect with Myra and something about this little girl makes her want to dive back in, at least this once, or have her actually tell him why she's doing it. Otherwise, it reads as him saying *Please?* and she's like *eyeroll* *Okay*. It will help us readers to know why and agree with her choice. There's also a moment with Miriam where she tells Sarah be careful and then looks out the window when Sarah asks *why*. I understood that you were showing that she's obviously hiding something but, that look out of the window seemed a bit over dramatic like, in a novella. What can help ground it is a forced smile from Miriam saying "I just want you to be safe, That's all", then Sarah can be suspicious or think her Mom is acting weird and leave. Small note, on Page 10, you wrote: "She exhales, visibly relieved" but, it wasn't clear if that was Jessica or Myra. Another thought: Jessica appears to be a Medium. You jump into Occultism but, you never use the word Medium and I was curious why? And what makes Jessica different from a Medium? If you could show or mention that, it can help someone like me put her in her own category and understand her significance. So, Miriam and Jessica have the same dream, which I thought was pretty interesting but, then Jessica runs into Miriam who starts speaking about the murder as if she knew. The part that confused me a bit is

that Jessica wasn't shocked that this woman detailed something she herself saw, instead she was standoffish and thought Miriam was sketchy. It read as unbelievable due to the ignoring of a specific scene that happened right before, which instead makes that shared dream scene pointless, with no effect or consequence. Lastly, I was curious on how and why Jessica had a gun on page 44. I thought she wasn't a detective anymore. That caused me to pause because I didn't understand why she had it and where she got it from if she never had it in any previous scenes. Other than those notes, these characters and their relationships are golden. Love it!

PLOT:

So, what I understand from the story is that Miriam was a monster and she wanted a companion so she convinced or altered (wasn't clear) a man to be the Clyde to her Bonnie but, then she got pregnant and abandoned him. So now, he's become heartless and sacrificing little girls to live forever. Jessica connects to this because she's guided by one of the dead little girls, Myra, to catch her killer sorta like "The Lovely Bones" movie. The first question that comes to mind is, and I'm sorry because I know this is going to cause your head to spin but, if Jessica can see innocent victims, why can't she see the second victim? Better yet, why can't she also see the parents? They were innocent too. Possibly, you can change that line to say something like, "only certain spirits who need my help appear to me"? Hope that helps. So earlier I mentioned that this feels a lot more like a movie than a pilot. The reason why is because there's no Season or Series setup that tells us what question will be answered and what the future episodes may lead us to. The way we end this pilot is a very movie-ending: Looking off into the sunset as if they're Thanatos and they killed half the world (too soon?). Ideally, a pilot will end on a question or the protagonist moving toward their new mission or a line saying, "Now, I'll have to..." or "I need to..." so we know what we can get excited about learning/seeing. Currently, all I know is that she's a Conduit and I'm not fully sure what that means for her. What will happen to Miriam? There's no indication that Morrow is alive so, how do we know there are future villains for her to kill? There's nothing that says: This story is LONG from over. It feels

right now, that it ended. See how you can put hints of what's to come in future episodes or what mission still needs to be completed?

Other smaller notes: Make the wake up from the shared dream of Jessica/Miriam more suspenseful; it's currently written very passively and not with a shock, like GASP! These women just shared a dream! It's more like: Yawn, Jessica wakes up oh and by the way, Miriam had the dream too. Just so you know. There's no sense of urgency or shock to it. A good script to read for example of how to write suspense is "The Stranger Things" script. They are great at it. Or listen to some podcasts, some great ones are: "The Screenwriters Rant Room" and "Paper Team".

STRUCTURE:

As I said before, you're really good with pacing. I see the build up of tension and suspense as they get closer and closer to this infamous Morrow. It's easy to follow the story and go through the events. Then, I'm stopped by a flashback and it brings a halt to the rhythm of the story. Currently, as the reader, the flashbacks don't add anything for me that I need to know. I understand you want us to understand the backstory of Jessica and what she's going through but, the flashbacks don't alter her choices nor does her parent's death play a role in the serial killing of Morrow. Her being wealthy or a shopaholic doesn't even give her an advantage or access to something that changes or affects the story. So all in all, my suggestion would be to get rid of the flashbacks and reveal that information through Myra and Tom. You're already really good at reveals as you did with Morrow being Sarah's dad and Miriam's partner (Page 27). Another big thing that stuck out that pulls away from the pacing is the passivity of your action lines. I'm not sure you do it intentionally but, you give away the surprises and intentions in the action lines. It makes me, as a reader, feel like you don't trust your writing or that I'm not smart enough to get it. Ex. On Page 19, you stated in the action line that this was the murder happening, which comes across clear after mentioning that it's a little girl's room and you reveal it more from the video. It happens again on Page 32, where you literally tell us it's a defining moment instead of letting it play out and us seeing it. You spoon-feed us again on page 44.

You're a great writer. So good, that these moments are speaking for themselves, you didn't have to tell us.

FORMAT/GRAMMAR/SPELLING:

For a detailed look through your script for grammar / spelling / formatting errors, consider upgrading to a PREMIUM COVERAGE.

DIALOGUE:

The dialogue is great and flows smoothly revealing information and keeping us engaged. I'm also a fan of how you reveal certain information through dialogue. The only time it feels heavy-handed is on Page 8, where the therapist heavy-handedly just spews Jessica's backstory. It's an obvious exposition move. Also, personal note, Morrow's bad guy monologue (pg. 50) was way too much. It's unneeded and creates a gigantic red flag for you. Any reader who sees that will roll their eyes in frustration and possibly throw your script aside. Trust me. 1-2 sentences max. Only Game of Thrones can pull off something like that. It's too risky and unfortunately, not vital.

CONCEPT:

I love occultism; I've literally dabbled in it when I was younger and still know a lot. Your script doesn't break any of those rules and it even creates its own, which I love. As I mentioned before, the abilities of Jessica represents Mediums and Miriam can easily be seen as an Astral Traveler. Or you can incorporate astral travel in there to show how it's different. I believe this is one of those situations where, if you know the rules you can break them. I love the story of Miriam, actually she's my favorite storyline. I understand Jessica's connection to them and I think the haunting of the vision and Myra is a nice touch to keep her involved, so that they can both go away. I think the almost all female cast also gives it relevance to our current market. I think this story has a lot of potential if you can alter it to show what the future episodes will unfold.

MARKETABILITY: LOW / **MEDIUM** / HIGH

The reason I didn't put High is because currently very few shows and movies revolve around Occultism and the ones that do are from IP "Intellectual Property". Ex. "Sabrina The Teenage Witch". But, an Asian woman and mostly women cast does fit today's market. Also, children are being slaughtered and few people are willing to fund the death of children. I personally tried to sell a move with a 5yr. old boy's accidental murder and it made it a harder sell.

Budget: I'm going to say it's going to be a higher budget, like in the 100M range due to the special effects, stunts, and various, specific locations.

MPAA: "R" - Due to the death of children and the horror themes.

Castability: Yes. I can see some actors being interested in such a fantastic story.

OVERALL: PASS / **CONSIDER** / RECOMMEND

Very appealing story, just the ramp up of the suspense, making those passive words more active, and setting up a series and season arc, can make this a very exciting pilot. Sorry I wrote more pages than anticipated. I hope this contributes to your success.