

SCRIPT COVERAGE

TITLE	XXXXXX	GENRE	Mystical Horror
WRITER(S)	XXXXXX	CIRCA	Present
SUBMITTED BY	XXXXXX	LOCATION	New York/Puerto Rico
FORM / PAGES	Screenplay / 115	BUDGET	Mid
DATE		ANALYST	
LOGLINE			

A woman desperate and unable to have her own child, and pressured by the world around her, turns to a legendary witch who grants wishes such as hers, but asks for something in return that will destroy everything the woman holds dear.

SYNOPSIS

We open on an urban playground in The Bronx as children play and fight while being supervised by a young MRS. FLYNN and another teacher. All seems like regular 7 year old fun and games until a small girl sees something on the roof and screams. Flynn tries to comfort her until she also sees what the girl saw – the decapitated head of a young boy, set on a spear on the school roof.

Synopsis removed for writer confidentiality

We flash out to see that Hector is alive and well at school, Tara is gone and a new teacher is in her place. And a final scene shows Tara as an aged doctor, doing the same fertility hypnosis as Dr. Bishop once did. And we fade out.

COMMENTS

What you have here is a very engaging, dark, visual and visceral screenplay. It takes us into a very dark world of a legend that is very real. Dora Franca is the ultimate antagonistic force, and it is very interesting to sit back and watch those who are pulled into her world be affected and lose every single thing they felt was not as important as their own personal goals.

Many of us can empathize with Tara and what she wants, the pressures of her world steering her a certain way and causing her to walk a step too far to try and procure them. It is also a story with a great message behind it, that God has a certain plan for us, or that the road before us is laid out in a certain way and we must choose to adapt to the bumps along it, and not give in to false hope, as anything worth getting is worth working hard for, there is no easy way out.

When choosing a story to write as a screenplay, a great place to start is at a very carnal state. The idea of a woman not being able to have a child of her own, is a carnal state that many of us can identify with. Even if we ourselves have not been in that position, we most likely have been affected by it as we know people who have troubles having their own children. You have also chosen to make it a bit of a social issue, as you touch on the idea of women in society, and how they are viewed a certain way both amongst friends and amongst neighbors.

You make sure to put a lot of pressure on Tara from many different angles, so that she feels that weighing down on her. And the tricky thing you play with is that her husband Eric never puts that pressure on her. She is taught the ultimate lesson that happiness and expectations were never as far away from her as she thought. This husband cared more about her and the happiness they could provide each other than he ever did about her becoming pregnant and carrying a child. We never actually hear them speak of anything else, like adoption or surrogacy, etc. You do have a moment when the OB/ GYN mentions these options but they are quickly dismissed.

One thing that I did feel could be at least touched upon, were the feeling or reasons why Tara felt having a child defines her, herself. You set it up as to why those around her feel this way, but we never get a glimpse as to why she does. I say this because my wife and I went through this same situation with infertility, and she had very specific personal feelings as to why having and carrying her own baby was extremely important to her.

These feelings defined and made clear the choices we made to deal with it. It would be great and much easier to deeply connect with Tara if you can let us into that a bit for her. She can be guarded, and obviously is challenged by the demons of her past and the horrible thing that happened to her, but give her a few vulnerable moments, with Eric or with Beth in which we feel it with her. What is the reason she would refuse to find a surrogate? What is the reason she would refuse to adopt?

If we can better know her personal feelings on this, it would make us better understand the reason she would go as far as to approach a Bruja and dabble in the black arts that could easily have major repercussions on her life and everything she holds dear. It is very drastic, especially when there are other choices that she could make or explore. Let us into that journey, even using Eric as a mouthpiece, suggesting things, and making sure to create tension and bring out exposition in very unique and interesting ways.

The script is smooth, engaging, and very visual. You have created characters that feel real, that we reach out to, that we fear. It is a macabre setting and world I never want to actually step foot in. Which is a good thing, it means you have created something that felt very real, that induced fear on the pages, and that gave a physical reaction while reading. That is very hard to do, so good job on that.

As a whole, there are areas that are very solid, and also some areas that could extra care and another look. I will go into these details more deeply in each of the sections below. You do have a story that was quite engaging, as well as a setting and tone of a dark world that leaves an unsettled feeling hanging over everything that is happening. Now it is about making sure all aspects of the script rise to that feeling as well in the most effective ways that you can.

CONCEPT

The concept of your story is a very carnal one – a woman is so desperate to have a

child that she reaches out to anyone who can possibly help, even a corner of the darkness that is so evil and so shrouded in death. It is something that engages us as most people have entertained ideas such as this when we have been hit hard by tragedy or continually have the door closed on our dreams, no matter how small the dream may seem to others.

Now, at the same time, it is a story with a deep mythology and legend built into it. The trick in stories like this is to make sure that the legend itself has enough weight to it to fuel a story. And you do actually pull this off quite well. The addition of Alvaro as the voice of back story and legend understanding was very well played. You set him up well in the classroom and as he began to speak to his class, and to Bruno, it was easy to trust him and his words and thoughts and choices carried very much weight.

This is also a concept with a very large built in audience. The mystical horror genre is alive and well, and is something that is very genre specific. You have managed to let a story fall into this genre, and have effectively brought the world to life, with nuance and care, and a very strong line of layers. As far as commercial viability, choosing a female protagonist works well, and the entire damsel in distress idea works well in this convention.

The idea of this Bruja, shrouded in mystery, feels real to us, it feels as though it is a real part of our world, we just don't see the ways to tap into it. Tara herself is a character in the right place at the right time, to make the wrong decision and the most wrong time in her life. Concepts like this usually only work if the right characters are put in its way.

You seem to have that here, and it was quite refreshing to read.

A legend story like this also needs an antagonistic force that is always hanging in the air, always on the cusp of destroying the world of our character. You manage to hang a nice level of dread over each scene, and as a whole it kept us worried for Tara and this new baby she had. The baby crying straight for six months added such tension to every scene, so we were always edgy, uncomfortable, and that was the perfect reaction to have while sitting in this world of yours.

I think you have something that when people hear the concept – the idea of this woman who turns to a mythological witch who asks for three people and their souls, in order to give her a child – they can see a trailer, a movie poster. That is a huge part of the battle, and so you have a step up right from go.

INTRO

The opening scene or sequence of a screenplay is very important. A lot of times writers tend to miss the mark and it fails to set the tone. You have chosen to start us off in the school yard with the children. But you have also chosen to not have it be Tara's school yard. I was not sure

about that choice. Since this world is going to be of Tara, and these worlds cross each other in a way that has the forces of Dona Franca at play, I thought it would be better if this was Tara's school. And perhaps even it is Hector that sees the decapitated head of the boy. This would be an excellent way to bond them. She cares so deeply for this boy, and she wants to protect him, she wants to drape her motherly wing over him and keep the horrors of the world away from him. This might be an excellent way to do this.

In TV episodes or pilots, starting with a teaser that doesn't focus on our main characters, can work very well. In a screenplay, the best way to begin a screenplay is to make sure we see and know our hero in the opening scene. This of course is not a hard set rule, but if done right can set a tone and connect us with our hero and their world. Choosing to leave Tara out, by the time the scene ends, we are not sure who this is going to be about, and what type of story it is. Seeing a decapitated head on a

spit like this made me initially think this was going to be about drug cartels or something. And I was wondering how Flynn was going to play into it.

Of course, we never see Flynn again, or Kylie. Imagine how much more invested we would be if this was Tara and Hector? And then jumping into the next scene to see Tara watching the news, affected by it all? I would at least entertain it. It would immediately bond us with our character. As it is now, we never even see Flynn again, or Kylie, so it is kind of a waste of investment on those character we will never again see.

Also, the decapitated head of the boy, and his murder, is never touched upon again or explained or explored, until Alvaro brings it up in his research. To start a script with such a gruesome and hard scene to watch, and then not having it flow in or be touched upon, seems like a waste. It feels like the pages and the tone could be so much more affecting if connected to people we will be continuing to watch.

As a final touch on this, it would also pull the legend of Dona Franca into the mix in an even stronger way. Everything in this world of darkness is connected, the people who are affected are connected in ways they have never or will never understand. So the idea of Dona Franca planting a seed of connection in Tara's world and inner circle even before Tara has entertained the idea of using her to fulfill her own dreams, will be a strong unspoken layer of the story that brings it all full circle.

I would at least think about entertaining the idea. It could then lead into conversations in the kitchen at the party. Imagine the tension and conflict of this kitchen scene if the talk of Tara and babies turns to her saying how it is all so fleeting, and the boy who was taken like nothing and brutally murdered, or something along this vein. It would really add more to the scene, and people would be on eggshells trying to not say the wrong thing to upset her since they all know she was on the grounds when the head was discovered. It would also add even more tension from Patty as she tries to steer the conversation and attention back on herself. Just make sure that whatever choice you make in your opening scene is something that is the strongest possible choice and puts us in the world in the best possible spot at the best possible time.

As for the rest of the introduction of the first 10 or so pages, I would also recommend bringing Eric into it more. We see a flash of him at the party, but then don't hear a word from him until page 11. This is a relationship that really does fuel her decision here. One thing that could work with a lot of scuffle, is to move their lovemaking scene in after the party. Instead of moving her to school in the next scene, move her to her bedroom. This is the side of her that fuels her choices, so it should be in the spotlight, as well as her husband, earlier on. It also showcases the tension earlier between them, and gives them something to work towards at an earlier stage.

Losing Eric as she does, once she is pregnant, rocks her world in the worst way possible, so if we can see a connection between them and get to know him faster than Tara and Esther. After all, Esther is the catalyst to get her to the healer, and then her job is completed. Eric plays a bigger part and that should be shown to us as early as possible. Even have him come and find her in the bathroom crying, something to show us what is happening there and how much he cares for her. As it is now, when he cheats with Irina, it just feels like added fodder, and nothing that really fuels the story in any strong way. If we can see how much he seems to care for her, and to have sex be a robotic act, the pleasure taken from him, we will have an earlier sense of sadness for him, and when he reaches out for Irina, we will have a stronger emotional reaction to it.

Make every choice in the first 10-12 pages the strongest possible choice to engage us, set up the world and characters, and keep the tone at play.

MAJOR CHARACTERS

You have some pretty solid characters here. It is nice to see strong women at play in various avenues of the story. Let's go through them and see if there is anything that can make them even stronger.

Let's start with Tara. You have done a solid job of creating a character we can have sympathy for. We feel bad for her as she wants a child, is pressured about having a

child, has so called friends pushing it in her face, and she feels so alone. Her husband is there, and he wants it to, but he cares about her more than he cares about having a baby. So she is a softened woman in a hard spot. She loves her job and the kids and yet it hurts her to be around them because of the fact that she can't have them herself. And we can get that, understand that.

You then have her finally go to a real doctor, and I was unsure why she hadn't. I didn't understand why a woman who is having a hard time, or even beginning to start, trying to conceive would not go to her doctor. Especially when she hints at something in the past that could have caused issues. Why would she put herself through something so hard and traumatic and huge without even taking the basic initial steps? I didn't quite get that. She seemed smarter than that. And what happened in the past? Was she raped? Did she have an abortion? This information could be huge to the story line. I think you may want to consider making it known, even for a moment, even if the doctor mentions it and Tara doesn't want to go into it. This could add layers to Tara and define more of who she is to us as a leading character.

As Tara moves forward on her journey, we always feel for her. We feel sad for her that she is drawn in and even considers going to a Bruja. And we feel she is manipulated into signing this contract with Dona Franca. It is not fair to her because she didn't walk into an office and just make the conscious choice. She was in a dream state of hypnosis, so it wasn't fair. And because of that we can feel for her. It would have been hard for us to feel for her at all if she made the choice to have three people die for her to have a baby. It is a hard line to walk in this case, but I did feel for her. As well, not choosing the three people to die, but almost having them chosen for her, was a good choice to keep us rooting for her and keep her the person of light in the darkness surrounding her.

Also, having her showcase her connection and care for Hector, makes her even more likeable. And then she gets this baby and it is awful, she has such a hard time, but she still cares, she tries to love it, she yearns to be happy. It makes for a character we enjoy watching and we root for until the end.

Moving on to her friend Beth, you have a great sideline character here. Beth ends up being a victim, and it is interesting because we like her even though she is almost set up to be a snobby bitch. But she truly cares for Tara and so that works. And by the time she is killed, we are upset because she has become the only one left who really does care about Tara and wants to see her happy. And her death was brutal, killed by her child, so it hurt even more. I loved her snippets of dialogue, the attitude in her words, she felt genuine and real, even though her station in life had perhaps made her have to be harder than she wanted to be. It was a great portrait.

Alvaro is the next character I want to touch on here. Like I mentioned earlier, Alvaro was a great legend character. He brings it to life, he is an expert, he knows about it, the inner working, how it all connects, etc. He has a drive to help stop her, to help Dona Franca herself, and his passion for it drives his decisions. I also liked the fatherly teacher aspect of him and how it connected with Tara. Being that both he and Tara were teachers, just in different ways, gave us a subconscious coupling between them that made us want them drawn together.

His relationship and mentorship of Bruno was great as well as it showed this man simply cared about people, about the world, and wanted all to be good in life. He is then a character we really care about. We not only want him to help get Tara out of her situation, but we also want him to succeed in saving Dona Franca and keep himself safe at the same time.

It was a good choice to have him hit by her, almost killed by her, and want to give up. That side of his storyline was a good personal journey moment. And Bruno bringing him back in was a good way to keep them connected. One thing I didn't understand about that though was that Alvaro saw the canister on Tara's mantle before he left her house. He also saw the canister that was in the Ruiz family case, so I was confused as to why he never put two and two together.

You may want to look at the logistics of that and make sure there is something that keeps the information or connection just out of his reach. He is the smartest person in this story, so he should really be smart enough to put those together. If you want to have Bruno discover it, that is fine, but make sure that Alvaro is missing the piece of information. A good option may

be to have Alvaro have his phone in his hand and randomly snapping pictures of the house as Besia leads him out. And perhaps he has Bruno look at them, leaving the canister out of his realm of knowledge until Bruno can present it to him.

Eric would be the other character to look at here. As I mentioned above, it doesn't feel like we get enough of a dimensional look at Eric. He is a husband who is unhappy with the grind of trying to get pregnant. He has a hot woman at work willing to have sex with him. He has a baby on the way and dies. Now, it all depends on what angle you are trying to play here. As it is now it feels like it falls into a gray area. He needs to either be the good husband who really cares about his wife and does all he can to make her happy, even though he is voicing what is really important to him at home, or the asshole husband who we want to see taken out of the picture.

As it is now, he is a good husband who wants to see her happy, but also the cheating asshole who has no redeeming qualities. I feel like it needs to be one or the other. Making him the asshole husband who deserves to have something awful to him is the choice that takes the murderous guilt off of Tara, as we want her to have good things in her life only. Making him the good and doting husband, hits us harder emotionally and we feel bad Tara has managed to get herself caught up in all of this. So it is a tricky line. The best thing to do though is to choose one of these sides of the character he is and own that decision. Leaving it in this kind of limbo leaves his character feeling weak, and the moments in which he is there, weak as well.

It is also important for us to see him more. We don't see him enough and because of that we don't see their connection enough. We see them together in bed once, in bed a second time, and we see him buying wine and then kissing Irina. For a husband who becomes the first death that changes the complete course of her life, it doesn't feel like enough. In order for his death to become an emotional affecting thing, we need to know and feel who he is. Otherwise it becomes red shirt syndrome, a guy just dying. It could be anyone. A death in a script is only worthwhile if we feel for that character and are emotionally affected by their being gone. So look at ways to incorporate him more and make him more impactful to her world and story. The moment when she is going into labor and he is with Irina and she leaves the message saying that she knows where she is and thanks for always being here when I need you, is a great beat. But it would be greater if we felt their disconnection as well. We skip ahead 8 months and lose out on that opportunity.

MINOR CHARACTERS

There are a lot of great characters here in Bruno, Besia, Dona Franco, the Attorney, the healer and Esther.

I loved Besia the most, in the fact that you were able to tie in a large amount of foreboding when she was on the page. We knew something was up with her right off the bat, and Beth voiced our concerns. We felt the desperation in Tara to get some help and she seemed perfect. We knew she was not good, and that added to the tension in all scenes in which she played in. Great job. I loved how subtle she was about it all too, she kept her cool and let things happen around her, not manipulating them, but taking her opportunities to encourage them to happen. And how she changed in the end as the final warning was the icing on the cake. The knife play was so tense, it was very well crafted.

Bruno was an interesting character. I do think though that since he was so pivotal in the end, and was there with Alvaro, being the only one left alive, I could have seen more of him. He could have traveled with Alvaro, gone to see the Ruiz family, gone to Tara's house, etc. It could have been made to be more of a two man team, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of each of them. It would also make the moment when Dona tells them that Bruno only does it to be loved by Alvaro have more weight and not be so out of left field for us. It is all about layers when it comes to building characters that we identify with and care about. Even smaller characters like Bruno need layers that reveal who he is underneath. Any character worth spending time on in your screenplay is worth spending time on really revealing.

Dona Franco is quite the character. The legend that you have built around her is very cool. I loved the back story explanation of her life and death and afterlife. It really did well in building it up. It wasn't too far into the story either, it felt like it was at the right place. You also managed to keep a very dark shroud of mystery around her. The fact we never saw her, only saw the attorney working things out for her, and Besia, made it have a nice sense of mystery and uncertainty. And when we saw the giant shape of her in the end, it was just very cool. I liked the idea of this woman so scorned, so hurt and used and angry at humans and especially those who love. It made her have this overbearing feeling of dread and added a nice tone of vengeance and pure rage built up around everyone, keeping them off balance. It was very well crafted.

And her attorney, with his eye sockets sewn closed and his jagged yellow teeth... just creepy. When he was revealed in that room, it was just so creepy, I loved it. And it was so surreal as well, it just felt off balance to be witnessing. I also loved in the end how he revealed why he worked for her, and you could tell he just didn't want to be doing it anymore. I felt bad for the guy, he wasn't doing all of this out of want, but need. Poor guy.

Esther was a good mouth piece. She was a bit of a bitch, so I didn't want Tara buying in to the things she was saying. And she brought her to the healer, which lead to the Bruja, so I hated her even more. And in the end, I was so happy to see her paired with a teacher who had attitude, and so far removed from Tara. Esther almost deserved it. And the healer, she played her part, but it was cool to see how much emotion she had, how much passion and desire to do God's work. It was a nice touch of brightness in a very dark script as well.

And then Erica, as the final character to touch on, was so powerful in her little role. All she was, was a crying baby. But she added so much to the pages we saw her on, and you did an excellent job of adding that layer of tension and discomfort. She was the perfect tool molded perfectly.

STRUCTURE / PLOT

Overall, I don't think there are any major structure issues. You have your acts in place, the script has a certain flow to it, the pacing works well, not too slow and not too fast, things happen every few pages that keep us interested, and you lay information out in a way that keeps us wanting more, with just enough to understand without things getting too complicated.

In regards to plotting there were two issues that came up for me. The first were the dream sequences. Not the dreams as a concept, but the overall length of them, especially the one about the church. It was so detailed, so involved, and seemed to just go on much too long. It also took away a lot of the dark effect of the reveal of the church and the back room in the end.

It would have been cool to just get a glimpse, in surreal flashes or something, or even feeling of dread, flashes of imagery, or moving around in the dark, something to that effect, to leave us a little more to be surprised with in the end. I wanted to feel like this was all happening in the real world, this new world she found herself in, and not just the dream world or another plain or dimension. After all, her child was born out of the dirt, so we feel this world has been

changed for her. Keep it real and let her see stuff in the real world, in the faces of her students, her friends, stranger around town, etc. Like with Agnes, that was real world, that was unexpected, that was dreadful. Give us more of that.

The other was the Ruiz story line. More than anything else it felt like a distraction. I didn't feel like it was tied into the story in a cohesive way. Perhaps it was the way we touched back on Alvaro. It didn't seem like he had a specific goal. He felt more like he was simply digging and exploring. Here is an idea that may make it work... What if you have Alvaro more obsessed with Dona Franca and all that she is? He has theories, he has goals, and he has been hunting her and searching for her forever perhaps. So when we meet him we can see that the murder of the boy and the symbol there brings him back to life with this obsession. Perhaps she had gone cold for a while and this is her first in maybe ten years or something. So when he latches on to it, it is all about this Ruiz family. And he sets out on his investigation. It brings him to the states earlier, he gets involved deep, digging up clues, with Bruno at his side, and it leads him closer and closer to Tara.

As it is now, it is a distraction and we are always on the outside trying to put all the pieces together. It was out of left field when Agnes was the connection with the Ruiz family, as she felt more like a messenger for Dona Franca. I liked the Agnes connection, but even then, when Alvaro met her he told her if she could help him he could find a way to help her or break the hold the Bruja has on her. It just feels disconnected, and because the rest of the script outside of that works so well, it is something to be looked at. You don't want to have it drag the script down.

So look at it, give it some thought, see what you can do to have it come together stronger and have more of a flow to how it all connects. Don't leave it off to the side, bring it into the story, make it count, keep us invested in it. By having Tara possibly be in the opening scene with Hector as suggested, it really would connect them in a fast and easy way, as well as Hector, as he was forced to see what Dona Franca had happen to the boy.

You just want to make sure that every little thing you put in the script should enhance and connect everything rather than pull us in other directions or distract us from the most important pieces of all. I have faith that this will not be a problem for you. It is sometimes hard to see all of these aspects as the writer when you are so close. But if you look at how they play into the script and when, you should be able to understand what I am talking about.

SCENES

You have a pretty solid handle on your scenes. The old rule of starting as late as possible and leaving as early as possible is always good to put each scene to in regards to a test. And you seem to have done that here. Your entrances and exits are pared down and tight. Just make sure you only have in your scenes what you need to. Keep some stuff a mystery, make sure to speak what needs to be said to be understood.

Some of the scenes that really stand out are the Agnes burning scene, the Beth death scene, the contract signing scene and the finale. These scenes all worked so well because of the tension on the page. There was so much happening in each scene that it really made us on the edge of our seats when it came to being uncomfortable with what the outcome may be. One tip is to make sure that each follow up scene matches the reaction of the previous. As an example, after Tara and others just witnessed an old woman being almost burnt alive, melting right in front of the, we see |Tara at home sorting through here gifts, getting rid of the burnt ones, etc. If I just watched a woman burn alive, in the strange connection she and Agnes had, I wouldn't be able to do anything but sit and stare at a wall, never mind function with daily tasks as though I wasn't as affected as I should be.

Overall though, the scene themselves are pretty strong. Make sure they connect and you will be just fine.

DIALOGUE

Dialogue itself is always a tricky thing. You have to make sure the words chosen are always the best words. What I like about your dialogue is the way it rolls off the tongue. You have a special way of making sure the words each character uses has a point. And it has a reason, a meaning, and function. Most writers just write words, but you make sure to have each line spoken have a specific reason for being on the page. Which is what all dialogue should have or it should not even exist.

The banter you have between these women at the initial party is great. It tells so much about each and every woman there. And later at the shower, each woman has such a distinct voice. It is refreshing. They have personality in the words spoken, and it really makes them come to life. You also make all of your characters stay true to who they are. It is like each of your

characters has their very own personal philosophy as far as speech goes and you take great care to make sure that is felt each time they speak. The women in your script shine.

As far as the men go though, it doesn't feel like you hit it as well. The attorney works, and he speaks like he would, and you can feel the exhaustion in every words he chooses. But when it comes to Alvaro, Bruno and Eric, it feels just a tad flat. It would be okay but the women have so much to offer, it makes it look like the men have even less than they normally would. Let's see if we can figure out a way to change that.

The first thing would be to add more personality on Eric and Bruno's side. Eric is a very stock character. In his actions and his speech. I don't even know what he does for a living. Is he a wine buyer? Does he own a restaurant? I wish I knew, it would at least define him more. Knowing that, you can take the type of person in that type of job and make his speech come alive. Also, he should speak differently to and around Irina than he does Tara. This is something we would pick up on too. He is this bearded and tattooed guy and yet that is where the personality stops. He is fun in the bedroom but even then his speech is flat and unemotional. So open him up, let us know who he is, how he talks. The way a man talks in the bedroom is very much a way that defines him.

So let him to talk, with Tara and Irina. He is obviously a very sexual being if he is cheating and sleeping with his wife, so let that come out as well. Fuel his words with whatever passion this man has inside of him.

When it comes to Bruno, you note that when he talks sometimes it is a very robotic way. The problem here is that only tells us he is technical and at a loss of feeling when he speaks. But that also makes us think he is boring. If Bruno is this linguist, this deep researcher, make him odd as hell if you want to. People who tend to bury themselves in the past do so for a reason. Give him a reason. Make him as strange or as cool as you want but make him interesting. Think of the Big Bang Theory and how they paint odd characters and how those characters are defined by how they do or do not speak.

You have an excellent opportunity to create a character here that really stands out. Right now he feels like he speaks in a boring monotone and has zero personality. If he is going to be included in this story, then he needs to make a splash in the scene he decides to show up in.

You want to make sure you make the most of every moment for every character, and that includes when they speak. Dialogue in a movie is probably the most important aspect, as it is where the characters really come alive. So remember that in your men as well. Give them things to talk about that push their stories forward, as well as reveal who they are. I feel at the moment that Bruno is underused and he can really add so much more to the story if you give him the right actions and the right words to really make him have a serious impact on the story as a whole.

When it comes to Alvaro, he is probably the most important character when it comes to dialogue, as he is the mouthpiece for all of the expositional information. And I like what you have done with Alvaro so far. But there could be more to him in regards to his dialogue. What I am not feeling is the passion from him. I feel he knows his stuff, like he is a master in information and history of all of this type of stuff. But his dialogue can tend to run a little dry and not get us as excited or interested in what he is saying or who he is. He should have a little more to his words. Let us feel his excitement, challenge him, make him try to prove himself, what he believes, as well as his worth in what he says to all those he speaks to.

Look at his scene with Agnes. Here he is at the bedside of this woman who has been burnt alive. And yet his words don't really have any feeling in them, any emotion. This is the most raw moment most people would face in their lives. But I don't feel that from him. I feel detachment and a sense of education and for Alvaro there needs to be more than just that.

A great way to really ride out conflict, and amplify the dialogue and tension in it is to stop and think, how would this character feel in this moment? Think of that for Agnes, her husband, and especially for Alvaro. Here is the physical proof, the embodiment of what Dona Franca does to people. This is what he is trying to fight, to stop, to put an end to all of the suffering the ideas of her causes. How would that make him feel in that moment? What would he say, how would those words spill out of him in that emotional moment? That is what is real, that is what we need to see and feel and hear. We need to die in that moment inside with him, and we need to hear how he puts words to it.

Don't underestimate the emotional power of words in highly emotional situations. These moments are the ones that stand out, these are the types of moments that make actors beg to play certain characters. You have that option and that chance in Alvaro, so embrace it and make him come alive in his words.

Your women like I said are strong and their dialogue sings. If you can bring the level of these men up, the dialogue would shine as a whole and the entire experience of the script would jump right off the page and into our guts and there would be nothing holding that experience back from happening. Take what you did with the ladies, try harder to identify with the men, experience what they feel. Put yourself in their positions and see what comes of it. Have some fun with it, explore, experience, embrace it all, and you will be surprised what you will come up with. Read Bruno and Eric and Alvaro out loud. See how they sound, see if you feel any emotion in their words, and see if you have missed the mark on any of it. Once you put voices to it, even with some local actors and friends, it will also surprise you what you hear.

Dialogue should be highlight of everything else that is happening around a character. You have great settings and tense situations. Almost every scene has tension in it, yet the dialogue does not always match that intensity or that level of conflict.

THEME

Like I stated above, I like the many facets to your theme. It is felt in a solid way and we have no issues when it comes to feeling like there is more to say in this screenplay than just the dark story that unfolds. You have a good grasp on creating a theme. The only thing is that it doesn't tend to move forward into each character's life. Alvaro doesn't seem to have the same sort of theme of the choices you make and what you control leaving the mark behind you in your life. But with deeper exploration it could. And Dona Franca as well, her theme of lust and greed, and wanting to punish it. Hers connects well as it is the same idea as Tara's, in that she felt defined by what she did as a woman, and was judged for it. Just make sure the theme carries through as deeply as possible along all avenues.

WRITING STYLE

You have a great style. It is a clean script, terse and economic. It delivers the story in a way that keeps us turning the pages. It is visual and dark and edgy, and we feel like we are standing there with the characters at most times. Your voice is clear, and the handle on tone in this genre is very strong. It feels like this is your zone.

FORMATTING / GRAMMAR

Overall, your format has no issues. I did find a couple of page specific things to note:

ON page 12 you tell us Eric's age again in his description, but you already did at the party. SO clean that up. On page 57, make sure you don't tell us what he is thinking. It says he decides to hurry home and then speeds away. Well if he slams his foot on the accelerator he has decided to hurry home so just use something like that mark the action instead of telling. And on page 102, one of the dialogue excerpts is missing a period.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, you have a good base here, and it is a compelling story about greed for our wants and how it can easily destroy us if we let our emotions get the best of us. One final thought is to perhaps have Tara on some sort of medication. Or perhaps even that she needs to be to manage some sort of mental issue. But because she is trying to become pregnant she has to go off of them and it leaves her feeling unbalanced. It could just add to the off kilter feeling of the character, and another way her internally puts extreme pressure on herself. This would make a cool, edgy film, and if you can just expand on a few things and make them all gel together in a more cohesive way, the script could draw attention.

RATINGS GRID

	1ST CLASS	SOLID	NOT BAD	WEAK
Concept		X		
Story		X		
Structure			X	
Protagonist		X		
Antagonist		X		
Stakes Character			X	
Minor Characters		X		
Dialogue		X		
Scenes		X		
Pacing			X	
Theme		X		
Tone		X		
Writing Style		X		
Marketability			X	
Formatting		X		
Grammar		X		
Title			X	

SCRIPT RECOMMENDATION: Consider with reservations

WRITER RECOMMENDATION: Consider