



**COVERAGE REPORT**

**Title:** The Family Doctor

**Author(s):** Ryan Armstrong

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**Genre:** Crime Drama

**Locale:** Denver, NYC

**Circa:** Present Day

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**Logline:** A medical doctor unexpectedly finds himself tangled up in the mafia when an old friend calls on him for help.

**Recommendation:**  Recommend             Consider             Pass

**Comments Summary:** Although some character arcs and minor technical errors need to be fine-tuned, the screenplay feels natural and authentic from beginning to end making it worth consideration.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Work
Premise	X			
Storyline		X		
Characterization		X		
Dialogue		X		
Structure		X		
Writing		X		
Originality	X			

**STORY/SYNOPSIS:**

In a new building construction site at night, an overhead light shines down on the center of the room, illuminating a table filled with blueprints. Two gangsters, SAMMY and RICHIE, frantically burst through the doors, followed by ELI, carrying NICKY dying from a gunshot wound. In a moment of desperation, Eli pulls out his phone and calls the only person he hopes can help.

From his high-rise apartment in Denver, AARON, drinking Scotch, watches as MOVERS methodically remove belongings out of the apartment. His phone rings and Eli, frantic but trying to play it cool, asks him for a favor and Aaron, sensing the urgency in his tone, agrees to help.

At the construction site, Aaron arrives and immediately spots Nicky bleeding out on the table. Eli explains that his sister BECKY has married into the Mafia. Aaron reluctantly agrees to help and sends Sammy and Richie out for make-shift medical supplies. Aaron takes Eli's shirt and ties a tourniquet around Nicky's leg. Richie and Sammy return with the supplies. They hold Nicky down and Aaron removes the bullet as Nicky passes out. Eli thanks Aaron for helping and Richie takes him home.

The next day at Aaron's apartment, a heavy knocking at the door pulls Aaron to his feet. VINCE TESTA, Nicky's father, offers to take Aaron to breakfast. At the diner, Vince expresses gratitude for saving his son Nicki and on their way to the car, he implores Aaron to be the personal family doctor in NYC.

On the airplane to NYC, trying to get some sleep, Becky approaches Aaron waking him up. She reveals to him the details about the demise of the last family doctor. They arrive in NYC where Vince and Richie are awaiting them. In the car, they pull up in front of Aaron's new luxury apartment where, soon after entering, there is a knock at the door by SPECIAL AGENT MORRIS of the FBI.

At Vince's lavish house, Aaron is flooded by a swarm of people. He escapes to the bathroom where he finds Becky sprawled out drunk in the bathtub. The next morning, Becky wakes up and notices an IV in her arm. She quietly enters Aaron's room and approaches the bed. A noise wakes Aaron with a jolt causing Becky to react, pulling the IV from her arm. In the bathroom, while bandaging her arm, they are interrupted by Vince who is overly suspicious of Aaron's intentions.

Back at Aaron's apartment, a knock at the door from Special Agent Morris wakes him. He explains that he has incriminating evidence on Aaron and pressures him to wear a wire. Soon thereafter, Albert, in a foul mood, arrives and discloses the details of an illegal shipment to Aaron and prompts him to be ready in case anything happens.

Agent Morris calls Aaron telling him that the arrest was a success. Aaron goes to Vince's house, finds Becky, and prompts her to get out of town ASAP. Albert, beaten and bloodied with gun drawn, orders everyone into the study. Just as Albert turns his gun on Aaron, he is shot in the head by Nicky, who leads them out of the house.

Aaron, Becky, and Eli pull up in front of the airport terminal and are soon spotted by Vince. Richie puts Aaron in a headlock and begins to drag him and Eli out of the terminal. Just then, a swarm of FBI AGENTS and POLICE OFFICERS surround the

area. Law enforcement escort Vince and Richie out of the terminal in handcuffs and Aaron and Eli get breakfast.

## **COMMENTS:**

Present day dark comedy, *THE FAMILY DOCTOR*, follows the story of AARON, a doctor from Denver, Colorado, who finds himself unexpectedly entangled in the inner circle of the Testa family mafia.

The premise of this screenplay is unique and intriguing and starts off in the middle of a life-or-death moment with strong and engaging dialogue. Each subplot complimented the overall story, and the tone was consistent and well-defined, accenting the sense of urgency throughout the film. With some additional attention paid to character arcs, primarily Agent Morris, it will be even more satisfying.

Because the foundation of the film is so strong, it allowed for some great dialogue and moments of humor. Conversations between Aaron and Richie were especially rich, and Aaron's sarcastic comments made him relatable. The overall characterizations were spot on. Vince and Richie, in particular, are masterfully crafted and they leap off the page. Likewise, Becky proved to be a solid sidekick for the protagonist. Moments of insight and care for each other strengthened their relationship and interactions. The script also provided some great homages to classic films and was interlaced with solid movie references that highlighted the writer's voice.

Although each of the characters stands out in their own way, there are small elements missing from certain arcs. The current pace of the film allows for a couple more minutes of set up, especially for Agent Morris. Although he helps move the story along, seeing more brief moments of him will define his plotline and create another strong sidekick. Equally, toward the end of Act 2, Aaron suddenly rises to the occasion, which is appropriate for his overall journey but contrasts with other points in the film. A hint of that inner drive earlier on will support this moment.

Transition clarification is needed halfway through Act 2. Agent Morris goes to Aaron's apartment to present the wire then leaves after Albert's appearance, then he returns again. Revisiting the character's purposes in these brief scenes will help these transitions.

From a technical standpoint, there were some minor typos scattered throughout the script as well as a couple accidental name changes that need revision. It would be an interesting exercise to examine the "why" of this film. The script has compelling elements and understanding the "why" will turn it into a great film. Soliciting a group of actors to read the film aloud might shed light on some of the moments that need a bit more development.

This screenplay feels natural and authentic from beginning to end. With some fine tuning to character arcs and correction of minor technical errors, this film, with its crisp dialogue and well-crafted characters, is well worth considering.