

SCREENPLAY GURUS

REWRITE AND POLISH SAMPLES

Revisions in RED.

1. HISTORICAL DRAMA

X

a screenplay by X

EXT-RED SQUARE-MOSCOW.

SARA has arrived in Moscow and she is in Red Square in front of the Kremlin with her clothing trunk. The trunk is heavy but movable due to two small wheels on the bottom. Her piano music is also in the trunk. She is trying to find the Moscow conservatory.

She catches the eye of a young woman passing by.

SARA:

Where is the conservatory?

YOUNG WOMAN:

Where is?

SARA:

Московская Консерватория

YOUNG WOMAN:

No, this is the Kremlin. The Conservatory is half-mile away. Sorry for my English. I take you there.

EXT. MOSCOW - RED SQUARE - DAY

The Kremlin -- crossroads of the Russian heart and soul.

SUPER: "September 1968"

Mind blown, SARA (19) pulls a wheeled trunk. She revels in the glorious architecture. Every brick drips history.

Few Muscovites tread the Square.

Sara stops to get her bearings. She catches the eye of MARY (16).

In English with heavy accent,

MARY
American?

SARA
Yes. How can you tell?

Mary winks.

MARY
Where do you go?

SARA
The Moscow Conservatory.

MARY
What is...?

SARA
(Russian)
The Moscow Conservatory.

MARY
Sorry for my English. No. This is Kremlin. Moscow Conservatory is not far. I take you there?

SARA
That'd be great. Thank you.

MARY
I am Mary.

SARA
Sara.

Off they go.

2. CONTAINED HORROR

FADE IN:

INT. CELLER - DAY

Cold, dark, wet, musty, and large celler. A modern day dungeon.

A man, BRAD (early to mid 30s) comes to. He is gaged, handcuffed and chained to the wall.

He gets up and runs away. He doesn't get far.

THE CHAIN

Tightens and Brad falls. He wiggles around.

More people around him start to come to. Ten in all.

THE LIGHTS

Come on.

The people are also gaged, handcuffed and chained to the wall. They begin to panic.

THE CELLER DOOR

Opens.

Two men in WOLF MASKS and overalls walk in with batons.

They beat the people. One of them picks up Brad, hits him in the stomach and throws him against the wall.

The people settle down, out of fear.

The men in wolf masks take everyone's gags out.

The wolf masks leave.

A woman, BRANDY (mid 40s) turns to Brad.

BRANDY

What the fuck is this?

A loud SCREECHING sound comes from an intercom from above.

VOICE

(booming)

Good morning. Welcome to my humble abode.

INT. DUNGEON - UNKNOWN

A modern day yet Medieval looking dungeon. Cold and dark.

BRAD (30s) rouses. He bites on a gag in his mouth. Cuffs bind hands. Chains fix him to the wall.

On pure instinct, he rises to run but --

THE CHAIN

tightens and snaps Brad back. He wriggles on slimy ground.

MOANS as Nine Players awaken. Chains CLINK.

Brad surveys the Others bound and gagged just like him.

Bright industrial lights flip on.

Immediate panic. All hold hands up to shield dilated pupils.

The door opens with a CREAK.

Two Men in WOLF MASKS and overalls wield batons. They go to town beating the Captives.

A Wolf Mask rams the baton's end in Brad's stomach -- OOF -- then slams him against the wall. Brad collapses.

The Players quiet to whimpers. Fear swells in every eye.

The Wolf Masks yank out all the Prisoners' gags then leave.

BRANDY (40s), a bit groggy, swivels to Brad.

BRANDY

What the fuck is this?

A SCREECH of feedback from an intercom speaker above. A deep DOOMSDAY VOICE booms from it.

Note: Throughout, Doomsday is (V.O.) from the speaker.

DOOMSDAY

Good morning and welcome. You will be playing a number of games, my friends I have chosen. To start, turn to your right.

Ten synchronized turns to the right.

3. FANTASY DRAMA

EXT. CITY - DAY

View from a blue sky. Clouds vanish as we discover a little city with a victorian architecture during the 50s.

A snowflake. It swirls toward the air revealing stone houses and vintage cars who become bigger and bigger as the snowflake descends to the ground.

ADULT WOMAN (V.O.)

Once upon a time... that should probably be the magical formula to begin a fairy tale. But this story is not like any other.

The snowflake drifts past a bell tower...

EXT. STREET - DAY

Then it floats over a crowd and lands on a MAN's cheek. He brushes it off like nothing happened.

OSCAR (12), with blue eyes and freckles on his cheeks, walks among the adults in his pajamas, a white stuffed rabbit in his arms. Lost and sad, he stops in front of a phone booth looks in his in his pockets but have no money.

A MISTER in a fancy suit and a hat past among him.

OSCAR

Mister, do you have a penny please?

Mister looks at Oscar with dispise and ignores him.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

Please... I'm lost... I want to find my family again.

No one stops to help Oscar and they all avoid him.

Snow begins to fall.

Oscar, with his stuffed rabbit, sits on the ground made of cobblestones at a street intersection near the bell tower.

EXT. SKY - DAY

A descent through brilliant blue sky to grey-black winter storm clouds. Below the angry, roiling billows nestles a --

QUAINT TOWN

of picaresque Victorian architecture under a blanket of snow. It looks like... a Christmas snow globe.

A snowflake swirls down, down, down. The city comes into focus as the delicate flake makes its frozen journey.

White smoke belches from the chimneys of weathered stone houses.

Closer now, Fifties vintage cars spin tires and swerve on the icy streets.

FEMALE STORYTELLER (V.O.)

Once upon a time... . That's an introduction for a magical fairy tale. This is no fairy tale.

The snowflake drifts past a stately bell tower to --

STREET LEVEL

where it lands on a Man's cheek. Annoyed, he brushes it off without a second thought.

An odd sight. A Child in cowboy themed pajamas rounds a corner. Outside? In this frosty cold?

His name is OSCAR (12). Striking blue eyes, freckles on scarlet-from-the-cold cheeks.

Oscar clings to a STUFFED WHITE RABBIT as he wanders with no direction and a sad, searching stare on his face.

He spots a phone booth, rifles his PJ bottoms for coins but comes up empty.

People hustle and bustle by without a look, including a Businessman in warm, expensive overcoat, and hat.

Oscar screws up his courage and approaches him,

OSCAR

Sir, could I have a nickel? Please.

The Businessman fires a disdainful look at Oscar. He pushes past and briskly moves on.

Oscar rushes up on other self-absorbed Adults. He pleads,

OSCAR

Please... I'm lost. I have to find my family. Help me.

No one misses a step to consider Oscar. They avoid him as if a deadly plague carrier.

An intense snowfall whips up.

Dejected, Oscar sinks to the chilly cobblestone street in the bell tower's shadow, his loyal Stuffed Rabbit beside him.

4. FAMILY DRAMA PILOT

X - X - ACT 1

- 1) Images of the fury of Hurricane Ida.
- 2) Images of its aftermath.
- 3) Images of flooding in the NYC subways.

INT. SOLERS' LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Unmasked but with masks sticking from some pockets, the SOLERS, MATTERS, and ATKINS adults relax together.

CARLOS

Hurricane Ida really whacked the city! Did you see the water just pouring into the subways?

LOU

Good old climate change! Drought and fires in the west and now storms and flooding beyond the South and Midwest . . . even here in the Northeast!

JIM

Why were we so surprised by Ida's force?

CARLOS

I just think it's just a bad year.

Everyone ignores Carlos' comment except Lou.

LOU

Well, get ready for the next one! Who knows what it will bring?

CARLOS

At the dealership we are beginning to sell more hybrids.

LOU

Yes, electric cars will help. . . But producing the electricity needed remains a key question.

TEASE

SPACE -- WEATHER SATELLITE VIEW, SOUTHERN UNITED STATES

Immense Hurricane Ida approaches a Gulf Coast landfall.

SUPER: "Hurricane Ida"

SUPER: "August 2021"

EXT. LOUISIANA - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS - HURRICANE IDA

- Ida slams ashore with great fury.
- Palms bend and break.
- Wind-driven storm surge crashes on Lake Pontchartrain.
- Roofs surrender to the Category Four winds and blow away.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - SUBWAYS - DAY

Torrents of water flood tunnels.

EXT. LOUISIANA - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS - TOTAL DEVASTATION

- Fishing trawlers on front lawns.
- Vehicles overturned and strewn.
- People slog through deep standing water.
- Boats navigate flooded streets.
- Debris from fallen buildings everywhere.
- A dead fish lies in a road.

END TEASE

ACT ONE

FULL SCREEN TITLE: "Aftermath"

INT. SOLERS' HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Adults gather. CARLOS and LENORE SOLERS, MARY and LOU MATTERS along with JIM and ADELE ATKINS. All in their thirties.

Masks stick out from pockets.

CARLOS

Hurricane Ida really whacked the city. That water pouring into the subways was something to see.

LOU

Good old climate change. Drought and fires in the west and now storms and flooding beyond the South and Midwest. Even here in the Northeast.

JIM

Why were we so surprised by Ida's force?

CARLOS

I think it's just a bad year.

LOU

Well, get ready for the next one. Who knows what it'll bring?

CARLOS

At the dealership we're selling more hybrids.

LOU

Electric cars will help. But producing the electricity needed remains a key question.

Carlos remains silent.