

**THE BLACK LIST**

# **THE HOMEWRECKERS**

**Evaluation**

Overall	Premise	Plot	Character	Dialogue	Setting
6	7	5	6	6	6

Era	Present
Locations	Los Angeles
Budget	Low
Genre	Comedy, Dark Comedy, Dramatic Comedy, Family Comedy, Drama, Family Drama
Logline	As two 40-something parents see their marriage dissolve and undertake separate affairs, their teenage children and elderly parents similarly experience dysfunction with love and romance.
Pages	120

## Strengths

The material is generally well-written, and in particular the voice and specific satirical tone with which the subject matter is portrayed demonstrate that the writer is mature and fully in command of their craft. Scenes flow quickly and there are many humorous / witty repartees, and although these stylistic choices sometimes take the place of more genuine emotions, elements such as the relationship between Warren's parents are hilarious and comment nicely on Warren's potential future. The ensemble characters were generally strong and funny, and it was clear that the author had aspirations to flesh out secondary characters in their own right – Katie's changing perspective on her relationship with Colin, or the arc of Harrison and Eleanor's relationship, demonstrate that the author is committed to making the characters dynamic and exploring the narrative themes via multiple avenues. Although the material is a bit wonky conceptually and could be defined by two separate premises – either, the story of a married couple who concurrently undertake affairs, or an ensemble comedy about three generations of a family navigating love and sexuality – both paradigms would work solidly as films while the overall quality of characterization particularly of secondary characters is high.

## Weaknesses

There's a lot of telling rather than showing, specifically in relation to Warren's unhappiness and 'need' to have an affair. For all of Warren's complaints about Barbara, it isn't really clear that their relationship is THAT bad, especially considering the amount of dysfunction in every other relationship in the material as well. Similarly, the level of dysfunction and callousness the characters show to one another make the more serious beats near the end very difficult to swallow, since it feels like the author is asking the audience to suddenly care about and take seriously people who up until this point have only been ridiculed. Katie's motivation is a bit unclear, why exactly is their parent's marriage "costing her college?" It's pretty hard to believe a kid would strive to break up their parent's marriage unless she truly felt like it was the best for both of them (and we as the audience can buy into that), and it's not really clear that Warren and Barbara apart are better than Warren and Barbara together. Finally, the story needs to do a better job tracking the steps Warren and Barbara each take toward succumbing to having affairs, and although this is theoretically the A-story it often gets lost in the multitude of B and C stories (which are interesting in their own right, but do sometimes take focus from the affair).

## Prospects

The material is well-written and the characters given plenty opportunities for depth, but without a stronger emotional backbone this is unlikely to attract the attention of producers. As a small and fairly low budget satire, the barriers to production are not high, although the fairly specific upper middle class milieu may further limit the subject matter's appeal. The writing is strong and if a more straightforward story were told, the quality of the voice might in itself garner interest for the writer – right now, however, the piece at times doesn't feel sure whether it wants to be the story of a specific affair and the marital circumstances it arose from, or an ensemble of a number of different interconnected relationships with commentary on the nature of love in sexuality in general. The material would benefit from choosing one of these paradigms and rewriting to fit its goals, with special emphasis on tracking the steps each character goes through to fulfill their arc.