

TITLE OF MATERIAL:	Screenplay	TITLE:	<i>The Fountain</i>
NUMBER OF PAGES:	111	AUTHOR:	Jan Henner & Pat Dixon
SUBMITTED TO:	DAN GREEN	CIRCA:	1987, 2007
ANALYST	MUGE LI	LOCATION:	Shenandoah, PA
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## LOGLINE

A 13-year-old boy from 1987 accidentally time-travels to 20 years later, reunites with his grown-up friends, and reconciles with his brother who learns to appreciate family during a car chasing adventure.

## SUMMARY

In Shenandoah, PA, in 2007, police and reporters gather around KETNER'S GROVE, a big amusement park for a missing case – A 13-year-old boy who has disappeared in the forest outside Ketner's Grove for 20 years now has been found, yet inexplicably remains 13 years old.

FLASHING BACK in 1987, a gang of students is happily hanging out on a school bus heading to Daniel Boone Middle School. TROUT KETNER, 13, a popular funny boy, good at giving nicknames to his fellows, talks about his big plan of building the coolest roller coaster in the world. Everyone is interested, except HOPSCOTCH, 14, Trout's brother and also the person Trout looks up to, because he's jealous of Trout getting all the attention. FUNGUS, 14, a slightly geeky older kid sitting next to Hopscotch, constantly casts doubt on Trout's idea. At noon, the gang is together again at the school cafeteria. TRINA KOSLOWSKI, 13, an outgoing cute girl, reads out loud their dreams written in the yearbook while Trout is doing a silly gag behind her. The rest of the gang includes DEB FERGUSON, 13, Trina's best friend, dreaming to be a neurological surgeon, and SCHMIDTY, 13, a boy dreaming to be NASCAR rookie of the year.

Later, the gang gets to Ketner's Grove, the family business owned by Trout's family. Hopscotch tries to grab a pretty ring from the claw game for Trina because he has a crush on her, but Trina seems to be more interested in Trout, which makes Hopscotch really upset. Trina catches up with the gang, Deb tells her that she decided to go steady with Schmidty. The gang starts a hiding-chasing game, while Hopscotch reaches the wishing fountain, and makes a wish. At the same time, Trout suddenly bumps through the timeline when hiding behind a rock in the forest, and time-travels to the present, which is 20 years later.

The rock turns into a memorial, and the amusement park turns into MEGALOMART, a department store. Trout, the time-traveler, shocked by everything around him, accidentally meets Trina, now 33, working as a manager at the store, and is witnessed by other passengers while Trina freezes and faints. In Shenandoah Police, DEPUTY WALLACE, 34, nicknamed Fungus, now a police officer, receives the report from a witness of Trout's return and informs it to Hopscotch, now called RICHARD KETNER, 34, who is now a TV star famous for his dedication to finding lost children. KATHRYN TOWNSEND, a savvy, no-nonsense TV Producer, works with Richard in a reality crime show called *The Finder*. She smells the news and follows Richard into the case. The two guys then go to Trina's place for more details as she is one of the witnesses, and she remains emotional. On their way back, they still cast doubts on Trina's words until they see Trout standing beside a squad car stopping at the location that

used to be his house. Richard disguises his identity and takes Trout to the medical office where Dr. Deb, now 33, works and examines his body. Deb can't help but tell Trout her identity, and that Trout might be in a time warp. Deb decides to dial HALE SCHMIDT, 33, nicknamed Schmidty, now working for a tow truck company, and tells him the breaking news.

Back at the police office, Kathryn meets Trout with excitement and self-arranges an interview, but Wallace is not happy with her plan as he tries to protect Trout from those greedy newsmen while Richard agrees with the plan. Trout's case attracts floods of news vans gathering around the police station. While Richard records the show with Kathryn to tell the big story, Schmidty and Trina come. They're on the same side as Wallace and decide to help Trout escape from the back door. Wallace blames Richard for utilizing Trout and not having his best interests in mind. Kathryn gets super angry and quickly starts a car chasing game in the suburban, other news vans follow her as if she is the queen bee.

Richard follows the clues in the yearbook to find Trout, and Deb is also on her way to meet up with the rest. After a thrilling journey, they all end up at Roller Rink, a skating place where they used to have fun together. Richard finally confesses his identity to his brother and gives Trout a warm hug. Meanwhile, Kathryn keeps chasing and finally arrives at Megalomart, and desperate parents are gathering around because Trout's reappearance somehow ignites the glimmer of hope that he represents in those believers' hearts.

Richard goes back to Kathryn and refuses her even crazy plan of letting scientists test Trout's body, and they start a quarrel. The gang takes Trout to the Ketner's forest, tells him about what happened after his disappearance, and recalls the good old days through the yearbook together. Trout is shocked by the fact that everything has changed – Ketner's Grove has been shut down, Deb and Schmidty didn't go steady anymore, and none of their dreams really came true. Schmidty then delivers a moving speech about changes and growth. Trout feels crashed after knowing about his mother's death and suddenly runs away into the forest. The four adults immediately split up and start searching. Kathryn hears their voices from the parking lot and dashes into the forest with her cameramen.

At the rock, Trout reads the words on the memorials from his friends and family and starts crying. Kathryn finds him behind the rock, Trout is scared and suddenly falls. Leading by Trout's scream, Richard and Trina successfully rescue him from Kathryn and continue escaping. Kathryn, together with other reporters joining one van after another, keeps chasing behind them. On their way, Trout figures out that Richard was trying to get the ring for Trina but failed after he went missing. But now, the reappearance of Trout kind of brings them back together again, and it also works between Deb and Schmidty.

Richard takes them to a warehouse, where he saves the entire amusement park, with all the rides, and even manages to build up the roller coaster Trout has constantly been talking about – the Troutlander. When they reach the old wishing fountain, Richard confesses to Trout that his time travel was due to this stupid wish he made to the fountain 20 years ago – to let Trout disappear. Although Trout is quite heartbroken, he accepts Richard's apology. As soon as Kathryn arrives at the fountain, Richard makes his second wish to let Trout go back.

FLASHING BACK to 1987, Trout successfully travels back and meets Hopscotch and his mom again. In this time zone, everything goes well ever after – Hopscotch gives the ring to Trina, Deb and Schmidty go steady for a long time, and the amusement park keeps running with new rides including the Troutlander. And Trout is also enjoying his happier and more fulfilling days.

## COMMENTS

THE FOUNTAIN is a smart, well-written sci-fi with many deep thoughts behind the concept of time travel. Its main idea is about brotherhood, the reunion of friendship, and how we can deal with the changes in our life. Those are the factors that the viewers can truly relate to, which lead to a chance to capture a wide and imaginative audience.

The plot of THE FOUNTAIN is comprehensive and logical. The main conflict is clearly stated throughout the whole process, and viewers will like the happy ending. There is no horror in the script, and the theme is related to family, friendship, and growing up, which makes the screenplay all-age, and can especially be promoted for families with children. The story goes slowly and lacks highlights in the middle, and the immediate conflicts and emotional explosions all happen near the end.

The theme of the story is that sometimes we're heading in a different direction than we expected, but it may end up being the opportunity of a lifetime. Taking Trout to the future creates a great opportunity to see how children's perspectives differ from adults', and he appears as a kind of healing power in different relationships.

The protagonist of the screenplay is the brother Richard. The whole story is strongly pushing for the changes in his attitudes toward Trout, and how he learns to play the role of the big brother. In the Ketner family, Richard is somehow playing a bit of a fatherly role. In the grown-up Richard, the qualities of fatherhood become more apparent. The gang and Kathryn represent two different forces. The collision of these two forces, their impact on Richard, and which side Richard finally chooses, is the climactic part of the story in the middle and later stages.

The complex characteristics of Richard make him a less likable character. The image he leaves on the audience in the early stage as a businessman who puts his family behind the business may leave a negative first expression. In contrast, other characters are relatively flat and not as complicated.

The structure of THE FOUNTAIN is similar to BACK TO FUTURE but has more time switches. It might be confusing in the first place, but each switch goes with a strong twisting point in the story. The beginning is a good setting-up that viewers can call back on later.

## **RATINGS**

Story:	Excellent
Character:	Fair
Dialogue:	Good
Writer's Style:	Fair
Structure:	Good
Setting Originality:	Fair
Production Value:	Excellent

☐ Pass

☐ Consider with Reservations

☒ Consider

☐ Recommend