SCRIPT READER PRO

CLASSIC FEATURE COVERAGE

TITLE	XXXXXX	**GENRE**	Comedy
WRITER(S)	XXXXXX	**CIRCA**	Present
SUBMITTED BY	XXXXXX	**LOCATION**	US
FORM / PAGES	Screenplay / 78	**BUDGET**	Med
DATE	XXXXXX	**ANALYST**	XXXXXX

LOGLINE

Removed for writer confidentiality.

COMMENTS

Hey XXXXXX! Thanks so much for sending this script along. This was a ton of fun to read, and I found that you had such a great knack for creating stakes within the small world of Madison. The dialogue in particular was the high point of the script for me. The one liners like, "I'm tolerating you back." from Otis made me laugh out loud, and made the writer's intelligence come through in spades.

There was a lot to love about this script. The way the girls spoke to one another suggested a clear rhythm and banter, and though I think there's some more character development that you can do in here, there was a lot I felt about their camaraderie and the roles that each plays in the group by the end of the story.

This definitely has the makings of a strong teen high school "love" story and I think that leaning into that genre and watching as many films of this ilk as you can would be great for correcting some of the structural notes I'll go into in just a moment. I say love in quotes because, the real love story is Madison and her awesome pack of girlfriends! I'd also suggest that you find ways to push the envelope and really throw these girls unique curve balls, as the concept felt a bit straight forward in a way that felt a bit familiar.

Jumping into it! One of the issues that I had upfront was that you have so many wonderful characters, but I found it took me a while to place the differences between Madison and her friends in here, because there weren't any character descriptions that might help us get a sense of who they are right off the bat. For example, giving us age and a physical descriptor is a great first step in character establishment. "MADISON (20), wears ripped jeans and an old soccer jersey." feels like a much different person than, "MADISON (15), wears a short, pink dress and too much makeup." To go further here, you can also give us an indicator based on something we can see. For example, "CASSIE (14) sits smugly by Madison in a stylishly worn bomber jacket. Her sharp gaze misses nothing." While I'm not saying these descriptors are necessarily right for your characters, the important thing is to give us a simple yet specific idea of who they are, so that we can inform their dialogue and get an immediate sense of characteristics Without having that introduction, I found that characters didn't stick as clearly in my head, making it hard to follow and root for them and also making it easy to mix them up. In particular, Cassie and Claire were hard to separate at times because their names looked very similar. On this point, regardless of character intros, I'd change either Cassie or Claire's name to look a bit different on the page so you don't risk any confusion within the read.

To stick with Madison a bit, I thought her need for breaking out of her shell was a great person to have some fun with. The idea of "Have an adventure, Baker." is a solid jumping off point for your story, and I loved when Madison went into her clarifying regret that she should've done more. I think this needs to come much earlier in the story, and, not to sound like a broken record, but you can start to build this idea as soon as we meet Madison with a character introduction and an immediate choice that shows she needs an adventure. The corny version of the kind of visual you need initially is the yearbook she flips through as she packs her room, looking at all the clubs she wasn't a part of.

Jumping into structure! My general note here, is that I think reframing your story to be more of the quest to get to Ryan's (side note: Ryan Bright is an amazing crush name!) would be a great way to expand out the material you have here, and keep the story moving forward. What I mean by this is, Madison took a while to finally give into Cassie, that for much of the script she was trying to get back home rather than trying to get to Ryan's. I'd rework this, so that by page 25 or so she's fully committed to the adventure, and the meat of the story is the hiccups the girls face in their way and the wild abandon for which Madison starts to act as she leaves a trail of chaos in her wake. A wake she's going to have to deal with when it's revealed she's not leaving at all at the end. This would allow your plot to be clear and singular, while your subplot of the girls' friendship and what happens when Madison, the glue, leaves town can reach into your scenes, affecting these girls at every turn. For example, when Claire tells Madison that she can't wait to not deal with Cassie anymore, that was something I wished we'd gotten a bit earlier, then we can see some of the cracks growing in this friend group as well as start to see Madison's concern over her friends, her real crushes.

To get more specific, reworking your first act is where you're going to get the story to start to click into place with a bit more strength. We spent a lot of time at Madison's house as the first scene and it felt like it dragged on just a bit. I'd consider showing some different elements of Madison even before we get here. For example, maybe we see her packing up her room, interacting with her family, etc. before her friends come over. I think chopping down on this would be a solid way to get you to the sneaking out element sooner, so that by your break into act two, we're post spray paint moment (where Madison is dipping her toes into the rush) and Madison has had time to consider the options and returns from her debate period fully committed to this idea of adventure. While your sequencing works, it just needs to be condensed so that we're moving along at a quicker clip, and I think we need to get that moment when Madison decides that she's down for this, rather than be dragged along the whole way. Otherwise, I don't truly get Cassie's need being more powerful than Madison's for this journey, and think she can be the instigator, but actually do her job and convince Madison that this is a good idea. Their subsequent adventures then, are not trying to get home but rather trying to get to Ryan's and dealing with the various obstacles in their way.

I like Cassie's backstory, and it added a lot to her character and why she struggles to let people in. It also explains why Madison is one of the few she does let in. However, it didn't do enough to give that clear motivator about why she's pushing Madison so hard to go talk to Ryan.

I think it made sense to be if she suggested it and plead with her to do it, but her refusal to give up even when it's clear her friend doesn't want to do that is an interesting choice that needs perhaps a more inventive reasoning behind it and is maybe an opportunity for a further reveal that can thrust them apart later on. I also think Cassie's monologue about her mother could maybe be placed further in the third act. It felt like a great character revelation, and we're missing a bit by not leading up to this after Cassie has perhaps made some bad decisions or gotten into it with Madison, and explains by way of apology. This leads into a bigger note here, about how the journey to Ryan needs to pull them apart more, while ultimately bringing them back together. Let all their separate hurts, worries and goals climax to this moment where they are at odds, and Ryan being out of town is the last straw before they all turn on each other. That rift is needed to bring them back with more strength, and will ultimately give us a more satisfying ending.

A little sequencing beat that I had a hard time with, was the loss of Nina's glasses at the same moment that Otis was driving back their way. This felt a little coincidental, and I'd suggest leaning into the problem behind Nina's glasses and actually making this more of a new beat, where they have to divert from their current path to go take care of this issue. Maybe Nina is not only drunk, but blind and panicking, making it something they're forced to deal with. At 79 pages, you have some room to expand, and giving this the time it needs to develop so it doesn't seem quite as written would be a great way to further layer their journey.

From a formatting standpoint I'd keep your name/contact information on the title page rather than having it spill over to the first page of your story. I'd also stay away from using "MENTALITY FILMS PRESENTS, A XXXXXX FILM" in favor of a simple "OPENING TITLES." It just lets your reader live in the story, while also allowing that part of the filmmaking process to be saved for much further down the line.

I'd try to slim your action blocks down a bit so they're closer to four lines or so. This is because readers tend to skim when confronted with a large chunk of text, and creating more white space on the page can ensure that readers aren't missing important details that are hidden within your action blocks. Some of your lines could get more efficient, but also it could be a matter of separating your action blocks and natural break points to spread those out. This was more an issue at the beginning of the script, and therefore made your first two pages feel a bit dense. Contributing to this was a lot of description that focused on camera angles, and the way the script was shot. While definitely a choice that shows intention behind the writing, I felt like it took away from the story, and found it hard to totally immerse myself in the script.

I'm all for emphasizing points and moments with camera movement and specific choices, but I'd recommend scaling back on this just a hair and give more platform to the emotional mechanics and choices of the characters, especially in your pivotal first moments.

I also noticed your scene headers need a bit of finessing. There was a point where the time of day dropped off when we stayed in NIGHT for a while. I'd keep referencing time of day, and also stick to a period after INT./EXT. For example, "EXT STREET NIGHT" should be "EXT. STREET - NIGHT" to keep it consistent throughout.

Additionally, make sure to cap your character names the first time we're meeting a character. For example, Joslyn was never given an introduction, and was referred to as a girl walking towards them and it was a little confusing when a Joslyn started to speak. This happened with Otis and Walt as well, so just make sure that you're being clear when we're meeting those characters that will have subsequent dialogue.

Last little formatting note, but I'd make sure to center your parentheticals on their own line. For example:

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                    PAIGE
               (annoyed)
          Okay, fine.
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CONCLUSION

This has a lot of potential to be a really strong story with dynamic characters and a heartfelt ending. I'd first step back and restructure a bit so that you can get the framework where it needs to be. When doing this, ask yourself how you can track and stay true to not only Madison's evolution, but also Cassie, Claire and Nina. While we got a chance to touch base on each of their storylines separately, I didn't feel like they had much intention or affect within the story, and making these spill over into your plot and the progression towards them being at odds with one another is going to give some layers and subplot to your story. It all feels a bit too easy for these girls at times, and since the biggest thing I cared about was their friendship, I'd love for you to rework that structure to give your characters an opportunity to lose it all. After restructuring, that's when I'd take the deep dive into reworking and specify your characters, starting with strong introductions and giving more clarity on the page through consistent formatting choices. Well done and best of luck on your next draft!

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:
<u>DEVELOPMENT NEEDED</u> / CONSIDER / RECOMMEND

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The Script Reader Pro team