



SCRIPT READER PRO

CLASSIC SYNOPSIS/TREATMENT ANALYSIS

TITLE	XXXXXX	GENRE	Thriller/Mystery
WRITER(S)	XXXXXX	CIRCA	Present Day
SUBMITTED BY	XXXXXX	LOCATION	Stockholm
FORM / PAGES	Treatment / 14	BUDGET	Med
DATE	XXXXXX	ANALYST	XXXXXX

LOGLINE

Removed for writer confidentiality.

COMMENTS

Thank you all for submitting this TV treatment for review. I think you have the makings of a fascinating and cerebral true-crime thriller, which will certainly resonate with the success of recent projects such as True Detective Season 3, and the escalating visibility of European murder mysteries on domestic streaming platforms.

Off the bat, I was impressed with the evocative mood you managed to conjure up in this document alone. The story you're presenting here is ripe with mysterious intrigue, and I was eager to find out what twists and turns were coming next. Also, you've displayed a sharp eye for aesthetics in the creation of these visually dynamic pages.

CHARACTERS

I will admit that I didn't get quite enough of a sense of Matthias here to truly appreciate his dramatic core as a character. I understand that he's obsessively dedicated to cracking this case, but what is he like as a human being beyond that?

Perhaps Matthias' could be motivated through some sort of personal connection to this kind of crime, as opposed to a purely external goal of seeking justice. What if his own little sister was kidnapped and abused as a child, and the perpetrator was never found? Maybe Matthias was meant to be watching her that day but became distracted, thus causing him to internalize the blame and guilt for her abduction? Alternatively, it might be interesting to give the audience more pause about Matthias' mental state, rather than simply concluding that he's been railroaded and unjustly thrown away in an institution. Perhaps Matthias was known as an overly aggressive and impulsive police officer. He might have had several disciplinary warnings after manhandling suspects in the field, putting him on thin ice even before the shooting of the old man in the woods. Later, after Sonja springs Matthias from the asylum, you might go further in showing how his personal quirks and eccentricities have only become worse since being institutionalized. He could be manic, twitchy, mumbling to himself, etc. I like the moment when Sonja sees Matthias house and marvels at his huge collection of research regarding the case, but what's missing here is a sense of unease. It should strike her, and the reader, as a little bit odd that this man is so tethered to these crimes. Doing so would go a long way towards making Matthias a more three-dimensional character, with flaws and emotional problems, thus allowing for more of a redemptive "arc" from beginning to end of the series. Matthias might even develop some form of substance addiction in order to cope with the stresses of re-entering civilian life, such as relying on prescription pills or alcohol to quell his nerves.

On that note, I think it would be worth delving a bit deeper into the nature of the relationship between Sonja and Matthias. This could start with adding nuance and layers to Sonja's character to explain what's motivating her to track down Matthias and enlist his help in this case. Is she extremely career-driven and aching to prove herself in the face of rampant sexism within the police force? We should get a feeling for what makes Sonja tick and her general demeanor. Moreover, I didn't understand the bond between these two. Was Sonja Matthias' ex-partner, or was she just another tertiary officer who dealt with him during the initial case? As I see it, the more personal you can make their connection the better. Maybe Sonja and Matthias actually had a secret romantic spark before he was taken off the force. In fact, this relationship might have been uncovered by Matthias' ex-wife Alex, leading to the collapse of their marriage. Thus, when Matthias returns to the civilian world, he makes overtures at winning back his ex-wife, only for their reunion to be complicated by the fact that he's now again teaming up with the woman he cheated on her with! One can imagine the tension and drama this triangle might produce once Matthias'

own daughter disappears, as he's forced to cooperate with both Sonja and his ex-wife in tandem to bring her home.

Lastly, though I found the iconic mythology of the Valknut cult to be creepily compelling, I also feel your story needs one concrete antagonist who is mentioned during the synopsis itself, rather than just speaking of an amorphous group. In the characters section, you deftly describe the influential Mark and his two twin stooges Roger and Franco, making them all stand out in a unique manner. These are fascinating figures who serve an important role, so I would devote more time to them within the synopsis. You could sprinkle in a few more "red herrings" who the audience is led to believe is the perpetrator, such as the head of a local church which shares some similar viewpoints to the cult, or a suspicious teacher at the school attended by a number of the missing girls. To that end, I generally think it would be good to introduce one or two additional side characters in the synopsis. Maybe there could be a pugnacious police chief who's constantly on Matthias' case, or a local criminal "snitch" who Matthias usually hits up for information from the underworld -- just a few colorful characters to expand the world of this story.

PLOT

On the whole, I think you have the makings of an exceptionally powerful concept here. That said, I'm not entirely sure that you've presented quite enough plot to fill out an eight-part series. Typically, a show of that nature would include an "A", "B" and "C" storyline, whereas you have only really outlined the "A" track of Matthias' investigation. As I relayed above, you need to find ways to give your secondary characters their own compelling narratives that would run in parallel to Matthias'. One vehicle for this would be through Yvette, whose current role feels a tad thin. For instance, you mention that Yvette "fled the country" after Matthias killed the old man in the woods to save her. But how would a (then) fifteen-year-old girl have the wherewithal to sneak over the border on her own? Then, two years later, how does she manage to return home so easily if she's become, essentially, a fugitive in the from this dangerous cult? It would be interesting to actually show more of her journey, maybe even interspersing it with abstract flashbacks of the original incident two years prior. In fact, there's a world in which the entire show could use past events as a kind of "framing device" for the present-day storyline. I would generally recommend looking for ways to expand your plot to allow for more concurrent threads.

Another missing logistical piece here has to do with how, precisely, Sonja is able to get Matthias out of this asylum. Does she have the official backing of the police department in doing this, or is this a somewhat extralegal move she's making on her own in order to crack the case?

The latter option sounds more dramatic to me, as it would allow for a situation wherein Matthias is helping the cops while simultaneously having to evade them, since he was illegally sprung from this institution and is meant to have no involvement in the case. This would ramp up the tension even further when Yvette returns, as Matthias has to hide it from the police who are tailing his every move. Currently, the beat included wherein "Sonja, is angry with him because he disappeared" doesn't really feel earned. Instead, Sonja could be mad at Matthias because he's been withholding this rekindled involvement with Yvette from her, due to his own suspicions about the police force. To wit, you could add another "red herring" within the precinct, which would see Matthias finding some link between the Valknut and a high ranking police officer, thus intensifying his paranoia. Lastly, I think the current synopsis ends just as it's getting good, with the revelation of Isabel's disappearance. I would include one additional paragraph which delves further into what happens after this watershed moment, so as to give the reader an inkling of where the series is headed in its later installments.

PRESENTATION

I feel I must mention that the technical writing of this concept document was a little bit clumsy and awkward at times. I would suggest going over it with a fine-toothed comb and fixing any wording or grammatical errors you might find throughout. The more slick and professional your prose reads on the page, the more likely it will be for someone to feel your show is commercially viable. Also, for the purposes of a document like this, I think what you've written comes up a bit short in terms of detail. During the "Character" section, you could list potential actors who you might see for each role (to give the reader a sense of them visually). Also, from a purely practical point of view, it might be worth expanding the "Film References" section. Rather than just listing a few titles, you could try explaining the "tone" and "vibe" you're aiming to strike— providing in-depth comparisons to how these other properties tackled similar subject matter. Finally, it's worth noting that all of the examples you include are feature films, while the actual product you're trying to make here is a limited series. I would reflect this by adding in some more television-based influences amidst the other selections.

TITLE

The title "XXXXXX" does have a satisfyingly gravitas-laden ring to it. However, I must say that, upon initially hearing it, my mind went directly to the phrase "round-house kick." As such, I was primed off the bat to think this was a martial-arts-related show, rather than the dark crime thriller it actually is. Might I suggest simply using "The Valknut" as a title? Or, alternatively, "Incarnation" might work as well.

CONCLUSION

Overall, I think XXXXXX has strong potential as a series if it were to be developed further. As stated earlier, the public's appetite for true crime fiction is at an all-time high at moment. As mentioned above, I would suggest paying more attention to the inner lives and emotional motivations of your characters, making each of them feel like an integral part of the whole rather than a means to an end. The same goes for the logistical particulars of your story, which should be expressed in a streamlined, but fully descriptive manner. Finally, I advise spending more time on some of the technical elements of this document to ensure that it feels more polished and well-rounded. In closing, thank you for sending, and I wish you the best of luck with this project.