



Team N.W. England

Tuesday, March 20, 2018

Hey Geoff,

Firstly, please accept my apology for the ridiculous delay.

Skype

Let me know when you have a window in April then let's schedule a Skype to review the review.

Sentient – N.W. England – Pilot Synopsis – Review

The work has excellent potential. Rather than impose the standard formula let's give you some room to move and also time to do it.

Inciting incident – The axe murderer

Let's show it.

We start with the **wake-up**. Rewind. Let's start with **the night of the axing**.

You've gone with father - Jack who has become or is the new rep for the Charles Manson party in Cumbria.

This will need more meat. Consider **Step dad** - Jack who sold mum on true love but actually wants the property and wealth for himself. To get it, he has to kill the whole family and then have someone to blame.

Who to blame? A recently dismissed Sandhurst Officer cadet with a history of violence of some sort makes for the perfect candidate.

He'd have to kill the power, collect the phones and the property would have to be remote but it can be done. Now, how to blame it on the cadet? How to ensure it looks like a murder - suicide?

In this case, as the body count starts to pile up and the hunter comes for Marley and Delia, he will be explaining his plan and bragging about how he is going to get away with it. He's also going to give us **some exposition about Marley**, how everyone will believe it was her based on her conduct at Sandhurst.

Then cometh the storm.

Marley may take Delia to the cellar to hide but will pass out as the storm hits. We can see the storm via the top windows in the basement.

Wake up the next day, Jack is gone and we are into our story.

This means you don't need to go, 'I was going bankrupt and lost it' angle later on which was a weak choice delivered at the wrong time. Show what Jack is about from the get-go. Show his plan being realized.

When Jack reappears he will have a story about how Marley went crazy in the storm and Delia won't be able to defend her. He is charming and believable. He wins hearts and minds and Marley finds herself falsely accused by the very person responsible for the murders.

One thing, he is an axe murderer at the start then goes the gun. Which is he, a gunner or axe wielder? He strikes me as a double barrel shot gun, kind of guy.

The Protagonist – Marley the ex Sandhurst Officer cadet

Marley as a beginner soldier, kicked out of Sandhurst, works.

You'll need a strong backstory for why she was kicked out. It will need to show, once again, how she stood up for someone being bullied and was then blamed for the violence that followed. Demonstrate she is a leader but always on the wrong side of the law.

Marley's loss of family will make her very protective of her sister Delia and also highly focused on bringing down Jack.

Marley cannot be gay. The Sentient only leave those they can mate with who have the DNA they need to spawn the next gen. Marley can be bi. So, her relationship with Sam may be more complex.

Delia

Make her 13 – 16. Easier to cast plus true to story. Only those within mating age survive the storm.

Nemesis - Jack

Jack has a great deal of potential. We've already covered an angle to pump him up from the beginning. We need to evolve him as the nemesis. So far, he is a hate-able character but you need to grow that. His execution from here has to be far more subtle until he grows in power. Pot shots are too, 'on the nose' here. He has to play the victim and make sure the survivors are set against Marley. That's a starting point.

Next, let's disappear him until the end of the pilot. See notes later on. That is not standard formula but right for this story.

The storm

The arrival needs to be demonstrated in a unique way. See the Australian or USA script for some tips re this.

Origins / Wake up scene

The wake up works.

Discovery

We lack a discovery journey and the post storm effects.

She needs a wander through the town / outlying to the main town to find it deserted. Show your ash shadows there.

She needs to look for people that are no longer there.

The journey through people's homes and facilities reveal a snapshot of the culture and the things they value. You may even get a few flashbacks of Marley's life through that journey, (Sam for example).

Also, the atmosphere is heavy red, there is that light hum everywhere and at some point, do add the human ash spill, (ash from the sky rains down, this is cremated bodies of the dead, burnt up in the storm).

Speculation – What just happened?

Start and grow your speculation about what has happened but don't go OTT. They don't know. Regardless, Marley will have a tick list of things she has to do and because of the design of your story, #1 will be get Delia to safety with the Police and tell her story.

The rolling bus

Love the rolling bus.
Not the Jack shooting incident.

Jack shooting people

Your spending his 'badness' too early. First you have to 'reappear' him and that will be at a time when Marley is compromised and he will have brought his posse that are not clued up on what Marley has allegedly done.

The damaged people

Bock is a good start.

Bock and the revelation that her stepfather is trying to kill her

Here's the thing. The man just crashed his bus. He has no idea it is full of dead people, (well not really dead). He is blind and freaked out and this is his first human contact. He cannot see Marley is covered in blood. He is in no state to receive the information that Marley has to share so she won't share. She will know that and do what she does, lead.

Keep Bock blind for a while as it slows Marley down.

Stated objective

What Marley needs to state at this point is her objective. Get to a hospital. Get to the police. Get to the main town where everything is going to get sorted.

At this point we don't know Jack has survived. Hold that back to a moment when Marley is compromised.

The EMP reference

Save this for one of the scientists from the reactor to reveal.

The main town revelation

It's empty.

Facilities such as hospitals, schools, police stations are ghost towns filled with ash shadows until she find bodies piled up in exit doors. You will build to this.

Find an authority figure that is whacked then disappear the bodies

This is an opportunity to discredit Marley ahead of Jack's testimony. If she finds a stack of bodies, that will freak her out. She will protect Delia and Bock from that information but then approach the authority figure with the information. The figure will be whacked from the storm but still retain arrogance and disbelief.

Have Marley insist he/she come to see and then disappear the bodies. They have gone. Now she looks like a fool and that lends itself to Jack's return and assertion that she has killed her family and he escaped from her.

The Atomic power plant

This is a fabulous location. Don't waste it. Save it. Feature the two survivors waking. Give them damage. One cannot speak. One has another affliction but both know that they are losing control of the plant and they have to act.

Build that story as a ticking time bomb.

The planes

The scale of this tale in Cumbria may be spoiled by the plane crashes. Leave these out of this location.

The survivalists

They are their own journey. Jack can come later.

We get a boat, we get the hell out

OK, something is very wrong. Cars don't work. They need to get out of the town and let the rest of the world know. They go for a boat. No joy. They decide to walk across the tidal path to find another boat. All good.

This is where they discover the bodies floating face down in the water.

This is where Marley discovers one of them is one of the bodies she saw in the town. Something distinctive to show that.

Show some electrical activity, like a blue glow in the water, like the ocean is coming alive but don't explain. Just increase the need to get to the exit.

The Sentient appearance

Don't feature many. Feature just one. Have them get to the other side to discover one of the lifeforms matt black and filled with stars. They run for their lives only to escape into the arms of JACK and his posse.

"Hello Marley"

Season Two

Rather than speculate on the work so far, let's wait for a rewrite of the synopsis to set up the elements better.

Rest of season

Ditto.

Conclusion

Set up your nemesis and protagonist relationship better.

Grow your story slower.

Use locations to build.

Hold back on Jack until end of Pilot.

We seek one more draft of the Synopsis from you.

We have awarded you 2500 more points to complete this.

Deadline – July 1st 2018

We will create and publish a page on the Sentient site promoting your work such as this one. <http://www.sentient.tv/sentient-the-philadelphia-series/>

Well done.

Kind regards,



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