

External Reviewer - Anon

Sentient

What did I like?

This pilot is action-packed and quickly-paced, which makes it engaging to read. Overall the structure and act breaks work to heighten tension. The world is unique and seems well-researched. The blend of the realistic military world and an apocalyptic sci-fi one has cinematic potential.

What could use some work?

There are two worlds going on in this pilot that both need a lot more information in order for the reader to understand them and therefore, to understand what is going on. The world of the Navy and Clearance Diving is not something the average person is familiar with. There are terminology and visuals in this pilot that are not common knowledge, and hardly any context is given to help piece the world together. Because the pacing is so brisk, there isn't time to establish the rules of the world before they are flipped by what seems to be an alien attack.

The alien aspect is the second world that needs more building. The description of the alien on p. 9 could use more in order for us to understand what it is and what it looks like. The continual desecration of humanity is also happening so quickly that it's hard to grasp what was normal and what is changing, and how it is changing and what effects the change has.

Dowd is our lead, and while he has some distinct traits, he could use a little more space to be developed more complexly. Similarly to all of the other characters. Amiri's desire to be a Clearance Diver despite the fact that they only allow men to make her compelling, but she could use a more dynamic personality. The dialogue is mostly to the point and without subtext, due to the extreme situations the characters are in, but if there could be moments that allow those relationships to come forward, it will help us care more about those extreme situations.

Overall the structure works, but some of the act breaks are stronger than others; the teaser, act one and two all end on a tense place with momentum, whereas act three end at a time that doesn't add to the suspense, and act four makes sense plot-wise but could use a little more conflict where it lands.

The resolution of the pilot gives us some interesting plot points to think about, but it doesn't establish a bigger sense of what the show is going to be about. More of a concrete plan or conflict needs to be developed with the alien plotline and how it directly affects our main characters as Clearance Divers in order to set up what the show is about.