



StoryPros International Screenplay Contest Feedback

PERCHANCE TO DREAM by Steve Beshekas

NOTES

- Spellcheck script.
- p. 1 Description blocks too long. Each block should be no longer than three lines.
- p. 2 Easy on the parentheticals. Use wthem only when it's not clear how the line should be delivered — e.g., "that's great!" when it's meant to be "(sarcastic)".
- p. 6 Opening scene goes on for 6 long pages, and very talky — what's done here could be handled in two, and would have far more impact. Remember, your first scene is your grabber...you've got to hook the audience quickly.
- p. 7 No need to describe Diana's outfit, etc. Stick to a few pithy words about each character when they're introduced. Less when, like Diana, they're not main characters.
- p. 8 "He is one of Dean's few close friends" — in description, you have to limit yourself to only that which can be seen. If it's in description, the audience will never know it, because they will never read the script!
- p. 9 Why does Dean mumble "William Danforth?" Be interesting if somehow he was involved in what follows, if he and Danforth had a secret history as well...
- p. 14 Remember, every scene should a. Advance plot, or b., Reveal character. Eliminate scenes which do neither, or fold them into other scenes.
- p. 16 "Shot widens" — avoid "directing" in your script. Use description blocks strategically to indicate narrative flow in a visual way, but leave camera directions out.
- p. 22 Might be more effective to begin the script with this dream sequence!
- p. 28 How does Dean know Mrs. Hagstrom is waiting? Diana didn't call and say so...
- p. 32 "He sits, puzzled" — why's he puzzled? Just because he couldn't hypnotize her? Or something else? If she were the *only one* he's never been able to hypnotize, that would explain his puzzlement and be more intriguing as well.
- p. 35 "DOESN'T" — underline only for emphasis in dialogue.
- p. 51 Would Dean really give patients his home phone number?
- p. 56 Mr. Eldridge appearance — good to get another element involved. He should appear far earlier — you want your bad guy, or his minions, to be visible as early as possible.
- p. 57 How come Dean is able to hypnotize her now? What changed?
- p. 60 This sequence might be more effective with POV shots of the action being described — show, don't tell!
- p. 69 "check my methodology" — he just said that same thing on p. 68.
- p. 74 End scenes earlier — no need to waste time on pleasantries or exit chit-chat. Always end a scene on a decisive note, and never trail off.
- p. 74 "The expression of vulnerability on her face is heartwarming." Nice, but not really appropriate for screenplay description. Be spare and telegraphic in your descriptions.
- p. 79 Why won't Dean introduce Sarah to Laurel? What in their history would justify this?

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PROFESSIONAL SCRIPT ANALYSIS

- p. 79-81 Use proper montage format. Better yet, consider using something other than a montage here — series of shots or, even better, actual short scenes to show their developing relationship.
- p. 92 Message or letter, not both — you could make this part flow much more smoothly if it was just a message that points him in the right direction. Or if he's forced to sniff out where she's gone, because, to protect him, she's left no scent for the others to find.
- p. 93 Islington mentioned again here as being responsible for "deconditioning" — so a bad guy has been lurking about all along? More on this!
- p. 94 "We've had this conversation before" — but we haven't heard it...what are they talking about?
- pp. 115-117 Lots of bad guy monologuing here...a bit standard, undermines the ending.
- p. 121 Clever ending...does it need to be sad?

COMMENTS

Dean doesn't probe the nature of the Carson Project early in Act 2 — he seems hot on the trail, then inexplicably backs off. This is exactly the kind of mystery that he's been searching for in life, and you figure he would be keen to find out more about it. There could be a conflict here with his need to know vs. his growing love for Sarah.

What's the nature of Sarah's memory blockage? Who did the memory erasure? Why are these memories resurfacing now? Is there some cue, some environmental stress in her life that's triggering them? Perhaps some case in her insurance office could be the trigger — a family just like the one in her submerged memories perhaps. Or perhaps that ties in also with a family in Mexico who she got to know. Any of these would strengthen Sarah's character, and make the script more interesting.

We need to know more about Danforth. He should be revealed as an active antagonist early on in the piece. We should ultimately come to know nearly as much about Danforth's motivations as we do about Dean & Sarah's.

The first act should be shortened by half. The second act should focus on developing the characters and more importantly, bringing up the B story of the love affair and uniting it with the A story to lead us to a satisfying resolution. The third act should supply that resolution, and it should lead to Dean & Sarah's triumph over Danforth — and if they do not, then there'd better be a good reason which flows organically from the events leading up to it.

A thematic think-through — not a revision, but a "re-vision" of the script, is really needed here. Break it down into its abstract pieces and decide what story is really being told or should be told. Is it the story of Dean's redemption? How does Dean's redemption correspond to Sarah's redemption? How (and why) does Danforth prevent them from realizing their goals? Do they seek justice for the dead, or is there some other way to play it?



Does Danforth's accession to the vice presidency threaten the country in such a way that Dean and Sarah must risk heaven and earth to stop him? Questions like this help you pinpoint the thematic core of the script. And you'll be surprised how this kind of clarification can really snap your story into focus. When you have the core all figured out, you know what scenes are necessary, and what are not, and can spend your time wisely on sequences you'll keep.

Thank you!

Thank you for submitting your script to our StoryPros International Screenplay Contest. We hope you find this feedback useful, and hope to see you and your work again in future!