

LAST WOMAN

by Sandi Jerome

A female scientist consumed by PTSD after being raped in college tests a new high tech security device that continually transports her to parallel universes where her reality slowly erodes and her husband and daughter eventually cease to exist but her assailant who is not incarcerated does.

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Logline

A female scientist consumed by PTSD after being raped in college tests a new high tech security device that continually transports her to parallel universes where her reality slowly erodes and her husband and daughter eventually cease to exist but her assailant who is not incarcerated does.

Strengths

The reader thoroughly enjoyed LAST WOMAN which held their attention cover to cover through two successive reads. There is a lot to like about this script which effectively mixes the thriller genre with imaginative Sci-Fi.

Danielle is a strong female lead and as a result should attract some potential name brand talent to this project. While Sci-Fi is generally a male oriented demographic, that bodes well for the prospects of this project as the target demographic should significantly expand as a result.

That's important to a project's success with commercials and sponsors assuming a greater presence on the streaming platforms with their current two tiered (with and without commercials) strategy to curb their current losses.

Sometimes Sci-Fi themed thrillers soar over the heads of the audience, but the theory of parallel universes driving this plot is one that the vast majority of viewers will grasp and remain engaged for the entire ride.

Supporting characters are on point as well with the changes to each in every parallel universe being just subtle enough to keep the audience guessing where Danielle is in her journey.

Structurally, the reader saw that Danielle's universe would eventually change to one in which her assailant from college would emerge and do an about face. Circling back to the character who created her fear of being alone and resultant PTSD was rock solid.

While that could have been a bittersweet ending to the story, the writer wisely took it a few steps further to have Danielle end up in a parallel universe where her husband Bryan and daughter Chandra were close to enough to the originals that Danielle would live happily ever after with them.

This is a very clever script that is intelligently crafted for an industry where Sci-Fi is a perennial staple, but recent budgetary constraints have priced them out of the market. Just ask JJ Abrams who had the plug pulled on his Sci-Fi series DEMIMONDE at HBO.

LAST WOMAN on the other doesn't need to rely on big budget VFX in order to tell a story, in fact the daily call sheet will be particularly lean for many of the parallel universes which make continual use of the same sets with only minor alterations to the set dressing and props.

This is intelligent screenwriting in an era where "less is more" and "price does matter!" Great job!

Opportunities for Revision

Accolades aside the reader does have a number of minor suggestions for the writer to consider that may further enhance the prospects for this solid project.

The plot and characters are rock solid as is the dialogue, but at 109 pages the script is a bit heavy for a cost conscious market where the studios are hemorrhaging money on their streaming platforms and production costs have risen up to 50% as a direct result of the pandemic.

This script would be better positioned at approximately 90 pages which would give it a quicker pace but also reduce the budget proportionately.

Features are now being developed with estimated running times of 90 minutes or less in order for them to meet the standards set for a theatrical release if warranted as a result of focus group feedback, but also more importantly to conform it to a curated two hour ad supported time slot.

While every feature writer envisions their movie being shown commercial free that's simply not reality anymore. Commercials aren't going to disappear and the streamers are also aligning their libraries with options for FAST and AVOD.

A tightening of the dialogue after a table read would be the next logical step before paring down this script. This script doesn't need a major revision but simply a polish before it can be shopped for a potential deal.

With a lean principle cast, several low impact recurring locations and reasonable VFX, this project also has the potential to attract interest of indie producers who may have a relationship with SYFY channel which would be a good option. Why? SYFY is under the NBC/Universal banner which is owned by Comcast that also owns PeacockTV, Xumo and Telemundo.

That entity may see the upside of a modestly budgeted Sci-Fi thriller that could have multiple revenue windows and potentially spawn a sequel or a series featuring Danielle and her adventures over multiple parallel universes. That's just food for thought.

In closing, the reader trusts that the observations prove to be beneficial. All are actionable with a writer who displays an excellent skill set for the craft and a true affinity for the genre. Keep up the great work! All the best to you with this project and your future screenwriting endeavors!



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