



T.A.G., You're it? – Script Coverage Service

HOMEWRECKER By: [REDACTED] <i>1hr TV Pilot</i>	Page Count – 52 Genre – Crime, Drama Synopsis/Logline Included – No Package – Full T.A.G. w/ Social Responsibility
T.A.G. = Tell...Ask...Give... (A complete analysis and feedback system)	

QUICK T.A.G.

Tell the writer what they did well

The characters are the strongest and most interesting parts of *Homewrecker's* pilot. Their voices are mostly all unique and their interactions jump off the page. This is especially with our antagonist, Al, our protagonist, Jazmin, and our supporting cast members, Xavier and Valerie.

Ask the writer a question

- *Why is the show called "Homewrecker?"*

Typically, a homewrecker is described as: a person who comes into a happily married home and disturbs it by playing a concubine or being the person a spouse cheats with. The title made it seem as if this was something to expect, but we were not shown any one actually wrecking the home.

- *Can we learn more about the city and environment they are in?*

We don't learn a lot about the setting and world of the script and what makes it particularly unique. Additionally, how does their environment play a role in the story?

Give the writer a suggestion

- **T.A.G. SUGGESTED LOGLINE:** *A neglected housewife must return to her old life of sex-work and drug dealing to keep her family together when her rich husband falls gravely ill, forcing her to face her past or risk losing it all. (37)*
- A pilot must introduce the goal of the pilot and the goal of the series so the reader understands what to expect from episode to episode (the series mechanism). Consider establishing more quickly the pilot goal with an early inciting incident and a stronger series goal by the pilot's end.
- There are a few grammatical errors and typos throughout the script. Be sure to go through the script with a fine-toothed comb or hire a proofreader before submitting to a competition, producer, etc.



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T.A.G. IN DETAIL

CHARACTER:

- **PROTAGONIST:** The protagonist must be very clear within the first few pages of the script. The audience must be able to quickly decide to like or relate to them therefore choosing to journey with them throughout the screenplay.
 - Our main protagonist, Jazmin, is not very likeable though she does have some relatability in terms of her strained family relationships and as a person who is trying to be seen and considered. Jazmin's progression made her feel more like a passive character as she was getting pushed by the plot through happy coincidences instead of the other way around due to intentional choices. For example, there was a moment when she confronted the man during the accident who turned out to be an associate of an old friend and potential new rival, Al. Unfortunately, the scene did not execute a consequence for this action and as a result, the scene even though it was dynamic and paid off Jazmin's hard training, felt unnecessary rather than an organic story beat where we got to learn more about her.
 - Jazmin gets pushed around by her husband and step-son, one inhibited by perpetual pervy cheater habits and the other by hormonal teen angst respectively. This is juxtaposed with her relatively unstrained relationship with her mother Valerie and her relationship to her work-outs and hard training. But this is all we get to learn of Jazmin. Consider ways you can show us who Jazmin is through her environment or things that are important to her. For instance, we learn that she doesn't drink anymore through exposition dialogue, but we don't know why. Why is to say, we don't have an emotional attachment to that choice. Maybe she could have an AA coin or other personal items that she holds dear and often interacts with, communicating to the audience what is at stake for her if she doesn't keep herself, her marriage and her family, together.
 - Consider showing us the good of how Jazmin's new life as Richard's wife and being a step mom is fulfilling for her and moreover, the perks and privileges she enjoys about it and isn't too inclined to let go of. If we only see the bad affecting her, it makes us as an audience less likely to root for her or understand why she continues to remain in an emotionally

PAGES T.A.G. SAMPLE

T.A.G. REVIEW		
T.A.G. YOU'RE IT!	10 – 9.5	(CONSIDER)
T.A.G. you're lit!	9.4 – 8	(RECOMMEND)
T.A.G. you're almost it	7.9 – 6	(NEEDS REWORK)
T.A.G. NOT IT	5.9 – 0	(PASS)



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abusive and neglectful marriage. But if we know the stakes of what she is running away from and doesn't want to ever go back to in addition to the parts of this life she does enjoy, it will create a more complex emotional arc when Richard gets sick and she could potentially lose everything.

- **ANTAGONIST:** Depending upon the genre, antagonists must also be 3-dimensional. Exceptions are slasher or slapstick comedies and those in similar veins. Their plans and stakes should be clearly defined and they must be a viable threat to the protagonist's wants.
 - Al, the presumed antagonist of the story, we don't understand how what she wants is getting in the way of what Jazmin wants. Consider giving Jazmin and Al a similar goal with different approaches that reinforce who they are as people but also foreshadows who they might become.
 - We don't know why Al is after Jazmin, as we get hints of their relationship but aren't shown their relationship. Business seems to be good for Al, and she obviously knew that Jazmin was still alive even if she had moved away and came back, so why now? Consider what you can show us about Al's current life circumstances that could hint at her wanting Jazmin back by any [nefarious] means necessary. Maybe she has a problem dealing with higher tier criminals or something from her past has come back and she needs Jazmin in on it?
 - Richard going from the potential antagonist to an antagonistic force sidelined by his sickness was a good turn, but it arrived a bit too late. Consider showing us more of Richard as he takes care of his children and does things with his children, rather than being the 'emotionally absent husband but a provider who loves his kid' cliché, so that we see more complexity of him when his family loving side is paralleled to his shows up for everyone except Jazmin and neglect her emotionally side. This would help us as an audience also feel conflicted, just as Jazmin is intimidated as feeling, when Richard suddenly falls ill.

STORY:

- **STRUCTURE:** A story must hit very important beats within the screenplay to be considered a story. Many of these beats must be reached within the first 10 pages or most readers, executives, etc. will discontinue the read.

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- **INCITING INCIDENT:** The inciting incident is the reason we have been dropped into the protagonist's life at this stage. It's the thing that disrupts their normal and sends them on their journey to reach their goal. This is usually set up before page 15. No inciting incident = No story.
 - There are two potential inciting incidents, but both don't arrive until well after page 15. The first is when Jazmin gets in the fender-bender while Madelynn is in the backseat with Booga, an associate of Al, who unnecessarily escalates the situation and threatens Jazmin. Her training kicks in and she painfully incapacitates Booga. The more compelling incident, is when her husband, Richard, falls gravely ill out of nowhere with no knowledge of pre-existent ailments.
 - Page 22 is when the first incident takes place. The writer would need to create a new one or if take our suggestions above and push them closer to page 15 so that we actually have a moment to see Jazmin's normal be disrupted and the ripple effects this will have onto the story. The second incident suggested above is more capable of accomplishing this because it is more personal and bears more stakes for Jazmin.
- **GOALS:** The inciting incident causes the goal or sets up the problem. Achieving the goal/solving the problem is what we will track as an audience throughout the screenplay. No goal = No story.
 - Because the potential inciting incident of Richard falling ill doesn't arrive until the fourth act of the story, Jazmin does not have a goal for the story until this happens. If this was moved up to create our story's inciting incident, Jazmin would now have a tangible goal: find a way to make money, support her family and keep her marriage intact as they go through these sudden and dilapidating changes of Richard no longer being a stable provider.
 - While the suggestion above will create an external goal that we as an audience could hang on to, it will also create an opportunity for an internal goal for Jazmin as she navigates the complicated feelings of having to care for another person who has actively hurt her. This in turn could make for a more compelling emotional journey as Jazmin completes her character arc at the end of season.

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- **COMPLICATIONS:** Watching our characters deal with conflict is the only way they grow and change and the only way to make the audience root for them. The conflict must complicate reaching the goal. If not, it isn't conflict; it's drama for drama's sake. No complications = no story.
 - Consider having the waitress from the restaurant who ends up drugging Richard, Al's associate, be kept alive instead of killed off by Al at the end of the pilot. This could ensure that we get to see how future interactions with this character could cause complications for both Al and Jazmin as they scheme and work with (or against) one another.
 - Richard's illness has the potential as an emotional complication. Similar to the show *Queens* (FX/Hulu), where the wife played by the actor/rapper Eve, finds out that her cheating husband has cancer right when she was readying herself to leave him. Additionally, he receives a small form of amnesia due to procedure when they removed the cancer (or so he says). The point being, consider how you can make his illness work not just as a dramatic beat, but an emotional one which becomes a core metaphor and story mechanism while also giving Richard a trajectory for his arc.
- **STAKES:** What does the protagonist have to lose if he/she doesn't reach his/her goal? Why should the audience be invested in him/her reaching the goal? No stakes = no story.
 - It is unclear what is at stake for Jazmin until Richard falls ill and she has a goal in taking care of the family by returning to her old friend, Al, for help.
 - It is equally unclear what is at stake for our antagonist, Al, as everything seems to be in order for her until she kills the waitress who colluded with her to set up Jazmin and Richard in cold blood.
- **MIDPOINT:** Stories are rollercoaster rides because of the complications in place to hinder the protagonist from reaching their goal. There must be a point when the protagonist hits rock bottom or the end goal changes making them have to reinvigorate and redirect. Without the midpoint, the climax is less sweet.
 - Consider using the faux accident with Booga as a midpoint where Jazmin recognizes him or something about him, allowing her to realize he has something to do with Al. Consequently, this moment could be what she recollects when she has to make a

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decision on how she will care for the family, inspiring her to seek out Al in her last most desperate moments.

- CLIMAX: The climax is the moment that the protagonist meets the problem head on. It is the highest point of action and emotion in the film. This is where protagonist wins or loses. Without a climax there is no resolution and the audience is left disappointed. Hence the term, anti-climactic.
 - Following the sequence suggested above, the climax can now be when Al and Jazmin first meet, built up from all of the tension and crumbs you have dropped throughout the pilot about their relationship.
- RESOLUTION: The resolution is the fallout of the climax. This is where we have our emotional catharsis setting up the rest of the series – what will the protagonist's life look like going forward now that they've gone through this journey?
 - Continuing the sequence above, it would be in the resolution that Jazmin finally acquiesces to Al being her only person who could help her out of her situation, even if this reason was set up by Al herself without Jazmin realizing she is getting played. Additionally, you will also be able to show us Jazmin's reactions and flesh out the emotional catharsis she experiences.
 - The resolution must give us the overall series goal that will send our protagonist, Jazmin, on her journey. Currently, the deal is for Jazmin to sell drugs for Al, but we don't know for how long or at what end. Consider a suggestion, where during Jazmin and Booga's accident the bag he had or its contents get damaged or lost, giving Jazmin a more organic connection and through line to Al for this part of the story. Because the items were damaged or lost, it is what Al uses as leverage to lure Jazmin back into her fray: Jazmin now owes the money back for the damaged/lost goods, so Al tells her she will help her only if she comes back to work for her. Now we have a tangible series goal where Jazmin owes money but is in line to make much more after she completes her debt.

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- **ACT STRUCTURE:** One-hour dramas are typically told in five acts. Act 1 (~11 pages) encapsulates the prologue establishing character and setting; Act 2 (~11 pages) presents the conflict; Act 3 (~8 pages) moves us into the rising action resulting in the climax, Act 4 (~9 pages) is the falling action, Act 5 (~8 pages) is the resolution or denouement expressing the tone and moral of the story.
- **FLASHBACKS:** Note that though flashbacks provide backstory, they have no context unless we understand how they are pushing the present story forward.
 - Each of the flashbacks we were offered only revealed the same information we already had. It felt more poignant when it would just be her tugging or rubbing at her scar as something that we can see her react in the moment. Consider then, if you are going to use a flashback how can it reveal information that will push the story forward rather than offering us more information without context. For example, show us how she got the scar or show us Jazmin and Al together when they were younger as it relates to a contrasting or relatable moment in the present.
- **SET UPS & PAYOFFS:** Everything in a screenplay matters. If something – an object, a character, a line of dialogue – is set up, the audience will set an expectation that it will come full circle and push the story forward in some way. This script has some setups without payoffs and some misleading setups with disconnected payoffs.
 - The set up from the accident with Booga was not completely paid off. Consider making the accident even more directly consequential to Jazmin's actions.
- **TEASERS:** Note the function of a Teaser in a one-hour drama is set up the inciting incident of the episode. What we see in the Teaser helps us know what to expect from the Teaser week to week.
 - If your pilot has a teaser, it is safe to assume every episode of your show will have a teaser in the beginning. The teaser in this pilot has more of the elements of a story's beginning rather than a tease of the story.
- **THEME:** The theme of your screenplay refers to the issue at the core of the story itself. This isn't mentioned in the script, but it's the emotional or spiritual driving force behind your movie's message.
 - The theme of your story is revealed through all of your screenplay's traits and elements — character, dialogue, description, setting, tone, genre, tropes, etc. When a writer makes the

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theme more important to be said explicitly rather than allowing it to be revealed organically through combination(s) of the aforementioned elements pushing a compelling story forward, the script suffers and can either feel preachy, predictable or inauthentic.

- The theme of the story was a little unclear to grasp. At first it seemed like Xavier's comment on page 24 "whose lives do I ruin?" was more in relationship with a theme of how our complicated choices may impact us positively but others negatively. But then there were moments of over-description, such as on page 28, where the action lines lingered a bit too long on how the waitresses were dressed and the writer's voice permeated in a way that disrupted the read rather than enhancing it. Make sure the repeated mention of how the women in the script are dressed does not overshadow the intention for character development.

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- **TONE:** In screenwriting, tone is the mood or attitude that your writing portrays by painting the story in details, incorporating genre, exploring environment through dialogue and the voice that you use for the script. Tone is all about how you intend to make the audience feel by projecting it onto the page and subsequently the screen.
 - Comparable projects for this submission were stated as *P-Valley* (Starz) meets *Power* (Starz), both crime dramas with varying approaches to serious tones. Presently, the tone is consistent and although the script could use a little more worldbuilding, the world still feels grounded and present. But what makes this city any different than New York or Los Angeles or any other suburban area? What makes the setting of this story unique and how can you translate this via tone?

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CATEGORY	SCORE	SCORE REPORT
Voice	8.9	The writer's voice is really strong and tonally consistent, but we do get some occasional moments where the theme takes frontstage to the story, decreasing its impact.
Story/Concept	9.0	With some tweaks to story structure moving some scenes around and giving a little more focus to backstory elements and story goals, the script could make a compelling story.
Dialogue	8.9	The story's dialogue needs more subtext as it is often very on the nose. Everyone is saying exactly what they're thinking leaving no room for tension. Also, some minor issues of pacing and redundancy, which can be fixed once the goal is established more clearly.
Characters	8.9	We need to spend more time with our protagonist and we need more social proof: teaching the audience who your protagonist is by showing us their skills. It is how we can believe they will achieve the goals set before them.
Proofreading & Formatting	8.6	Formatting can be remedied by reading more screenplays or acquiring services for someone to do a pass on formatting for you. The mistakes made in this script show that you haven't seen formatting enough to know how to use it properly.
Responsible writing <small>Responsible Writing is evaluated by how the use of story elements such as dialogue, character descriptions, actions and themes treat its world and characters with care and consideration.</small>	7.5	Some women characters were framed with language that slut shames or is heavily misogynistic such as when Antoine referred to a woman as a "bitch" in front of his mother and father, but did not use such language at any other time in the script. Others like The Waitress, received a violent death which did not push the story forward.
Final T.A.G.	8.63	TAG, you're lit! A good submission that could use some development. It shows promise as a script to RECOMMEND to executives.

T.A.G. CONCLUSION

Homewrecker is a crime drama with a simple premise and potential for a gritty and complex plot centering heartbreak, trauma and all of the ways they affect our choices and visions of joy. Because it misses a clear series goal, we do not get a sense of what to expect to watch past the pilot. Consider returning to the outline stage and restructuring the scenework, as scenes should be cause and effect and we should learn new information in each scene that creates a cohesive story. Additionally, without a goal the stakes become harder to establish. Consider showing us more of our protagonist, Jazmin, so that we understand what her motivations, wants and needs are in relation to her environment and interactions with her supporting cast.

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