

THE BLACK LIST

WINDFALL

Evaluation

Overall	Premise	Plot	Character	Dialogue	Setting
9	9	8	9	8	9

Era	1930s - 2010s
Locations	US, China
Budget	Medium
Genre	Drama, Coming-of-Age, Family Drama, Period Drama
Logline	Three generations of a Chinese family must struggle to achieve a sense of identity and escape the vicious cycle of abuse and tragedy that haunts their lives.
Pages	114

Strengths

Rarely does one encounter a script with this much genuine emotional power, and the writer's deft characterization, attention to detail, and unabashed sympathy for their protagonists have the potential to move a reader to tears. The key to WINDFALL's success is its utter absence of sentimentality, melodrama, and overwrought emotion. Every emotional beat has been rigorously earned, and the results are devastating. It is impossible to overstate the utterly wrenching power of the first act's finale (one would be hard-pressed to find a more heartbreaking moment in a contemporary spec), and the writer demonstrates a strong affinity for rendering relationships between parents and children in a resonant, close-to-home fashion. Particularly commendable is WINDFALL's ability to take the twin cliches of stereotypical Chinese interests (the violin and photography) and present them with such arresting minutiae that they ascend to the level of vibrant, cohesive motif. The textual mirrors linking Jing, Ethan, and Emelia's adolescences are vibrant without skewing neat or reductive, and the script's violence, while brutal, feels grotesquely real, vital, and entirely earned. While the script may prove too intense for some audiences, there is simply no denying that it is the work of an emotionally intelligent, deeply formidable author.

Weaknesses

WINDFALL's strengths far outweigh its weaknesses, but one can only imagine how much more effective this project might become if granted some additional editing in the interest of greater economy and propulsion. While hardly tiresome, the script does feel a touch overlong, and greater momentum and focus stand to benefit the proceedings without detracting from the deliberately epic scope. It also feels as though the writer has freighted the dialogue with a great deal of the emotional heavy-lifting, and because they clearly possess a talent for creating moving interactions between characters in an entirely non-verbal fashion, an even greater emphasis on this wordless, cinematic storytelling style could very well elevate WINDFALL to the status of masterpiece. Ultimately, minor but choice edits will yield huge results as far as this particular script is concerned.

Prospects

While its production demands are not insignificant given the geographical and temporal requirements, WINDFALL is that rare script that could conceivably garner the necessary industry attention to secure both financing and bankable, adventurous talent. The sheer number of compelling roles it offers for Chinese actors is commendable in its own right, and it would not be difficult to imagine the project finding a perfect home in the art house or prestige realm. Regardless of production, WINDFALL will serve its author beautifully as a truly unique and powerful writing showcase, and they are more than deserving of whatever attention these pages may bring them.