

NARRATORA

SAMPLE OUTPUT

PROFESSIONAL SCRIPT COVERAGE

Whiplash

Feature screenplay coverage — two-hander character drama about greatness, abuse and the cost of both.

MATERIAL

Feature screenplay

GENRE

**Drama / Music /
Psychological**

VERDICT

RECOMMEND

COVERAGE DATE

Sample output

Coverage Verdict

VERDICT	RECOMMEND
WRITER'S VERDICT	RECOMMEND — ferocious, specific voice; a two-hander with no wasted scene
MATERIAL	Original feature screenplay, 106 pages
GENRE	Drama / Music / Psychological Two-Hander
FORM	Feature screenplay
BUDGET TIER	Low budget — contained, performance led
COMPARABLE TITLES	Black Swan, Full Metal Jacket, The Master, Foxcatcher

A lean, brutal and extremely well-made two-hander that treats musical ambition as combat. The screenplay's great strength is specificity: it is about drumming the way a procedural is about procedure, and the technical detail — tempo, dynamics, the physical destruction of hands — is what makes the psychological material credible. It is also an unusually honest film about abuse, in that it refuses to resolve the question it raises. The final sequence grants the student everything he wanted and nothing that would make him whole, and it declines to tell the audience whether the teacher was right. That refusal is the script's achievement. Structurally it is a duel: escalation, humiliation, expulsion, return, annihilation, transcendence. No subplot survives that does not serve it — including the girlfriend, which is both the script's cleanest instinct and its most legitimate criticism.

HEADLINE ASSESSMENT

The script's closing nine-minute drum solo resolves the plot and deliberately refuses to resolve the moral question. The reader leaves exhilarated and complicit, which is exactly the intended effect.

Industry Scorecard

Weighted against produced material in the same genre and budget tier. Scores below 6 indicate a development priority; scores of 9 or 10 indicate a commercial asset that should be protected through every revision.

Premise / originality		8/10
Structure		9/10
Characterisation		9/10
Dialogue		10/10
Emotional engagement		9/10
Momentum / pacing		10/10
Commercial potential		7/10

Production feasibility		9/10
Overall readiness		9/10

Commercial potential is the only moderate score: a two-hander about jazz drumming has a narrow theatrical hook and a very strong awards and word-of-mouth profile. The budget discipline (two principals, four locations, no effects) makes the risk-return unusually favourable.

Logline

A nineteen-year-old jazz drummer at an elite conservatory is taken into the studio band of a legendary, sadistic instructor who believes greatness is forged by cruelty — and destroys his body, his relationships and his stability chasing an approval that may never have been available.

Synopsis

ANDREW NEIMAN practises alone in a conservatory rehearsal room when TERENCE FLETCHER opens the door, listens for eight bars, and walks out. The first three pages establish the entire dynamic: Andrew's hunger, Fletcher's power, and the fact that withheld approval is the currency of the film.

Andrew is promoted into Fletcher's studio band as an alternate. The rehearsal scene that follows — Fletcher stopping the band to hunt a single out-of-tune player, then hurling a chair at Andrew's head for rushing tempo — is the script's statement of method. It is also extremely funny, which the writer understands is necessary: the reader must enjoy Fletcher's company to be implicated by him.

Andrew's ascent is written as self-mutilation. He practises until his hands split, tapes them, bleeds through the tape, ices them in a bucket beside the kit. He dumps his girlfriend NICOLE in a two-page scene of astonishing coldness, on the explicit grounds that she will eventually resent his priorities. He humiliates his extended family at dinner. The script is rigorous that none of this is presented as admirable and none of it is presented as ineffective.

The hinge is the bus crash and the concert Andrew plays with a bleeding, broken hand — collapsing mid-performance and attacking Fletcher on stage. He is expelled. Months later, having abandoned the drums, he learns that a former student of Fletcher's hanged himself, testifies anonymously, and gets Fletcher fired.

The final movement is a trap. Fletcher, now playing a club date, invites Andrew to drum at a festival, then calls a chart Andrew has never seen — revenge for the testimony. Andrew walks off stage, turns around, returns, counts in the band himself and takes the piece. The final nine pages are a duel conducted entirely in music, ending with Fletcher cueing him with something that is almost pride and almost nothing at all. The script cuts on the last cymbal.

Structure and Narrative Logic

Act architecture

Movement	Pages	Function
Rehearsal room	1-4	The entire dynamic — hunger, power, withheld approval — in three pages.
Act One	5-30	Promotion; the chair; the method established; Nicole introduced as what will be spent.
Act Two-A	31-58	Escalation as self-harm; blood, ice, the dinner table; Nicole discarded.
Act Two-B	59-80	The bus crash; the broken-hand concert; assault; expulsion.
Reversal	81-92	The abandoned drums; the suicide; the testimony; Fletcher fired.
Climax	93-106	The festival trap; the walk-off; the return; nine pages of pure music.

Assessment

The structure is a duel and the script never pretends otherwise. Each movement escalates the same conflict rather than introducing a new one, and the writer's discipline in refusing subplots is the reason a 106-page script about drumming reads in ninety minutes. The reversal — Andrew winning by destroying Fletcher, then discovering that victory is worthless to him — is the script's most sophisticated structural move, and it is what makes the final sequence a choice rather than a comeback.

- The opening three pages are a masterclass: no exposition, no dialogue beyond a handful of words, and the complete power dynamic legible.
- Nicole is introduced, developed and discarded in twenty-four pages with clear structural purpose — she is the price. This is efficient and also the script's most contested choice.
- The bus-crash sequence is the only place the script strains plausibility, and it earns the strain: the reader's discomfort at the coincidence is overwhelmed by the horror of the performance.
- The final nine pages contain almost no dialogue and are the most propulsive in the script.

Characters

ANDREW NEIMAN — protagonist

Written with real courage: he is not likeable and he is not redeemed. The script's method is to make his ambition physically visible — blood, tape, ice, a taped photograph of a drummer on his wall — so that the reader understands the cost without being asked to approve it. His cruelty to Nicole and to his family is presented flatly, which is correct. The only reservation: his pre-Fletcher life is thin. Two beats of who he was before the conservatory would make the transformation measurable.

TERENCE FLETCHER — antagonist

One of the best-written antagonists in contemporary material, because the script takes his argument seriously. He is given a coherent philosophy, a plausible origin story (the Charlie Parker anecdote), genuine musical authority, and real charm. The bar scene where he explains himself to Andrew is the script's most dangerous passage — he is persuasive, and the reader has to do the work of disagreeing. The writer never once has another character deliver the refutation, which is the correct and braver choice.

NICOLE — the cost

Functions structurally rather than independently: she is what Andrew spends. The breakup scene is superbly written and genuinely shocking. The legitimate criticism is that she has no life of her own on the page; the second phone call where Andrew tries to reach her again is her best moment and her only one with agency.

JIM NEIMAN — father

The script's counter-argument, embodied rather than spoken: a kind, unremarkable man who loves his son and whose life Andrew is terrified of inheriting. The dinner-table scene where Andrew defends greatness against his uncle's football-scholarship cousins states the theme without stating it. His waiting in the wings during the final concert, powerless, is the right closing note for him.

RYAN and TANNER — the band

Deliberately interchangeable, and the script uses that: they exist to be replaced, which is precisely Fletcher's point about the disposability of the competent. Effective as mechanism, thin as people, and probably correct to leave that way.

Dialogue

The best dialogue in the sample library. It is rhythmically musical, profane with purpose, and it does three things at once: humiliate, instruct and reveal. Fletcher's tirades are written as performance — he is a man who has rehearsed his cruelty — and Andrew's dialogue measurably changes over the script, from deferential hedging to flat, clipped confidence.

- 'There are no two words in the English language more harmful than good job.' Philosophy, character and threat in one line.
- Fletcher's rehearsal invective is comic before it is frightening, which is what implicates the reader.
- The Nicole breakup is written with no cruelty in the phrasing at all — Andrew is reasonable, which is why it lands.
- Andrew's verbal register shifts across the script without a single line of comment on the change.

Screenplay Craft

Technically superb and admirably economical. Music is written as action — tempo, dynamics, a

conductor's hand, a bead of sweat on a cymbal — so the non-musician reader is never excluded and the musician reader is never insulted. Scene lengths are short and the cutting rhythm is legible on the page, which suits the subject.

- 106 pages that read in under ninety minutes. Scene economy is exemplary.
- Musical performance is described through physical consequence rather than through musical terminology. This is the single most transferable craft lesson in the script.
- Rehearsal geography (kit, podium, sightlines) is established once and then trusted.
- Only craft flag: the bus-crash sequence needs one additional page of logistical grounding to reduce reader resistance.

Theme and Meaning

The script asks whether greatness justifies cruelty and then refuses to answer, which is why it is a serious film rather than a message one. Fletcher's case is given its strongest form; the counter-evidence — a dead former student, a broken young man, an abandoned relationship — is laid beside it without comment. The ending is the argument's final refusal: Andrew achieves transcendence, and the script cuts before telling us what it cost him afterwards. The father's face in the wings is the only editorial the writer permits himself, and it is enough.

Market Position and Comparables

A low-budget, performance-driven awards play with an unusually strong festival profile. The subject is narrow but the execution is broad — audiences with no interest in jazz respond to the material as a thriller. Contained production (two principals, four locations, no effects) makes this one of the most favourable risk-return propositions in the set.

Comparable	Relation	What it indicates
Black Swan	Closest comp	Artistic self-destruction as body horror; strong crossover from a narrow subject.
Full Metal Jacket	Antagonist comp	The instructor-as-antagonist tradition the script consciously extends.
The Master	Thematic comp	Dominance and discipleship between two men, unresolved by design.
Foxcatcher	Tonal comp	Sport and mentorship turned pathological, prestige register.

Casting Recommendations

Offered as tonal calibration for packaging conversations, not as availability guidance.

Role	Casting note
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Andrew	A young actor who can credibly drum on camera; the performance cannot be faked in coverage.
Fletcher	A senior character actor with genuine menace and comic timing — the part must be enjoyable to watch.
Nicole	Naturalistic, warm; her ordinariness is the point of contrast.
Jim	A gentle, unremarkable presence; his lack of ambition must read as love rather than failure.

Strengths

- The best dialogue in the sample set — funny, violent, and doing three jobs per line.
- An antagonist whose philosophy is given its strongest possible form and never refuted by another character.
- Physical specificity: blood, tape, ice. Ambition made visible instead of stated.
- A protagonist the script refuses to make likeable or redeem.
- Nine closing pages of near-wordless music that resolve plot and withhold judgement.
- Contained budget with an outsized awards and word-of-mouth ceiling.

Development Opportunities

- Andrew's pre-Fletcher self is thin; two beats would make the transformation measurable.
- Nicole has no independent life on the page, which weakens the cost she is meant to represent.
- The bus-crash coincidence needs one page of logistical grounding to reduce reader resistance.
- Ryan and Tanner are mechanisms rather than characters — defensible, but one distinguishing beat each is cheap.
- The middle third repeats the humiliation beat three times with the same shape; vary one.
- Fletcher's Charlie Parker anecdote is told twice; the second telling can go.

Prioritized Revision Roadmap

Ordered by impact on the material's readiness. Pass one addresses anything that affects the reader's comprehension; pass three is polish.

Pass	Priority	Action
1	Nicole	Give her one scene with her own want, independent of Andrew, before the breakup.
1	Bus crash	Add one page of logistics so the sequence reads as catastrophe, not contrivance.

2	Andrew's baseline	Insert two beats of pre-conservatory Andrew to make the change measurable.
2	Humiliation variation	Restructure one of the three middle-third humiliation beats to a different shape.
3	Trim	Cut the second telling of the Parker anecdote; reclaim a page.
3	Band	One distinguishing beat each for Ryan and Tanner.

Reader's Closing Note

A ferocious, disciplined and genuinely dangerous screenplay that is ready to be made. Its greatest virtue is its refusal to tell the audience what to think about Fletcher, and every note above is written to protect that refusal. Fix Nicole and the script has no remaining structural weakness.

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