

"Merit's Reel" - (Thriller/Drama) An unassuming film student falls for a beautiful coed at college, but things get messed up when she decides to get revenge on the man who raped her, his celebrity film professor.

Here's what some judges had to say:

"The theme of a film student constantly filming his surroundings, his lover and himself and accidentally coming across a murder, then becoming involved with the murderess is really intriguing. You want to continue reading to discover why the fascination."

"The writer is trying to create a modern day film noir, where nothing is what it seems. At times, doubly so, because of the extensive usage of film recording which serves as one more layer of lies and illusion. We get some classic noir tropes, filtered through a modern digital sensibility."

"You have created an exceptionally compulsive first act mystery, which hooks us from the moment Mandy pushes Donovan off of the roof. It's also a terrifically visceral hook that pulls us in immediately. I really like the way that Merit's camera becomes a kind of secondary witness to events, and how we get to 'see' the crimes through that lens, and feel the immediacy of the narrative unfold. The Hollywood aspect, and Merit's own desires to become a filmmaker, makes for an exotic additional aspect. This is a story about surfaces, lies, distortions, and characters 'acting' the part; almost as if the murder mystery is Hollywood dynamics folding back in on itself."

"The second act we begin to feel how Merit is being pulled inexorably into events that are going to spiral out beyond control and having Mandy pull Merit further into her web of deceit. There's a sense of foreboding... that leads us into...

... the bloody third act, where events truly accelerate. This is where we see Mandy's entire scheme play out, the visceral and shocking impact on Merit, and, finally, how he decides to take the battle back to her. All in all, the structure conforms to classic noir tropes, and is all the better for it."

"I have to admit I did not see the end coming; and, of course, there is a wonderful irony in that Mandy, in some ways, makes Merit a much better filmmaker. I kind of loved that!"

"There is always a great market for thrillers, so this has the potential to attract audiences. Especially if the sexy Hollywood angle can be maintained and maybe even emphasized"

Excerpts from:

Bluecat Competitions Judge  
Page Awards Judge  
Scriptapalooza Judge

Script and One Sheet available, email to: [ryanphilander@gmail.com](mailto:ryanphilander@gmail.com)

