

THE WORKSHOP

– TITLE –

Tight plotting, strong dialogue, and fascinating characters elevate this show about a psychiatrist confronting a wealthy self-help cult to save the women trapped inside. Marisol has a clear goal from the start, and her motivation is airtight. David is delightfully devious and insidious in the way only a wealthy man with skeletons in his closet could be. Using his wife Patricia as the cult's Ghislane Maxwell-esque co-leader also adds a truly intriguing and deeply resonant dimension to it all. Setup: flawless.

It feels like you know where you want to go for the pilot. However, the *series* plan feels a little vaguer. What's your endgame there? Say Marisol gets Tiana out of the cult and Risa issues her scathing investigative report—what happens then? Are we going to see David brought in for his crimes, or is the system so entrenched in corruption that the only form of justice is death? What about Marisol? Once she takes David down, what happens to her? You may need to be more specific on your series plan if you're intending to pitch to producers or reps, since they'll want to know you've thought it out, to some extent, before pulling the trigger on just the pilot. In the past, series plans weren't as set in stone and you had more flexibility, but the current market is obviously much more risk-averse.

One thing that would help immensely is a dedicated section for your character arcs that's a bit more expanded. Right now, you've got the blurbs, but like the series plan, they're hazy. That's fine during the development process since you're still figuring piecing things together, but your characters will need to inform your plot. Let's take Marisol as an example. We know where her heart is and why she's doing what she's doing. But what are the consequences for her specifically? Her empathy cripples her in certain situations—would she be the type to “drink the Kool-Aid” if David's treatise on apathy offered her a solution to that? How is she going to manage taking this man's cult apart once he catches on? How long would he let her continue to undermine him if she's one of his targets?

Another thing you might want to examine is how you handle David and Marisol's powers. I love the fact that we don't know whether or not they're “real,” in the sense that they're almost superpowers, but grounded enough in reality to keep us guessing. That said—are these the types of powers that will grow throughout the season, or are they more fully formed out of the gate? How much of a role are they going to play in David's downfall? How are you going to integrate them with the other characters on the show? Yes, the audience doesn't know whether or not they're real, but would the other characters? If they don't know now, will they?

Additionally, would re-examine why you're using a sex cult specifically and why that advances David's goals alongside his self-help preaching. Make it crystal clear that these girls are being used to get into wealthy circles—specifically wealthy circles where people (mostly men) are naturally more apathetic and malleable to David's ideas.

That's another thing, actually: if Marisol takes down David's cult, what's the fallout from David's clients? Will they come after her, or scatter to save themselves the scandal? That's a big unanswered question at the moment.

All of that said ... you've got a really incredible start here, and your writing conveys the heart of the project in its initial stages. The main thing you need to do now is convince your reader you know where it's going next.

