



The Robb Company Script Coverage

Title: The Virtuoso

Author: John Lynch and Roger Nygard

Locale: Mexico

Circa: Modern

Format: Screenplay

Genre: Criminal Underworld meets Romance meets Sci-Fi Thriller

Budget: Mid-range

Draft Date: Not indicated

Coverage Date: 11/18/2021

Prepared By: Austin Cappetta

Writer's Logline:

Not indicated.

Reader's Logline:

A story about a young man who falls in love and has to forsake his criminal family in order to make his relationship work.

Brief Synopsis:

Two escaped convicts that a secret (government/agency) fled from a prison. Watkowski and Phillips, the agents that worked on them seek to track them down due to a mysterious yellow liquid in their bodies. One makes love to a random woman in a bar and she gives birth to a son. Watkowski and Phillips try to take the boy after learning the yellow liquid is inside him too. The liquid is shown to give people abilities (heightened strength, virtuoso-instrumentation, etc.) and grows their brains so they learn things incredibly quickly. Michael (the boy), grows up as Marco when he is taken in by Carlos, a gang leader. Carlos raises him with Luis, his son. Marco falls in love with a girl named

Daniella and tries to get her her dream of being a singer. Marco steals money from Carlos' associate and gives her her dream. She is furious when she learns the truth as is Carlos. Watkowski and Phillips find him years later and try to take him, however they fail. Daniella comes to forgive Marco and they have children who are even more gifted than Marco was.

Characters:

DAVID: Short, fatherly looking, escaped convict
WAYNE: 20s, handsome, tall, several tattoos, escaped convict
BLAKE WATKOWSKI: 30 (then 50), government agent
DEAD GUARDS, DEAD DOCTOR
WARDEN
MARISA MARTINEZ (20s), mother of Michael/Marco
JANITOR
GUNMAN
PHILLIPS: Govt. agent (40s, was 20s)
DOCTOR LANCE
SISTER FREDERICA
RACHEL: Carlos' girlfriend
ANDREA: Carlos' girlfriend
CARLOS: Drug lord, lives in fancy villa
LUIS: Marco's adopted brother
EVA, FLORA
DANIELL, 20s, singer, beautiful
PUNK LEADER: Gang boss
ROSA GARCIA (60), Daniella's mother
ARIEL
VICTOR
OSCAR ESTRELLA
BELLE, BIANCA: Carlos' previous girlfriends
CAMPOS (30s): Carlos' associate
KASCZH: Campos' man
HECTOR: Producer
STAGE MANAGER
DAN: Guitarist from prominent band

Michael/Marco: Michael is the titular virtuoso and is intriguing to the audience because of that. He's got a very cool origin story and has abilities that truly make him fun to follow. Marco doesn't particularly have an external goal which is a problem (will discuss when talking about Watkowski). He has an internal goal which is to help Daniella with her career and life. Marco is semi-sympathetic. His desire to not partake in violence or raunchy parties makes him sympathetic because he strives to 'be above' basic human urges which we all desire to be above. Marco has an arc but it's a very basic one. He forsakes his criminal family to be with the girl he loves, putting love before obligation. The reason that it's basic and less interesting than it could be is because there's no opposition or struggle in him making that decision, it's very instantaneous for him. There's opposition after the decision, but little to none before or during.

Marisa: Marisa was a good supporting character. She was a caring mom who just wanted to have a 'normal' son. She didn't realize the extent of his abilities, but she knew

something was up. Seeing her struggle and come to terms with that was one of the most realistic parts of the script.

Daniella: Daniella. Daniella as a character was a bit bland. She didn't bring anything unique to the party. Her romance with Marco was masterfully written however, and her interactions with him made me really root for them to be together. She didn't have much of a personality outside of her music though. She wasn't presented with any choices that led her to develop as a character. She is a bit inconsistent with her trust for Marco. When she doesn't trust him at the end because of what he did with the money, it feels unearned and just like a way to insert additional conflict. More build up for her distrust of him is needed for it not to feel cheap.

Carlos: Carlos has a great personality. He's a typical 'mob-boss/caring dad' trope that works all the time. However, he is also rather un-unique unfortunately. He needs to be developed more as well and given time to show exactly what kind of person he is.

Watkowski & Phillips: Watkowski and Phillips are the two characters who are the most interesting in the entire story because their goals and motivations start out as a mystery and then when they are revealed, they are really terrible. They are given the time to shine and be awful human beings that really makes me hate them in the right way. The main issue with them is that they don't provide opposition for the protagonist at all. They are a side-story not antagonists. Marco has barely any recollection of who they are and why they're coming for him. This leads Marco to not have an external goal. Typically, in a story like this it would be 'revenge for dead mother' but that's typical, don't be typical. Marco's story feels lack-luster because these guys hardly interact with him at all. Watkowski and Phillips are awesome characters but they need to interact with Marco more or the plot will suffer.

Plot:

By and large there are no issues with the pacing and the tempo of the script. The obstacles that are introduced are an issue though. Marco is able to get out of almost any situation because of his abilities and the stakes never feel high enough. The issue with this lies in the fact that there are little to no flaws in the 'magic system'. The yellow liquid's effects on him need to be more pronounced. It also needs to be explained to him what this stuff inside of him is, so he can grapple with that and show character development. But an easy way to make the flaws more apparent is by making the headaches worse and at worse times. Marco could receive a headache after doing something 'miraculous' and that would leave him vulnerable to get hit. With this magic system, there are no established rules either. There are no rules that govern how this works. For some magic systems that's a good thing (Lord of the Rings, Star Wars). For this though, a bit more exposition is needed to explain things. The answer as to what the liquid is and what exactly it does is still something that's not clear at the end of the script. That is essential to the story, it needs more attention.

Another issue I had with the script is the fact that the yellow liquid has no apparent impact on Marco's goals. Allow me to explain. Marco's story is about him falling in love and has to forsaking his criminal family in order to make his relationship work. That's where the conflict really arises. I love the idea of the yellow liquid and I don't think it should be taken out. The blend of genres in this script is a really great idea. But, the yellow liquid needs to provide more conflict on his character arc and main plot. For instance (some ideas), instead of Carlos ordering them to go and deal with Kazsch, they

could unknowingly go and deal with someone involved with Watkowski's operation and that could lead Marco to become curious about what's going on inside of his body. It would be interesting for him to stumble into their lab at some point and get a vague idea of what they're doing. The liquid needs to play a more active role in Marco's life and the main conflict of the script. Perhaps he learns that Carlos was once working for Watkowski but left the business for moral reasons, perhaps they try to capture Daniella and steal her from Marco so he does what they want. Watkowski, Phillips, and their whole operation need more bearing on the plot because the main conflict of the story could be told without it (a boy giving up his family to find love).

A lot of Marco's decisions are active, which is great. There should be some more of them though, even if they're small. The more decisions Marco is given to show who he is the better.

Overall, the beginning is one part that needs attention. After re-reading it, I'm sure it would be much clearer on the screen. In script form it's difficult to follow what exactly is going on. Indicating places, their significance, and giving the characters more developed descriptions. Instead of 'WATKOWSKI (30)' give us 'WATKOWSKI (30), decent looking, brown hair, wears a suit. Secret government agent.' Characters should also always be described in relation to the protagonist. For Watkowski, and the others, since they get introduced first it's not practical. Also, the prologue section is too long. It should be cut down by a few pages and more time should be allocated to Marco's adult life.

Also, ensure that characters are referred to by name in the dialogue. Sometimes, that was a misstep in the writing I noticed. Some of the grammar and spelling is really not professional. Proof read twice more.

There were a couple of things that were foreshadowed that were never brought up again either. The main one in my head was why Watkowski and Phillips were at that prison, and who their boss was. If elements like that are going to be brought up, they need to have a larger bearing on the plot, otherwise there's no cohesion.

Line edit comments:

- Can't use a body as a shield, bullets fly right through. (pg 66) Hollywood will make you believe otherwise, but bullets fly right through flesh. It doesn't work like that.
- Why does Carlos rampage? Did he know Luis was dead? No one told him (67). Was it because they lost the money? No one ever mentions that to him.
- The scene where Daniella gives the book to him is literally word-for-word in there twice. You need to proofread your script.

Structure:

The structure of Marco's plot is on the whole, good, and there's no real issues with it, but there aren't a lot of instances where it shines above the rest of the pack either. The subplots have an issue feeding into the main story. The set-up goes on for a bit too long, but it is effective in conveying what it needs to convey, though more clarity is necessary. The scene transitions are fine. They don't need as much work, but more emphasis could be placed on placing hooks at the beginning and ends of scenes to move the plot along better. The climax is okay. There's not enough exposition about Watkowski and Phillips' project, and Carlos' death is somewhat predictable and anti-climactic. Marco's ending felt too happy for the tone of the script. He should be haunted by the things that have

transpired to him and around him and that should be shown somehow in the end. Perhaps the camera zooms in on a picture of Carlos and Luis and Marco tears up. Something to remind the audience that what he saw is still with him. I did like how Marco's kids were prodigies as well, and that Daniella was still with him.

Dialogue:

There is a good amount of dialogue. There's not enough exposition in the dialogue or in the plot. More in both camps is necessary. There's a good purpose to most of the lines. They can all be tied to some idea or something that came up before. The dialogue is fairly realistic, Marco and Daniella's dialogue was fantastic for most of the story. One thing that bugged me though was there were a few continuity errors. One I wrote down in my notes was that Michael was called Marco before Carlos found him once. Stuff like that makes no sense. Even if it is a nickname his mom gave him, that's never established in a way the audience can understand. Continuity errors like that were the main issues with the dialogue.

Setting:

On the whole, the setting was really good. It was a seedy world with bits of hope and whimsy. It really served the story's purposes well and helped develop the characters in a believable way. I do wish, more settings were given to Watkowski and Phillips and that they were larger parts. I would have liked to see Marco interact in their world to see how it affects him.

Reader Response:

The opening really grabbed my attention. A sci-fi thriller-esque prison escape is such a good way to start the story. The movie doesn't exactly deliver on that element of the story though. The script delivered great romance and some good fight scenes. It was able to hold my attention, but I had difficulty following some parts due to a lack of exposition or unclear character motivations. The idea of the story really stuck with me though, it had a lot of really great ideas that just needed better executing.

Conclusion:

Script Readiness: Could be ready with some editing.

Overall, this script needs a lot of work to inject more conflict and make the antagonists larger roles. More flaws and roadblocks need to get thrown in front of Marco that are not easily avoidable and the plot needs more of a direction in regards to the yellow liquid.

I recommend keeping an eye on this project and allowing the writer's to resubmit once the script has been edited.

Script Coverage on Draft II



The Robb Company Script Coverage

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Author: John Lynch and Roger Nygard

Locale: Mexico

Circa: Modern

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Budget: Mid-range

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Coverage Date: 12/1/2021

Prepared By: Austin Cappetta

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things incredibly quickly. Michael (the boy), grows up as Marco when he is taken in by Carlos, a gang leader. Carlos raises him with Luis, his son. Marco falls in love with a girl named Daniella and tries to get her her dream of being a singer. Marco steals money from Carlos' associate and gives her her dream. She is furious when she learns the truth as is Carlos. Watkowski and Phillips find him years later and try to take him, however they fail. Daniella comes to forgive Marco and they have children who are even more gifted than Marco was.

From here on out, I only really commented on the problems in the second draft. For more robust and generic comments, see first draft. Some issues were fixed from the first draft, some were not. If they were fixed I tried to bring them up in the second draft to indicate so.

Characters:

Michael/Marco: In the second draft Marco's external goal is given more emphasis which is good. It's really driven home that he wants to get out of crime life. While that was in the first draft, I thought it was handled better in this version. Marco still doesn't face much in the way of opposition and it's a low-tension story because of that. A really good way of adding opposition to compliment Marco's external goal is having him confide in Luis perhaps what he's thinking and Luis threatening him or talking him down. That would provide a more natural and interesting transition for him. There's opposition after the decision, but little to none before or during.

Daniella: Daniella didn't really change in the second draft at all. And that's okay. She's one of the parts of the script that is solid where it is. Good character, good evolution, really great romantic story line and character moments. With that being said, I do still wish she was given a few more opportunities to make choices that led her to develop as a character. Small things, small moments really tell a lot about a person. They don't need to be plot relevant (for instance when those guys are threatening her after her performance does she try to fight back? Or does she just tell them to stop? Small actions that are written in the script and dialogue choices that make them react stronger to situations will help the characters fly off the page more.

Carlos: Carlos is better in the second draft. He still needs some more development though to make him feel more unique. The only two things I can tell you about Carlos are that he's a gang boss, and he's a loving and caring father. Who is he outside of that? What other dimensions does he possess? (Is he tough on his men, does he love a certain game, what happened to Luis' mother, how does he feel about Marco saving him in that alley when he was five?) Stuff like these are all opportunities to develop his character that I feel were missed.

Watkowski & Phillips: They're better in the second draft for sure. They have a more integral role in the plot when dealing with Carlos and trying to accomplish their goals. They still need to provide more opposition to Marco throughout the story and Marco's gift needs to be a conflict for him earlier on.

Plot:

A great idea I had when reading the second draft to fix some of the issues in the plot are as follows. Feel no pressure to use them, but something similar needs to be implemented to fix the following:

- Up the stakes

- Increase tension
- Bring Watkowski and Phillips into a more central antagonist role instead of as a side plot
- And make Marco's abilities more of a central plotline instead of a tangent. Where it is now, the story can be told without it because it doesn't add anything to the central conflict. If you do what I suggest or something similar, it will fix that problem.

Idea:

- A great idea I had when reading the second draft is Marco has to do a task for Carlos early on in the script that leads him to meeting a very old and decrepit Simpkins who recognizes him. Simpkins tells him about the fluid inside of him and also reveals that there is a timer on his life (because of insert neurological reason that also coincides with David still being able to be alive. Maybe it's a second generational thing only) unless he can find an antidote to stop the swelling of his brain which is firmly in the hands of Watkowski and Phillips.
- Marco then kills Simpkins in a fit of rage. Adding conflict to the storyline of him choosing to be a bad guy or a good guy. He could have conversations with Luis about what he did, who encourages him. He could withhold the truth from Daniella and ask her 'hypothetical questions' to make himself feel better and try to decide where he really belongs. This will also be more believable for Daniella to be mad at him at the end. Murder is a lot worse than stealing.
- Marco will want to live life to the fullest though now that he's on a ticking clock and will try to help Daniella in whatever way he can because he loves her. All the while, he'll be searching for Watkowski and Phillips, not knowing who they are until eventually... they find him.
- He gets the antidote to stop swelling his brain and can finally settle down in a life that he's chosen with Daniella.

The beginning was better this time around. I feel like it flowed better even though not much was changed. Perhaps that just came with comprehending it more on the second read.

The script still needs to do better when giving the characters more developed descriptions. Instead of 'WATKOWSKI (30)' give us 'WATKOWSKI (30), decent looking, brown hair, wears a suit. Secret government agent.' Characters should also always be described in relation to the protagonist. For Watkowski, and the others, since they get introduced first it's not practical.

Structure:

Spelling and grammar was much better in this iteration and more succinctly edited. The subplots still have issues feeding into the main story as I've said a few times already.

The hooks were way better in this draft at the beginning and ends of scenes. Really well done with that.

So, if I'm reading correctly, Carlos doesn't die in this draft which I like better actually. It doesn't automatically provide an 'out' for Marco and he has to make a strong choice in order to take his destiny into his own hands. It makes Marco's happy ending more

believable too. I do think it would be nice to indicate to the audience that Carlos is still a part of his grandchildren's lives in some way though.

Dialogue:

The dialogue was more well balanced this iteration. There was just enough exposition that I didn't have to figure anything out from context clues and I could roll along and enjoy the story. This is also a script that's going to translate much better to the big screen than it actually is on written paper, I think and for that reason I think the amount of exposition is at a good amount and doesn't need to be changed.

Again, I love Marco and Daniella's dialogue, it's superbly written. Carlos' dialogue was also better in this draft. I feel like Luis wasn't given enough screentime in the second draft though. Adding a scene or two with him might be worth considering.

Setting:

Not much to say that wasn't fixed or mentioned in the first coverage.

Reader Response:

The second draft is on its way for sure. It's a lot more polished than the first. The characters are becoming more flushed out and more developed and the plot is gaining a better direction.

Conclusion:

Script Readiness: Could be ready with some editing.

The script still needs some work. It's getting to a much better place and I like the direction it's going. It could probably be sold now and bought up by Producers, but it can be better and I believe it can be better. Even though I've been a bit hard on this one, it's because I really see the potential within the elements in the story and characters and think that they can be executed in a more developed way. If I were to score it, it went from a 6/10 in the first draft to an 8/10 in this draft. I believe it can be a 10/10, so I would ask the writers be allowed to submit again. This project is getting good and it's only a matter of time before it's ready for representation.