

# KILLER SHORTS

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**Title:**

██████████

**by:**

██████████

**Page Count:**

20

**Package:**

Short Script  
Coverage

**Feedback Date:**

██████████

**Analyst ID:**

C810F

**Final Score:**

7

**Analyst Rating:**

Consider

## Logline

A father's rare day off is ruined when his son sticks around to play a game.

## Analyst Scores

**Premise**

6

**Originality**

7

**Pacing & Structure**

6

**Characters**

8

**Dialogue**

6

**Writing Ability**

7

## Analyst Notes

### Highlighted Strengths

██████████ is a psychological haunting that preys on a father's insecurities. David just wants to get some rare quality time to himself, only to find it suddenly interrupted by one of his kids. His frustration, and his GUILT about his frustration, is sympathetic even to those readers who don't have any kids. His eventual punishment may not fit the crime (see below), but his character rings true. Even when things get spooky, and he lashes out both physically and verbally at the phantom versions of Cole who are

driving him insane, we both understand his actions and the stabbing guilt that follows them.

The phantoms' motives are never explained, but their efficacy can't be questioned. They torment David with behavior both explicable and chaotic, mimicking and exaggerating the roller coaster of parenting. It's genuinely unnerving to imagine so many versions of Cole running amok at once, on a day that David wanted to himself, no less. On screen, the onslaught would feel overwhelming, which helps cement this script's biggest strength: getting the reader connected to our protagonist's headspace.

The ending reveals (through chilling implication) that David has been literally hollowed out with only his skin remaining. This is truly a parent's nightmare, reflective of what, deep down, they fear that parenting is doing to them.

### **Killer Moment**

Though the ending is immensely effective, the script's strongest emotional peak comes when David loses his temper and strikes one of the phantoms. Although he knows this isn't his child, and knows that there's something unusual go on, the brief pang of guilt and fear he feels at the thought at possibly striking his own child is a very real reaction.

### **Ways to Improve**

This is a solid script, to be sure, but there is room for improvement. Primarily, it doesn't quite feel like David deserves his fate. This isn't, of course, a requirement for a horror story—bad things happen to good people all the time for no reason, especially in this genre. But the first few pages of the script seem to set up some moral failing to punish. David is consciously afraid of being selfish and a bad father for wanting some alone time. It's an idea that torments him: the specters make explicit reference to this fear, taunting him for being "the bad guy" and a failed father. His Great Sin is very mild and, as a result, his punishment feels wholly unsatisfying.

Horror deaths need to at least feel fair, and if they feel especially cruel, the unfairness needs to be part of the point.

The script also takes a bit too long to ramp up to speed. Short scripts (all scripts, but short scripts especially) need a hook on page one, and [REDACTED] doesn't get particularly interesting until "Cole" interrupts David

at the end of Page 2. There's a version of this script that cuts a lot of the chaff from the first two pages (descriptions of photos that aren't necessary, parts of his routine, etc) that flows much smoother and gets the reader right into the story quicker.

Cole's dialogue sometimes strays away from sounding like a child at times...admittedly, this is one of the toughest things to do as a writer, but it is unfortunately necessary to nail his voice.

Lastly, as a formatting note, dialogue should not be Centered on the page. It should be aligned to the Left, with the margins set at 2.5 inches.

### **Final Thoughts**

██████████ is a parenting ghost story centered around a lost treasure: a day to yourself as a father. Though our protagonist's motivation is easy to connect with, and the premise is a great foundation to build off of, there needs to be some calibration with regards to the balancing of David's fate and his perceived crimes. The pacing can be quickened as well, and some formatting errors can be cleaned up before this script is the best version of itself.

Thanks so much for submitting to Killer Shorts, it was a pleasure to read ██████████!