

FEATURE FILM SCREENPLAY COVERAGE

TITLE	Parkside or Scream Forever
LOGLINE	A troubled young adult finds herself back in the hometown she's running from to save it and her estranged sister from the newest Ghostface killer.

SUBMITTED TO	Jeffrey Hirschberg	AUTHOR	James Vanderbilt and Guy Busick
SUBMITTED BY	Samantha Tocke	COVERAGE DATE	3/5/25
READER	Samantha Tocke	DRAFT DONE	1/14/2022
LENGTH	124	TIME PERIOD	Present Day
LOCATION	Woodsboro, CA/Modesto, California	BUDGET	Low
GENRE	Horror, Comedy	SIMILAR PROJECTS	Truth or Dare, Bodies Bodies Bodies, Scream (1996)
ATTACHMENTS	N/A		

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR
PREMISE		X		
PLOT			X	
PRODUCTION VALUE			X	
CHARACTERS			X	
DIALOGUE				X
SETTING		X		
STRUCTURE			X	

CASTING POTENTIAL	X			
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	RECOMMEND	CONSIDER	PASS
SCRIPT		X	
WRITER			X

SUMMARY:

Act one starts as TARA CARPENTER is attacked while home alone by the infamous GHOSTFACE. SAM CARPENTER, Tara's estranged and older sister, is alerted of the attack by Tara's friend, WES HICKS. This sends Sam into a panic and gives her a catalyst to come back to Woodsboro, the same town she's running from. Sam's boyfriend, RICHIE, tags along.

In Woodsboro, Tara's friends, Wes, CHAD MEEKS-MARTINEZ, MINDY MEEKS-MARTINEZ, LIV TATE, and AMBER FREEMAN, Tara's girlfriend, discuss the potential suspects and Ghostface killers. The group gets an update that Tara is awake and meets Sam at the hospital. There, the Carpenter sisters heal the rift between them. Later, Liv's creepy ex-boyfriend VINCE is murdered by Ghostface. At the hospital, it is discovered Sam is having apparitions of BILLY LOOMIS, one of the original Ghostface killers, and is his illegitimate daughter. The first act ends when Sam reveals this to Tara. Tara feels lied to and betrayed by her sister, causing another wound to form in the sisters' relationship.

Act two kicks off with Richie and Sam journeying to DEWEY RILEY'S home to seek help from a Ghostface survivor and veteran. It's Dewey's sequestered love for his ex-wife GALE WEATHERS that ropes him in to help find the killer. Dewey warns notorious "final girl" SIDNEY PRESCOTT and Gale about the killer's resurgence. Dewey follows Richie and Sam to the Meeks-Martinez household where Mindy, RANDY MEEKS'S niece, theorizes the killer's potential motives. As the killer has only been attacking individuals connected to the original murders and *Stab* franchise, she deduces the killer is out to make a "requel." Shortly after this conclusion, Wes and his mother SHERIFF JUDY HICKS are killed. At the scene of the crime, Dewey reunites with Gale. Sam, Richie, and Dewey rush to the hospital to defend Tara from Ghostface. The second act transitions into the third during the screenplay's crisis, and Ghostface murders Dewey.

After Dewey's death, Sidney joins forces once again with Gale to take down the masked killer. Sidney asks Sam to team up with her and Gale, but Sam declines the offer, saying the best thing she can do for herself and Tara is to get out of Woodsboro. Before the sisters and Richie can make their exit, the trio makes a stop at Amber's house, who is throwing an "in-memoriam" rager for Wes. During the party, Chad and Mindy are attacked by Ghostface. Sam is informed Amber's house is STU MACHER'S home, the setting of the original

Woodsboro murders. The third act's showdown begins to brew as Amber reveals herself to be the killer, shooting Liv in the head.

Richie is revealed to be Amber's accomplice, shortly after Gale and Sidney arrive. Richie and Amber are devoted *Stab* fans who have been disappointed time after time by the most recent *Stab* films. They've decided to take matters into their own hands and make the legacy sequel the franchise deserves, intending to frame Sam for the murders. Sidney and Gale take down Amber, shooting and causing her to fall back onto a lit stove, and Sam embraces her father's legacy to save herself and Tara by stabbing and killing Richie.

The third act comes to a close as Tara, Chad, and Mindy are taken to the hospital and live to see another day. Rather than write another book on the Ghostface killings, Gale decides to write a memorial piece on Dewey. Sam thanks Sidney and Gale before joining Tara in the ambulance.

COMMENTS:

The *Scream* franchise has transfigured into a snake eating itself, not aware of the damage it continues to do to its legacy. The first few *Scream* films have always been self-aware and carried a meta tone, parodying the over-exercised tropes and beats that reoccur in slasher and horror movies, but *Scream Forever*, or *Parkside* as the screenplay has two titles, fizzles out the charm and wit of its predecessors, mostly due to the underdeveloped plot points, clunky dialogue and exposition, formulaic beats, and callbacks to its successful films.

The structure of *Scream Forever/Parkside* is a mirror to the first film with callbacks shoved down the reader's throat. Explicit doesn't even begin to explain the lack of subtlety of this script. Whether it be Randy's niece, Mandy, reenacting the same Ghostface jump scare her uncle did in the first or the group j'accuse outside the high school that is nearly verbatim from the original film, beat for beat, the writers fear originality.

The dialogue of this screenplay reads like a rough draft rather than a finished product, and much of this flaw is due to the horribly written exposition. Rather than slowly sprinkle information throughout, creating suspense because a key component of writing good horror is suspense, the characters are written to dump crucial information all in one scene and/or one painstakingly long monologue. The cardinal rule of storytelling, "show, don't tell," is absent here. It appears the writers doubt the reader's literary intelligence.

The characters are very two-dimensional, and it's hard to find a reason to cheer for the main protagonist, Sam Carpenter. Other than having a troubled past, what else is there to her? Writers tend to confuse the words "tragic" or "troubled past" for strong, independent female characters, but these terms are not equatable. Instead of making her an excuse to revive fan-fav (but very much dead) Billy Loomis, give Sam her own plot and arc.

It is predictable that Amber and Richie are the villains as they are the love interests for both Sam and Tara. However, they are not believable villains. They lack a reasonable motive as to dawn the Ghostface mask. Horror features must do the impossible and continue to surprise their audiences, but with *Scream Forever/Parkside* riding on the coattails of the

original's success, the audience will sense the predictability and beats as well as the so-called "twists" due to the overindulgence of exposition in the first and second act.

Now, the *Scream* franchise tends to have their films' themes revolve around the importance and power of female friendship and relationship, which is attempted here but falls a tad flat. This is probably the only thing this screenplay succeeds at, but with Gale and Sydney in the background, their dynamic overshadows Sam and Tara's sisterly bond, which feels forced. To achieve a stronger arc and connection between the sisters, it would be wise for the writers to give them a stronger dramatic circumstance as well as some more turmoil in their relationship early in act one and possibly around the midpoint.

With fraile dialogue, characters, arcs, and beats, *Scream Forever/Parkside* seems to be reliant on the notoriety of the first few films, and this is what will probably draw actors into the project. Whether the screenplay is functional or not doesn't matter. What matters is that *Scream* is a successful franchise with an established fanbase guaranteed to draw in audiences. The screenwriters are mostly likely banking on a strong, star studded cast who want to add a *Scream* movie to their filmography to save their script.

PASS, CONSIDER, or RECOMMEND

Pass.