



There's an Alien in my Bathtub  
Scores & Notes

Analyst: S. Schellerup

Writer: RW Hahn

Genre: Comedy

Category: Feature

The following scores and comments are objectively presented and intended to be illustrative, instructive, and helpful in guiding the writer along a professional path. Scores and comments are in accordance with current professional film and television industry standards.

**Scores/Comments:**

**Concept/Originality - 8**

While the script grounds itself repeatedly with references to older pop culture (including *Leave It to Beaver*, the music of The Bangles, various pop music standards, *E.T.*, and more), its take on the classic boy-meets-alien trope is both fresh and fun. The story is additionally buoyed by an extremely strong lead character, the type that doesn't usually get to take center stage in cinematic struggles to save humanity. Perhaps most importantly, this script has a clear perspective/voice that is established from the get-go, giving the story a feeling of fullness and dimensionality that carries the reader all the way to the conclusion.

**Structure - 8**

The structure is straightforward, but effective. It never overcomplicates or obscures the narrative, which, at its core, is a fairly simple story about friendship and doing the right thing, even when it is difficult. The script makes good use of classic "turning points" and

seems keenly aware of when & how to elevate the stakes and proceed to the next phase of the story.

### **Plot - 8**

The plot of *Alien in my Bathtub* is not only charming, funny, and heart-warming, but also tidily and tightly constructed. In the beginning, it moves quickly to establish a handful of engaging, unusual characters, as well as set up an array of interesting conflicts (both internal and external). From there, it wastes little time in bringing these characters together, and setting them on a collision course with further conflict and character development.

Of course, a huge focus in this story is how Norman overcomes his fearful, self-isolating tendencies to bond with an alien lifeform (and save humanity along the way). One wonders if perhaps the story would benefit from seeing Norman use his newfound social skills and confidence to bond with another human. This is vaguely alluded to in his final exchange with June, and it seems possible there is more to explore in their otherwise constrained dynamic.

### **Pacing - 7**

The pacing starts out quick, and, in general, maintains that pace all the way through the story's conclusion. If there is one section to point out as perhaps unduly slow compared to the rest of the script, it's the part where Pizza and Norman get to know each other before setting out on their mission (roughly pages 45-55). While spending some time portraying their developing bond is important for both character development and emotional investment, the section does lose touch with the otherwise consistent sense of urgency that drives the script's pacing as a whole.

### **Characters - 8**

Norman is as fully developed a protagonist as one could ask for in this story. He strikes the right balance of odd and good-natured; in many ways, he's the perfect unexpected hero. His character arc also feels complete and satisfying, especially as he pushes himself beyond the strict confines of his day-to-day world to save not only Uncle Happy (who is

also a very entertaining, if perhaps slightly underutilized secondary character), but also Pizza and the human race as a whole.

While Pizza is also forced outside of his comfort zone (just by the nature of crash-landing on a foreign planet), the writer might consider if there's a way to more fully develop his character arc as well. His story currently reads as a character who sets out to accomplish a specific task, and then simply does it. Pizza lacks the dynamism of having an internal conflict to overcome, or having an internal belief to challenge and then either reaffirm or discard. While his current level of character development is certainly sufficient, further humanizing him may help elevate not only the specific character, but the story as a whole.

### **Dialogue - 8**

The dialogue is one of the (many) strengths of *Alien in my Bathtub*. It often strikes the crucial balance between appearing real and authentic, while also giving the reader insight into the characters and their inner worlds. Especially with regard to Norman, dialogue is often used to great effect to show not only his various 'quirks,' but to dig a bit deeper, revealing his own internal schema for dealing with and operating within the world.

While one might have expected more oddities or strange turns-of-phrase in Pizza's dialogue (he seemed to adapt fairly quickly to contemporary English), overall, his alien perspective was also well-conveyed through the dialogue. The convention of having him speak through "The Toy" also worked well, save a few hiccups/unclear moments when the enemy alien is posing as Pizza. While the script's humor is primarily addressed in the Tone section below, one piece of dialogue that seemed intended to be funny, but whose meaning was a bit opaque, can be found on page 93 ("NORMAN: Okay. But no time to slurp altar you."). Overall, though, any changes to the dialogue would be more like 'tweaks' than rewrites; throughout the script, the dialogue is generally funny, revealing, and effective.

### **Tone - 7**

The tone starts out with a slightly more mature, almost indie comedy-like tone. This is perhaps not only due to narrative focus on Norman's eccentric character, but also because of the all too realistic/pertinent threat of a virus looming just off screen. (It's possibly that

the somewhat verbose title contributes to this tone, as well). Once Pizza fully enters the picture, however, the tone morphs into something a bit more conventional/kid-friendly. These tones aren't inherently contradictory or competing, and, in fact, they often mesh together well.

However, for the present moment, the threat of the virus has a heavy, emotionally-weighted impact on the overall tone that does not go unnoticed. Perhaps in the future, once the real world threat of a virus passes and society's collective consciousness shifts to a new focus, the tone will feel more unified. In the meantime, the writer has dealt with the subject with enough delicacy to avoid a "too lighthearted" tone that could be interpreted as insensitive.

### **Conflict - 8**

Like the dialogue, the writer's skillful arrangement of the various conflicts is a high point of *Alien in my Bathtub*. Norman is a young man terrified of the world on a good day, and now, he's faced with an existential threat that both increases and justifies his fears. In a way, this is the story of a man's worst nightmare coming to pass, and it ultimately benefiting him. This script proves that children's movies can be well-served by a complicated, unusual protagonist.

### **Emotional Response/Investment - 7**

For the most part, *Alien in my Bathtub* hits the right emotional beats, especially with regard to the relationship between Norman and Pizza, the relationship between Norman and Happy, and Norman's own evolving conception of himself. When Norman rapidly shifts his decision-making after finding out his uncle is sick, the reader has an immediate understanding of just how attached he is to Happy, and that fickle character-audience bond solidifies, ready to see the action through all the way to the end. The script also does a stellar job of humanizing Pizza. In particular, the moment where he crafts a small 'spaceship' for Micah is incredibly heart-warming.

There may be more room for exploration in Norman's relationship with his grandmother and Micah's mom, June. While his interaction with his grandmother does a good job of conveying his internal moral code, her presence lacks a strong emotional impact. And with regard to June, her character also feels somewhat flat, as the reader experiences her

only through Norman's perspective (e.g., he hardly gives her the time of day until he learns she's named after a character from his favorite show).

### **Marketplace Potential - 6**

It is difficult to predict when audiences will be ready for a film about a virus threatening to wipe out humanity. On the one hand, watching a virus be defeated handily and straightforwardly (rather than the world's current state of looming uncertainty) might provide a kind of catharsis. On the other hand, it may be a topic viewed as "too soon" to broach for quite some time. Ultimately, when audiences are ready for it, *Alien in my Bathtub* appears poised for success.

While nostalgia-tinged sci-fi is certainly having its moment (*Stranger Things*, *IT*, *I Am Not Okay with This*), it's possible that some of the nostalgia in this script is too wide-ranging, distant, or obscure. Examining the many references as a whole, it is difficult to pull out a unifying theme and make much meaning beyond a general longing for a bygone era. A stronger presence of female characters may also help ensure the story feels accessible to contemporary audiences.

**Final Comments:** *There's an Alien in my Bathtub* is compelling from page one until the end. It's the kind of story that has a keen sense of risk versus reward, and plunges forward in the narrative accordingly. Additionally, it straddles the line between "children's movie" and more mature sci-fi in the same way 80s classics like *E.T.* did so adroitly. Norman serves as an excellent reluctant/unlikely hero, and it is easy to emotionally invest in his journey. The story was both moving and thought-provoking, and seems likely to stick with those who encounter it for quite some time; in other words, this writer has done wonderful work.