

TITLE		WRITER		DRAFT / DATE	
Dead Air		Alex Rivera		Draft 2, 1 Oct	
FORM (FEATURE, SHORT, PILOT)		PAGES	GENRE		BUDGET
Short film		13	Thriller		Low. 3 locations, 4 actors
TIME AND PLACE		SUBMITTED BY			COMPARABLE FILMS
Present day. A small river town, one night		Jo Kim, producer			Talk Radio (1988), Pontypool (2008)
READER		DATE	PREPARED FOR		
Maya Cho		3 Oct	Riverside Short Film Fund		

LOGLINE one sentence: hero, goal, obstacle

A late-night radio host who hides from daylight takes a call from a stranger who knows her childhood song, her front door and where she's going next.

RATINGS					
CATEGORY	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	NOTES
Premise	X				Hook lands on page 3
Structure		X			Clean three acts
Characters		X			Nora strong, Eddie thin
Dialogue		X			Sharp, a little on the nose in Act 3
Pacing			X		Calls in Act 2 repeat
Tone and voice	X				Claustrophobic, confident
Marketability		X			Festival thriller, cheap to make
Originality		X			Familiar setup, fresh ending

VERDICT			
SCRIPT	☐ Pass	☒ Consider	☐ Recommend
WRITER	☐ Pass	☐ Consider	☒ Recommend

IN ONE SENTENCE why this verdict

A tense, cheap-to-shoot thriller with a great hook. Fix the Act 2 repeats and set up the twist, and it's ready.

SCRIPT COVERAGE

Synopsis in present tense, with the ending. Then your honest notes.

SYNOPSIS the whole story, CAPS for each character's first appearance

NORA VANCE (30s) hosts the midnight show on Riverside Community Radio and hasn't seen a sunrise in years. Her producer EDDIE (40s) counts her in. Night guard WALT (60s) brings her coffee.

On air, a calm CALLER asks for "Blue Porch Light," the song Nora's late mother hummed on their porch at Elm Court. Nora freezes. Eddie tells her to cut him off. She keeps him on.

The Caller describes her front door and the spare key under the planter. Eddie kills the line. It rings again. Nora finds the back door propped open and Walt's chair empty. She runs to her car, and the show goes to dead air. On the drive home, the Caller's voice comes through her car radio.

Nora drives to Elm Court to face him and finds Eddie waiting on her couch. The calls were about her mother all along. At dawn, Nora walks outside into the first sunrise she's seen in years.

COMMENTS what works, what doesn't, and how to fix it

Dead Air knows what it is: one woman, one booth, one bad night. The hook arrives on page 3 and the car radio beat on page 10 is the best moment in the script. It's cheap to shoot and the writer's voice is clear.

The main problem is the twist. Eddie on the couch should shock us, but nothing sets it up. Plant his key to Nora's apartment early, or let him know one detail he shouldn't. As written, the reveal feels chosen rather than earned.

Act 2 has three calls that do the same job. Cut one and the script drops to 12 pages without losing anything. The mother backstory arrives as a speech in Act 3. It would hit harder spread across the calls.

The ending works, and the sunrise image pays off page 1. With one more draft this is a strong festival short.

STRENGTHS

Great hook. Contained and cheap. Strong lead role. The car radio scene. A clear, confident voice.

WEAKNESSES

Twist not set up. Repeated calls in Act 2. Backstory dumped in dialogue. Walt disappears without payoff.