

# Crossing Over

*Learn how to walk in another man's shoes. Even if he's dead. And liked high heels.*

After an entanglement curse is invoked, a gay ghost must help a pipsqueak, straight young man lose his virginity and “live life,” and the virgin must help the ghost uncover and bring to justice his diabolically dangerous and secretly powerful murderer before the innocent gardener accused of the crime is executed in three days.

*Manhood isn't about the stereotypical conquests that many men seem to believe it is. Both love and life are not skin deep nor a matter of the flesh.*

## HighLights from Script Readers

“Sparklingly witty and unique concept”

“Very unique, fun, and entertaining.”

“The concept was a lot of fun, and very original.”

“A supernatural Queer Eye for the Straight Guy.”

“Dialogue sparkles.”

“The ending was nearly flawless.”

“The plot has **many layers and twists** to keep audiences on their toes.”

“By the middle, **I didn't want to stop reading**, and by the end, you'd totally won me over.”

“This movie will see audiences laugh repeatedly, groan, grip the seat in suspense, and **quite a few will cry**. ...uplifting ...fun.... **Bankable**.”

“**This plot is so surprising and compelling**, and the writer really takes us on a ride throughout the course of the script.”

“A **memorable story** with exciting and original characters.”

“...truly **laugh out loud scenes** and complex, well-developed characters that could be **very attractive to actors**.”

“The dialogue really sells this script. It's witty, charming, and has an infectious hyperrealism to it that really makes the material **a joy to read.**”

“The writer has managed to capture the same rapid-fire back-and-forth of witticisms and cutting remarks of **classic Hollywood comedies.**”

“A fantastic bit of writing, and no doubt one that many actors would delight in performing.”

“There's a lot of **great chemistry** and comedic potential between these two characters, and audiences are sure to find that irresistible.”

“What begins as a supernatural odd-couple narrative, surprisingly - yet satisfyingly - unfolds into a story about identity, trauma and acceptance.”

“The writer has really shown great talent in both the construction of the script's comedic material, and their ability to touch upon issues of gender, sexuality and redemption in a way that feels respectful and rewarding.”

“With its quirky humor, playful use of generic tropes and inclusion of contemporary issues, this script could attract a lot of positive marketplace potential.”

“It's **refreshing and thoroughly unique**, and has all the makings of an instant cult classic.”

“**Characters are original and entertaining** and the writer incorporates themes that are meaningful and timely, especially in regards to transgender and non-cis characters.”

“The antagonists, while purposefully not likeable, are nonetheless very engaging and **fun to spend time with** because they are so wicked or cunning or ‘love-to-hate’ characters.”

“The **strong characters and fresh twists**, combined with the **high level of comedy** (especially in the dialogue) in the first half of the script would certainly appeal to a broad audience. Likewise, the dark supernatural elements could attract fans of thrillers and supernatural dramas.”

“**It's thoroughly satisfying. A delightful piece of entertainment** with a moderate budget that isn't much of a marketing risk, yet that successfully

articulates aspects of human nature and communicates a level of wisdom, sufficient to satisfy those audience members who want a bit more depth.  
**Wonderful.”**

## **Excerpts above were pulled from these extensive, detailed, reader's analysis notes below: (Caution: SPOILERS!)**

**Reader: S. Kerrigan**

This is a sparkingly witty and unique concept, which shows a lot of promise. A supernatural Queer Eye for the Straight Guy, this is a concept that requires strong comedic impulses and razor sharp dialogue to really fulfill its potential. Luckily, it is clear that the writer has these in spades. A wonderful, quirky read.

The key elements are all in place, from Steven's own journey into becoming a man to the intrigue of Marcus' murder. Establishing two narrative threads so effectively in such a short amount of time is, in and of itself, an enormous feat. To establish two threads while also laying the groundwork for a paranormal detective story is another thing entirely. It cannot be overstated that what the writer achieved here is truly impressive. A prime example of strong storytelling and a beautifully economic use of language. Well done.

The pacing overall is very well-managed. Comedy succeeds or fails based on timing, and the overall pacing of a comedic script is every bit as crucial as the timing of a one-liner or pratfall. The writer has shown mastery of their genre by keeping scenes tight. The action never drags, and each page serves a purpose. All of this makes for a thoroughly enjoyable opening act, and the writer deserves full praise.

This is a really fun concept, wonderfully teased out across its run time. What begins as a supernatural odd-couple narrative, surprisingly - yet satisfyingly - unfolds into a story about identity, trauma and acceptance. It's a lot to take on within what, on the face of things, appears to be a light-hearted comedy, yet the writer manages to do so with aplomb.

The third act, in particular, is enormously entertaining and packed with exciting set pieces and intriguing twists. The writer's use of foreshadowing throughout, in particular the way in which they made clever use of details introduced early on (let's coin the phrase "Chekov's magic mirror"), is applauded.

This plot is so surprising and compelling, and the writer really takes us on a ride throughout the course of the script. While the set-up of the odd-couple routine and paranormal murder mystery is intriguing in and of itself, the way it expands into astral plane showdowns is nothing short of impressive. The writer has done tremendous work in establishing the world of the film, and the rules of this world. Even the romantic subplot runs well. There's no shortage of strong plot elements on display here that audiences can really sink their teeth into.

By and large, the pacing here is of a high quality. The comedic timing is tight and the rhythm of much of the dialogue is a joy to behold. There's a quick, snappy quality to much of the speech that really carries the scenes and keeps the action from ever dragging. Additionally, the main story beats all fall where they should, resulting in a nice escalation of tension throughout the story. Overall, very nice work.

The main cast of characters are all very well-developed and fleshed-out. Steven, in particular seems to occupy an archetype rarely seen in modern comedy, insofar as his attempts at masculinity feel more wholesome than threatening. From the very first page, he's an immediately sympathetic figure and one with which we can relate. It was a clever move on the writer's behalf to show Steven trying to model himself against some perceived masculine ideal, yet never committing to the misogyny that often comes along with it - as evidenced in Wilmot. This allows his character to really shine, without alienating any audience members. Marcus, too, is a great counterpoint to Steven. Though somewhat broadly drawn, his character is imbued with some depth by the film's close, when we learn of his difficulties in accepting Anastasia for who she is - a trans woman, and not the man he initially fell in love with.

Steven as the feeble, well-meaning underdog calls to mind the hapless comedic heroes once played by Rick Moranis. While a similar character could easily have been imbued with a degree of bitterness, the writer here has managed to capture an endearing innocence and earnestness in their depiction.

The dialogue really sells this script. It's witty, charming, and has an infectious hyperrealism to it that really makes the material a joy to read. In addition to the quick-fire quips noted before, the writer's satirical edge is also noted and commended. The use of Steven's conversations with Marcus (and other spirits) being one-sided to bystanders is also milked to great effect throughout. A stand-out scene is when Steven is about to sleep with a sex worker in the motel, only to begin conversing with the unseen spirit of Molly. Though it could be argued that this scene doesn't quite further the plot, what it adds in humor and further development of both Steven and his powers more than makes up for it.

Dialogue is where the writer truly shines, and the argument between Marcus and Anastasia is a perfect example of their talents. In this scene, the writer has managed to capture the same rapid-fire back-and-forth of witticisms and cutting remarks of classic Hollywood comedies. There is simultaneously something very camp and old school in the delivery, yet something distinctly modern in the vocabulary, which makes this scene so entertaining and refreshing. A fantastic bit of writing, and no doubt one that many actors would delight in performing. Elsewhere, though somewhat more subdued, the dialogue remains appropriate to the genre and setting of the script. Mrs. Baltrim's deadpan admonishments of Steven are wryly funny, and a counterpoint to the flurry of excitement that is the opening argument. Taken in tandem, these scenes are a fine example of the writer's interplay of bombast and restraint.

As remarked upon with regards to characterization, a lesser writer could have imbued a character like Steven with a degree of bitterness or malice - souring the tone. Instead, the writer has maintained a light tone throughout, even when introducing the murder subplot, which feels like the right decision. Contrasting Steven against the casually misogynist and loud-mouth detectives further reinforces both the script's tone and Steven's characterization. In many ways, the scene in the bar sets the tone for what is to follow. Steven wants to be like

the detectives, but the course of the narrative will prove that Steven is, in fact, better than them - better at finding the killer, and better at being a man. Beyond simply adhering to the light comedic tone, this is a tremendous example of how to distill the tonal material of a piece into a few short pages. Very impressive.

It's no mean feat to balance zany supernatural comedy with some genuine moments of sensitivity and pathos. The writer has really shown great talent in both the construction of the script's comedic material, and their ability to touch upon issues of gender, sexuality and redemption in a way that feels respectful and rewarding. Lesser writers might be tempted to lean into cheap gags about the aforementioned issues, but this writer rises above and makes clear tonal distinctions. These distinctions manage to feel effortless, even though they represent quite significant shifts in the work's mood. Truly impressive work. The handling of Steven and his quest for masculine validation is also superbly handled. There were many ways in which a story of this nature could tonally fall flat, and the writer has managed to both avoid these pitfalls and provide surprising, refreshing and sensitive perspectives throughout.

For starters, the ticking clock device of requiring Steven and Marcus to save Juan before he is executed is brilliant. It immediately raises the stakes high, as a life is literally on the line. From there, the sense of peril only increases, as we are afforded with greater details pertaining to the spell. What really amps up the conflict is the mid-point reveal of Anastasia as undead. A remarkable twist, carried off beautifully, which adds another great element of tension to the narrative and opens the story up to those aforementioned fantastic astral plane set pieces. Truly unexpected and entertaining, and serves to elevate a concept that might have otherwise become repetitive as the story progressed. Finally, the last-minute fear that Steven might have failed, despite everything, is a great gut-punch. Though the resolution might be made somewhat more clear, it is nonetheless a strong beat.

There's a lot of great conflict to contend with in the opening pages of this script. There's the personal, inner conflict of Steven as he strives towards a hypermasculine ideal. There's the violent conflict of the altercation between Marcus and Anastasia, and the smaller-scale conflict between the children on the bus. Finally, there's the core conflict - the murder mystery. While many writers might feel the impulse to pack their scripts full of conflict in the mistaken belief that all conflict is inherently entertaining, the writer here has been very smart with how their conflicts function with regards to the script as a whole. Every instance of conflict here serves a purpose - be it setting the narrative in motion (Steven's arc and the murder mystery) or further developing the characters (Steven's response to the bullying on the bus). This displays a great understanding on the writer's behalf of how conflict ought to function within a script, and how to utilize it to different ends. Great work.

There's a lot of scope for emotional investment in this script. To begin, Steven's desire to "be a man" is sympathetic in how mundane and believable it is. He's just a regular guy, aspiring to something he doesn't fully understand - something that he's already better than. With the introduction of other plot elements, particularly Steven's desire to help and understand others, we get a more comprehensive overview of his character. This elevates Steven from relatable schlub, to a real hero we can invest in. His compassion towards Anastasia at the end, and the reveal of acceptance and love as the key towards resolution, is a strong emotional beat. As a result, our response to Steven feels earned, and the story as a whole gains greater resonance. Great work.

Given the strong character and tonal work here, there's no doubt that audiences will be able to sympathize with Steven and find themselves investing in his journey. Similarly, Marcus is an engaging and sympathetic character in his own right, while embodying the polar opposite of Steven's characteristics. There's a lot of great chemistry and comedic potential between these two characters, and audiences are sure to find that irresistible.

Marketplace Potential : With its quirky humor, playful use of generic tropes and inclusion of contemporary issues, this script could attract a lot of positive marketplace potential. It's refreshing and thoroughly unique, and has all the makings of an instant cult classic.

### **Reader: C. O'Donahue**

This is an imaginative and ambitious concept that swings from comedy to dark drama with supernatural elements. The writer has a unique and distinctive voice and there are some incredibly compelling visual elements written into the script, such as the astral plane and the use of a magic mirror. Characters are original and entertaining and the writer incorporates themes that are meaningful and timely, especially in regards to transgender and non-cis characters. The plot has many layers and twists to keep audiences on their toes.

The plot follows a traditional and effective three-act structure, with a strong set-up in the first act which introduces us to the protagonist and other major characters, as well as the setting, premise, and tone. A compelling turning point spins the protagonist from act one to act two and establishes the central conflict in a creative yet believable way. The second act takes the audience on a roller coaster of rising and waning conflict as the stakes get higher and the ticking clock grows louder, which leads to a fascinating 'final showdown' moment in the climax. The third act delivers an emotionally satisfying resolution that wraps up each of the subplots as well as the central conflict and fulfills the audience's expectations for a supernatural thriller but adds a heartwarming twist to the antagonist's story line.

The protagonist is established as a likeable and relatable everyman who is grounded in reality, and this helps to support the supernatural elements which enter his life as the central conflict begins. Marcus (the ghost) has a terrific backstory which is well-incorporated into the plot across all three acts and Steven is introduced as a man who is open to thinking outside the box and seeking help from those who know more about life than he does. So the foundations for the Marcus-mentors-Steven plot are strong.

The story begins with a high level of intrigue and comedy, and the pacing is strong across all three acts. Individual scenes have a clear sense of cause and effect, and there are very few scenes that feel either too long, too short, or incomplete. The writer does a good job of getting in late and getting out early, so that the audience can enjoy the comedy and get information that is important to the plot, without lingering on unnecessary moments. Comedic timing is also very strong, and this is equally well done during sequences like the rescue of the little girl in the motel which are suspenseful and intense. The climactic sequence in the third act has rapid-fire, dramatic pacing that feels entirely appropriate to the subject matter and the actions of the characters, and there is a great juxtaposition between the frantic 'real' world and the astral plane which enhances the supernatural elements and creates a strong visceral impression. Tempo builds appropriately across all three acts, hits a compelling crescendo at

the climax, and delivers an emotionally meaningful and uplifting resolution.

Characters are complex, well-developed and likeable. One of the things that stands out in this script is the feeling that each character has a life that exists outside of the confines of this story and that they are not merely caricatures created to serve a plot. This makes them feel like three-dimensional individuals and helps build a strong bond between the audience and the players. Character relationships and interactions are believable but with a heightened sense of at first comedy and later mystery and suspense. As an example, the scene where Marcus tries to Cyrano de Bergerac Steven during a dinner date is especially funny, largely due to the fact that each character involved has a fully developed personality, point of view, and comfort level. These scenes do a great job of revealing character as well as advancing the plot.

There are many sources of conflict in this story which are equally strong and do a great job of challenging the protagonist to rise to the occasion, grow as a human being, and think outside the box. From his internal conflict of doubting his masculinity and worrying if he will ever be able to be a father, to the more obvious external conflict involving solving Marcus' murder and eventually facing down the evil spirit/witch/ghost that killed Marcus, there is plenty of tension and conflict to drive the story. The stakes are high and are well established when Marcus and Steven read the spell book which tells them of the consequences if they fail to achieve their goal. Interpersonal conflicts are strong as well, both in comedy scenes like the ones at the restaurant, the bar, and the magic shop, as well as the more thrilling scenes such as the one at the hotel and in the astral plane. Not only is there a high level of action to drive the plot; there is also tension between characters on a personal level. One good example of this is when Steven is arrested after the police find the gun (Marcus' murder weapon) that has been planted in his car. This jeopardizes his budding relationship with Detective Wendy and leads to a climax in this subplot where Steven refuses the truth serum in order to prove that their love for one another must be based on trust rather than proof.

Each character presented (except where they are expressly antagonistic like Anastasia and Wilmot) is lovable, relatable, and endearing. Each, at one point or another, reveals something meaningful and emotionally relevant about their past that gives the audience a good understanding of who they are on a deeper level. And the antagonists, while purposefully not likeable, are nonetheless very engaging and fun to spend time with because they are so wicked or cunning or 'love-to-hate' characters. All of this works together well to create a quick and lasting emotional investment in the characters and their journey. With stakes that surpass even life and death, we worry for the protagonist and sense that he is in real and imminent danger, while still being charmed by his quirky, uncomfortable personality which plays out with great comedic effect in the earlier scenes.

Market Potential: The strong characters and fresh twists, combined with the high level of comedy (especially in the dialogue) in the first half of the script would certainly appeal to a broad audience. Likewise, the dark supernatural elements could attract fans of thrillers and supernatural dramas.

A memorable story with exciting and original characters. Some truly laugh out loud scenes and complex, well-developed characters that could be very attractive to actors.

## Reader: Hannah Vel

Within this familiar territory, you have created a heart-warming emotionally literate (!) story with its own originality, safely within generic expectations without actually becoming derivative (!).

It's thoroughly satisfying. A delightful piece of entertainment with a moderate budget that isn't much of a marketing risk, yet that successfully articulates aspects of human nature and communicates a level of wisdom, sufficient to satisfy those audience members who want a bit more depth. Wonderful.

### Characters

Steven is beautifully drawn. Sincere, insecure, half the time wise-cracking, the other half jamming his foot right up to his tonsils. He's easy to root for, and smack our heads over as he bumbles along trying to "man up." His arc is subtle but definite, and integral to the story logic - he evolves his understanding of what it means to be a man, and in the end, gains the confidence and self-esteem he always needed.

Marcus is delightful, if a little less dimensioned- but then, he's a ghost! He does eventually become fully dimensioned in the last few moments of the story as Steven finds the little boy inside him - this was beautifully done.

Wendy has a good balance of certainty, doubt, decisiveness and integrity. She's a great ally for Steven, helping him reality check how he's doing as he evolves. Yet she also rings true as an individual woman in her own right. Nice work.

Anna - she's a bit of a Villain with a capital V. I wanted just a few more tiny hints to recall later after Steven found the key to her resolution. Perhaps these could be planted in the backstory of her marriage to Marcus - there's a vulnerable little girl in there who is lovable - but she's too afraid to be intimate, she turns against Marcus rather than come out from behind her Witch Mask.

Wilmot - well drawn - the insecure blusterer, publicly using his crass phone app to 'man up.'

Even very minor characters like the principal, Molly, the muscle man in the cell, were people rather than mere extras. I downright loved how you painted Madonna, and used her to foreshadow and thematically set up the critical "trust" scene with Wendy in the jail.

### Dialogue

Dialogue sparkles. Used to characterise. Natural, entertaining. Great interactions and exchanges. The scenes where Steven answered Marcus, and the others present responded assuming they were being addressed, were beautifully crafted.

### Emotional Roller Coaster

This movie will see audiences laugh repeatedly, groan, grip the seat in suspense, and quite a few will cry. And overall it will be uplifting and feel like it was fundamentally fun. Great job. Bankable.



I loved the emotional literacy that constantly grounded the characters and action. Rather than a few clever platitudes pasted on top for the odd “ah” moment, a wonderfully wise world-view and perspective actually drove the action. Made the difference between what worked and what backfired. The characters don’t get off the hook till they “get it”. This makes for some great emotional intensity that is comedic-appropriate but isn’t actually cheesy - quite an achievement.

Overall

By the middle, I didn’t want to stop reading, and by the end, you’d totally won me over.

**Reel Writer's (anonymous) Reader Feedback:**

The story as a whole was very fun, very well done. The concept was a lot of fun, and very original. It's great when a story can carry certain themes and elements all the way through, even if some of them are smaller details. Crossing Over did this very well on several occasions, and it's an under-utilized tool that most writers don't take the time to use. It's a great way to tug at emotions and create a connection with the audience when they recognize it. Well done.

The characters, once they got rolling, were great. Very unique, fun, and entertaining. They played off each other very well and I could see several prominent actors and actresses playing different roles. Resolution - The ending was nearly flawless, and here again, is usually one of things that screenwriters mess up most. They rush the ending, or don't bring things together and complete the story. Crossing Over did a great job at building up to, and completing the story.