

Please and Thank You

FAMILY COMEDY / DRAMA

Series Treatment Sample

LOGLINE:

When a cantankerous father bets his teenage daughter he can keep his temper in check for an entire road trip, she starts a tally: ten strikes and she stays with her mom for Thanksgiving.

SERIES OUTLINE

Frank is driving his teenage daughter cross-country to move her into her mom's new house. After watching Frank lose his temper at another driver, Sophie draws ten boxes in her notebook and proposes a bet: if he can last the whole road trip without getting ten strikes, she'll spend the holidays with him. Frank agrees and the road immediately starts testing him: bad drivers, wrong directions, a speeding ticket on an empty highway.

As 9 strikes pile up and Frank deals with one frustrating event after another, Frank and Sophie begin bonding. By the time they're an hour from Nashville, with one strike left, they're easier together than they've been in years, which is why it's so hard for Frank to come clean with Sophie and tell her that his marriage to her Mom didn't end on her terms (as he told her), but because he lost his temper one too many times. Frank and Sophie argue and he raises his voice. Sophie leaves and he sadly marks off the 10th box.

Sophie calls her older sister from the hotel pool who tells her that Frank kept that information from her because he was so scared of changing Sophie's opinion about him. She comes back to the room after some time and Frank is asleep. His phone buzzes with an alert about the supplies he ordered a couple days ago for the holiday with Sophie.

They wake up and keep driving. As they start, Frank notices that his 10th strike was erased. He asks Sophie who replies that this is her game and she gets to make the rules. Frank smiles and they drive on.

They arrive at her mom's house. Inside, the contrast between Frank and Sophie's mom is made clear. While he's brutally honest and messy, she's spotless, a health-guru, fitness expert, home-decor minimalist. We see both of her parents in Sophie. In retrospect, we see the brutal honesty of her dad try to push past the superficial pettiness of her mother. When her mom makes a casual, backhanded comment that disparages Frank, something in Sophie clicks into place. She gets frustrated, the exact same way Frank would, and says exactly what she thinks to her mother, that she'd rather have a grumpy old dad rather than a perfect mother. She gets back into the car with her dad.

VIRAL POTENTIAL

The concept is simple enough to be understood on social media if you take any isolated clip from the show. The format of the show follows the father getting into situations that would

frustrate *anyone*. The audience can immediately implicate types of conflicts because each situation will be relatable. He'll struggle to hold his tongue after getting a speeding ticket, lose his temper at a jammed vending machine, and yell at a driver who cuts him off.

Beneath all of the relatable frustrating situations, there's also a sweet, heartwarming story about the father/daughter relationship that the social media audience can glimpse. This will drive conversion from the isolated social clips to the full series, since audiences will want to see how it resolves.

To keep the plot moving, we can start at the beginning of the road trip, after the bet has been established, and reveal information as we go. That way, we can open on Frank being frustrated by a scenario and earning his first strike.

SCRIPT EXAMPLE

SAMPLE EPISODE 1

Early in the show, Frank's politeness is tested when he and Sophie are pulled over by a cop.

RURAL ROAD, DAY

SOPHIE (16-yo girl) sits in the passenger seat of a car next to FRANK (50s, her cantankerous-looking father), parked on the side of a rural road.

SOPHIE
Remember, Dad. You've got 8 strikes
left and then I'm spending
Thanksgiving at Mom's.

She's holding a notebook with 10 boxes on it, two of them are
striked through.

FRANK
I can't be polite right now, do you
know how—

Officer Brown approaches. Frank takes a deep breath and
forces a smile.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Good afternoon, officer.

BROWN
(flat)
Is it.

FRANK
Yes ma'am! Here's my license and
registration.

BROWN
You wanna guess why I pulled you
over?

FRANK
I assume I was speeding.

BROWN
You assume.

Frank blinks.

BROWN (CONT'D)
70 in a 55. But you assume that's
why.

Frank glares and clenches his teeth. Sweat trickles down his brow.

BROWN (CONT'D)
You seem agitated.

FRANK
(getting agitated)
Agitated? I'm not agita-

Sophie nudges him with her elbow.

FRANK (CONT'D)
-tated at all. Just... eager to
help however I can.

BROWN
Okay. I'll be right back.

She steps back and talks into her radio.

His smile immediately drops. Frank stares straight ahead,
breathing hard through his nose.

SOPHIE
You're doing great.

FRANK
(through gritted teeth)
Don't patronize me.

SOPHIE
(grinning)
I'm not patronizing you-

FRANK
This is torture.

Officer Brown returns with a ticket. Frank immediately puts
back on his forced smile.

BROWN
Mr. Stephens, I'm citing you for
speeding.

Frank's hands grip the wheel. His face turns purple.

FRANK
You're citing-of COURSE you're
citing me, why wouldn't you cite me
for going 15 over on a completely
empty-

He catches himself mid-sentence and closes his eyes, taking deep breaths.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(opening eyes, strained)
I understand completely.

BROWN
The fine is \$150.

FRANK
A HUNDRED AND FIFTY- is very
reasonable. For the violation which
I committed.

BROWN
Sign here please.

Frank takes the pen and stares at the ticket, his hand shaking.

FRANK
(muttering to Sophie)
Highway robbery is what this is-

SOPHIE
Dad.

He signs it and hands Officer Brown the ticket.

BROWN
Drive safely now. Wouldn't want to
see you again today.

Frank realizes he still has the pen. He looks over at Sophie's clipboard, then reaches over and checks one of the boxes.

FRANK
Screw it, this one's worth it.

He gets out of the car.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(calling to Officer Brown)
Hey, 'scuse me!

SAMPLE EPISODE 2

In the middle of the show, Frank's car breaks down and he enlists Sophie's help to fix it.

EXT. RURAL ROAD IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE

Sophie and Frank stand next to the hood of their car. There's steam coming out from under it. It's clearly broken down.

Frank has a stick he's about to break in frustration.

SOPHIE

Wait!

Frank glares at her.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Ok, Dad, just think- how is breaking this stick going to fix the car?

FRANK

Ok, Sophie, how is breaking this stick not going to fix the car?

FRANK (CONT'D)

Let me have this. I need to vent.

SOPHIE

Just take a second to articulate why you're upset.

FRANK

I'll show you upset.

SOPHIE

Dad.

FRANK

Well I'm MAD because you can't hold the hood up for fifteen minutes while I fix the engine!

He goes back to almost breaking the stick.

SOPHIE

I can't hold the flashlight, AND hand you wrenches, AND hold the hood up, all at the same time!

Frank glares at her.

She approaches him like she's taming a wild animal, hand outstretched.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Just give me the stick, Dad.

Frank pouts, then holds out the stick.

Sophie takes it, then props up the hood with the stick. She gives a snarky grin and Frank stares at her in defeat.

SAMPLE EPISODE 3

This is the ending scene, after Sophie gets to her mom's home. Frank waits outside to say goodbye.

INT. SOPHIE'S MOM'S HOME, VERY FANCY, AND NEAT

Sophie talks with her mother, Janice, who is wearing linen pants, tightly pulled hair, and definitely has botox. Janice is looking at a plastic-wrapped pack of unhealthy-looking brownie squares.

JANICE
(judgmental, passive
aggressive)
Did you bring those in? I don't
have anything like that in my
house.

SOPHIE
Dad got them for me back in, like,
Oklahoma.

JANICE
(disparagingly)
Well, your dad never cared much
about his health.

Sophie chuckles, but there's some hesitation to being so quick to make fun of her dad.

SOPHIE
...Where is he, anyway?

JANICE
He's outside, I think he's waiting
for you to say goodbye before he
heads back home.

Sophie looks out the window to see her dad, lonely, sitting at the steering wheel of his car.

JANICE (CONT'D)
(still looking at the bag
of brownies)
You might as well be eating a
credit card with the amount of
microplastics that are in this.

Something clicks in Sophie.

SOPHIE

And how many CCs do you think that
is? /Alt: it's less plastic than
you've had injected into your face.

The retort leaves Sophie's mouth before she even realizes what she's saying. Janice looks shocked. Her perfect angel has never spoken back to her like this. Sophie looks scared for just a moment, then doubles down.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Y'know what, Mom? I love Mama Jo's
Brownie Squares. And if you
actually knew anything about me,
you'd know that I love Mama Jo's
Brownie Squares.

Sophie grabs her coat and stomps towards the door. She flings it open, then turns back to say one last thing.

SOPHIE (CONT'D)

Dad may not be perfect, like you,
but at least he knows me.

WHAM - She slams the door in her mom's face.